## Hijaz

by Brandon Marlon (July 2016)

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Heat dements rival sheikhs intent on a gymkhana to determine superior breeding among stables; shaded by canopies and awnings, tastemakers rate every caracole and gambade, scrupulously evaluating velocity, physique, and temperaments from submissive to refractory.
Hopeful of vindication, trainers and groomers observe their equine charges displayed before onlookers opining with abandon; already rumormongers gossip about uneven forelegs, bruised hocks and fetlocks, discolored tufts, and jockeys inclined to bestiality.
Midday's orb simmers, seethes, then scalds.
Rancorous camps assail one another with choice epithets and invidious gestures unsuitable for polite company, and even barter handfuls of loam and marl when the authorities are occupied elsewhere.
Bumptious upstarts deride veterans throughout the afternoon, greeting the eve with blessings for honors garnered. All parties decamp in the gloaming and disperse across dunes, leaving in their wake only the startling calm of desert oases stargazing on a clear night.
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Brandon Marlon is a writer from Ottawa, Canada. He received his B.A. in Drama \& English from the University of Toronto and his M.A. in English from the University of Victoria. His poetry was awarded the Harry Hoyt Lacey Prize in Poetry (Fall 2015), and has been published in 100+ publications in Canada, U.S.A., England, Scotland, Ireland, Spain, Greece, Romania, Israel, India, Pakistan, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea, Australia, South Africa, Nigeria, Trinidad, \& Mexico. here.

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