

## Hope and Love

All winter  
the blue heron  
slept among the horses.  
I do not know  
the custom of herons,  
do not know  
if the solitary habit  
is their way,  
or if he listened for  
some missing one –  
not knowing even  
that was what he did –  
in the blowing  
sounds in the dark.  
I know that  
hope is the hardest  
love we carry.  
He slept  
with his long neck  
folded, like a letter  
put away.

~ Jane Hirshfield ~