

Hope and Love

By Jane Hirshfield

All winter
the blue heron
slept among the horses.

5 I do not know
the custom of herons,
do not know
if the solitary habit
is their way,
10 or if he listened for
some missing one—
not knowing even
that was what he did—
in the blowing
15 sounds in the dark.

I know that
hope is the hardest
love we carry.

20 He slept
with his long neck
folded, like a letter
put away.