

By Anne Holub

Thrown

These ruddy hills stitched thick with horses. Rope-bridled and mudded, their eagerness to refuse a jump is something like the screeching hesitation of car wheels, dopplered and cunning, a momentary loss of equestrian control leading to distinct injury (the opening of legs too far and a sense of falling out of rhythm) indescribable except for the snapping sounds: an absence of heartbeats — a pressureless universe worse than any overly-weighted existence. In your chest like a collapsible chair: a fear that rusts through summer. It was not that warm, but there was a shivering beneath your hands. You could have heard the prelude from the hoof beats, but you never would have landed. You would have pounded your frame and towered above that which held you suddenly still or flown to safety. What becomes of wasted energy if it does not fall back into the mouth? What of the discordant sirens — their atonality more than you can press to the flowers with your lips? I wonder how your body feels in the bath, if your arms still float up from your frame. You must be tired of hearing the word *wait*, a pause like wind.