

Howard Johnson's off Rt. 95, Jacksonville, FL

We never talked about it—
how we waited at a rest stop and were never seated,
nothing was said, we were pressed into shadows,
the Florida sun glinting off my father's star.

Patiently, we waited, but were never seated,
my baby brother got bored and scampered in the tulips,
the Florida sun glinted off someone's star,
searing my twelve-year-old cheeks.

Amused, we watched my baby brother trespass the tulips,
while a crowd of families lined up quietly.
Something seared my twelve-year-old cheeks.
No one was discourteous.

The crowd of families lined up quietly
not the second or third but tenth group behind us called to sit.
Though no one was discourteous,
we were pressed into shadows.

When not the second or third but tenth group was called
nothing was said, we were pressed into shadows,
the Florida sun glinting in the shape of stars.
We never talked about it—