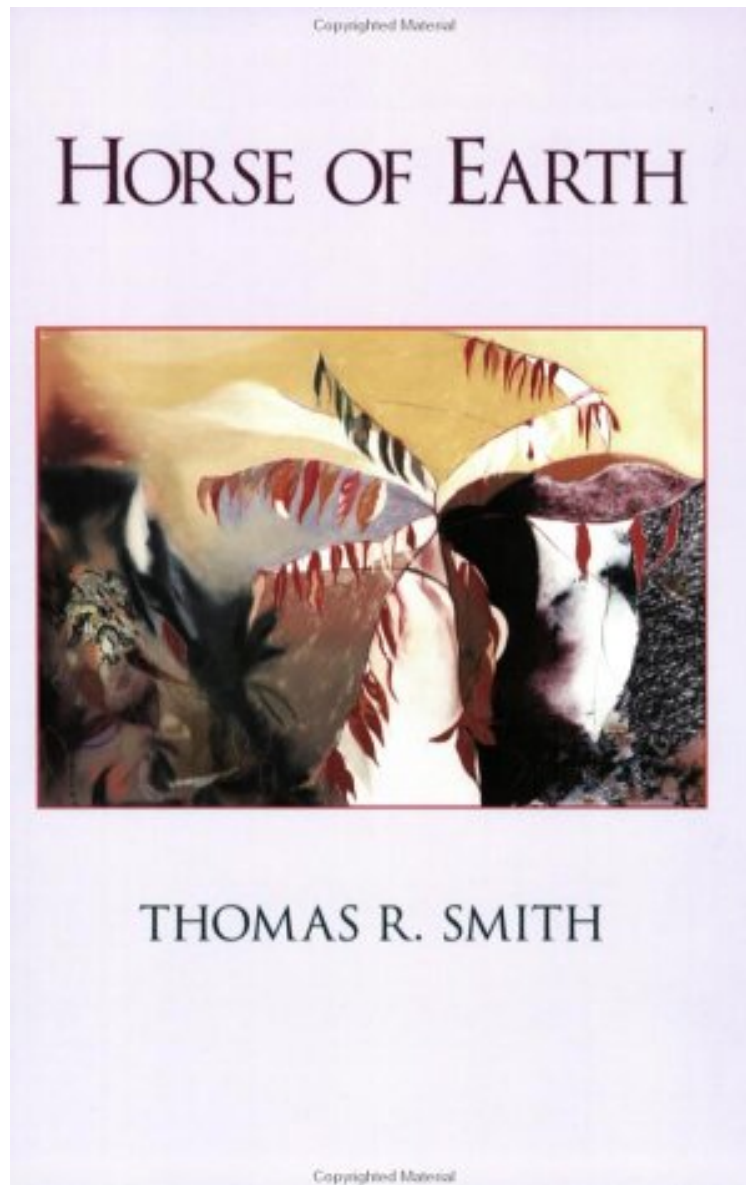


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Horse of Earth

Thomas R. Smith

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Thomas R. Smith : Horse of Earth before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Horse of Earth:

The poems of Thomas R. Smith's second collection of poetry explore passions within relationships, the grief of sons,

brothers and fathers, and the steady joy of commitment to the poet's art. "Some of the finest American love poems of recent decades."--Robert Bly

From BooklistSmith's second collection begins with a line from Rumi, "Don't be the rider who gallops all night and never sees the horse beneath him." In the rest of the volume, Smith tries to see the figurative horse that carries him and voice his appreciation for its support. In the first of the book's three sections, a set of love poems occasionally leans toward sentimentality but more often affords contemplative, warm recognition of an obviously important aspect of his life. In the second section are pieces about nature and people overcast by the pallor of loss--winter apples, graveyard roses, fallen pine needles, shed snake skins. The poems of the third section show why Robert Bly was chosen to blurb them. They are sensitive pieces about men and how they interact; in several, sons, brothers, and fathers move together in a tentative bonding, attempting to unite through common experiences. Although the sections aren't easily connectable thematically, Smith's flowing rhythms bring them together beautifully. Elizabeth Gunderson