the stands thrummed a spring pentameter, the crowd mint-juleped and almost. green ardor simmered in the long-shot. a blue fly buzzed on the track. garlands of smoke from

the fat men in suits, sweat, perfume, the musk of horses. gamblers whinnied in their seats. this is not a story about victory. we raced toward a finish line

behind the grandstand, your polka dot skirt pulled up. without watching we could see the drama unwind: gate thrust and stampede wild, a senseless bounding forward. all

eyes in orbit as the zealous filly pulled in front, nose and nose with the other racers but stumbled back. another horse won the race, and the filly broke

both ankles, had to be put down. an anxious Kentucky sun fated your face as we drove squinting toward the horizon, our mouths smudged red as if we’d eaten

each other’s hearts. that’s a terrible image to end on—so obvious and overwrought—but i like it better than what happened next: a year of nothing.