



Brad Reyes © 2004 All Rights Reserved

## Heartless Horse's Memo of Defeat

Mrs. Heartless Horse was in love with a pirate landscaper.  
His trio of fiendish offspring was off scheming.  
His own policy of divide and rule had left him with no friends.  
He had suffered the mutiny at the Lion's Club. He had no navy.  
Rumors around he had produced a bastard son with the hatcheck girl.  
(She was a furry dwarf!) (He hated the hatcheck girl!) (She chitted she chatted!)  
(She was a heather twig-wearer always asking for token assurances of safety!)  
Murder of a brother-in-law might ease things...  
(An act of revenge acceptable in Highland tradition...)  
His bid for lost territories and titles had gone unheeded.  
And he had yet to procure the all-cherry leather-top desk!

Heartless Horse wandered out to inspect his lands...  
He hated his castle, built 100 years earlier on a site chosen by a donkey,  
where an ancient hawthorn tree still strangled the vaulted basement.  
The private gaol where now he stored his defunct wine collection,  
was crumbling. A furry mouse scurried away.  
A pseudo drawbridge over a dry moat.  
A headless doll lay stripped in the sludge below.  
Little grandvikings to and froe-ing on tricycles didn't even notice him.  
He had a fancy for that one particularly cute one, didn't know her name;

but she had cute blond pigtails and dimpled cheek ...  
she slashed him in the knee with her pink sequinned claymore;  
(he buckled into the moat)  
she rode on.

Martha Kinney



Brad Reyes © 2004 All Rights Reserved

## Young Capitalists

*In a far recess of summer  
Monks are playing soccer.*

The sun's brown bodies tumble down and into the water the swelter of turquoise cool wet wealthy thrashing. Down, down, under to gather the coins, to plunder under to gather the coins, to plunder the treasure, to scrape up the glinting silver, to brush away the worthless copper. Smartest and biggest and longest, we hold our breath the farthest, finning the fastest, we clean out the deep end down down where the big coins lie, surface them and pile them in our one sneaker left poolside a soggy purse in the splash. Our loot. Our cash. Winner takes all. We take tans, sun, heat, hot cement, lemonade, calm days, high dives, skinned knees, smoothed thighs, feeling better. Better than him, better than her, better than your mother's yellow sweater. We win swim meets, races, hopscotch, money-dives, b-ball, t-ball, softball, badminton, ping-pong, four square. We see fireworks, town parades, art fairs, circuses; we lie in the grass, play in the zoo, and ride the horse in market square. We see a movie, write a play, build a bicycle, bake a cake. Winner takes all. We take heat, hot cement, lemonade, calm days, high dives, skinned knees, and golden thighs, feeling better. Better than him, better than her. Better than our mother's newest sweater. She is a go-getter.

Martha Kinney

Martha Kinney's first book, *The Fall of Heartless Horse*, is forthcoming from Akashic Books. She won the Menn Prize for Fiction at the University of Chicago, as well as the Olin Poetry Award, the Elizabeth Jones Writing Scholarship, and the Pazo Mayberry Poetry Award at the University of New Hampshire. Her poetry has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. She lives in San Francisco.