



Hoofprints  
E.B. Sullivan

Born in the plains of New York City  
Nary did I think horses were pretty  
‘Til graceful as a ballerina one moseyed by  
lowered his head, looked me straight in the eye

Like a pup, he followed me over my lands  
Towering above, he measured seventeen hands  
His owner, my neighbor, wanted to give him away  
With tears in my eyes, I begged, “Here, let him stay.”

It was clear this horse chose where he desired to be  
A home with no rules, cared for by a greenhorn like me  
Online, I searched cowboy stories with all kinds of advice  
These ran the gambit from natural to definitely not nice

I decided to buy something called tack  
Leeds, bits, bridle, saddle, and that

I ordered Timothy, pellets, wormer, soap, and cream  
When I saw my final bill, I was ready to scream

While my horse got pampered  
I became stressed, tired, and hampered  
Barefoot, he was trimmed, his coat carefully brushed  
Hay stuck in my hair, my toes nearly crushed

My nails split from scratching his belly  
Shooing away flies, I covered him in jelly  
To bathe him, I stretched, stained, and teetered on a ladder  
All clean, he rolled in dirt as if my efforts didn't matter

A series of pricey experts, one by one, came to my place  
Vets, equine dentists, farriers, and trainers, spoke in my face  
“He's a dangerous, unpredictable, high-strung, former racehorse that can't be ridden.”  
After much thought and consideration, I ignored the collective opinions given

One day, I realized my prince was lonely and needed a friend  
Off to the rescue center, I went with lots of money to spend  
On their ranch, this new guy seemed tame, gentle, and easy to ride  
But at home, he got permanently attached to my horse's side

Folks told me I should get rid of him too 'cause he's “barn sour.”  
Instead, I allow the duo to roam freely every day and every hour

It doesn't matter if these horses are expensive ornamental toys

Because etched in my heart are loving hoofprints of my two boys