

Unicorns on Sable Island

On Sable Island
inhabited by dunes and weathermen
wild ponies run.

In the deep night
trotting to the beach
they shed their rough coats
revealing white from
slender hindlegs to
silver horns.

For there are unicorns
on Sable Island
gentle, waiting to be fed
by hand.

One night ghost virgins from old ships,
wrecked en route to Nova Scotia,
floated their toes across the tide.
They stroked, oh carefully,
the horns of the unicorns.
“We are shy,” they all said
but none fled.

And one-by-one the women mounted
the unicorns to ride
into the breakers.
Bareback, clutching mane
grabbing neck, the virgins licked
their satin ears
and whispered, “Faster.”
 Faster but too deep
 hooves twist
 riders crash
 roll away
 under waves

On Sable Island
wild ponies run
and at night
they nuzzle each other's white chins,
but horns get in the way.
Horn against horn
is hard but they try to
mourn and remember
a touch that was needed
then lost.