



EMPRESS BULLET

AN ALLEGORY

LOUISE ODES NEADERLAND

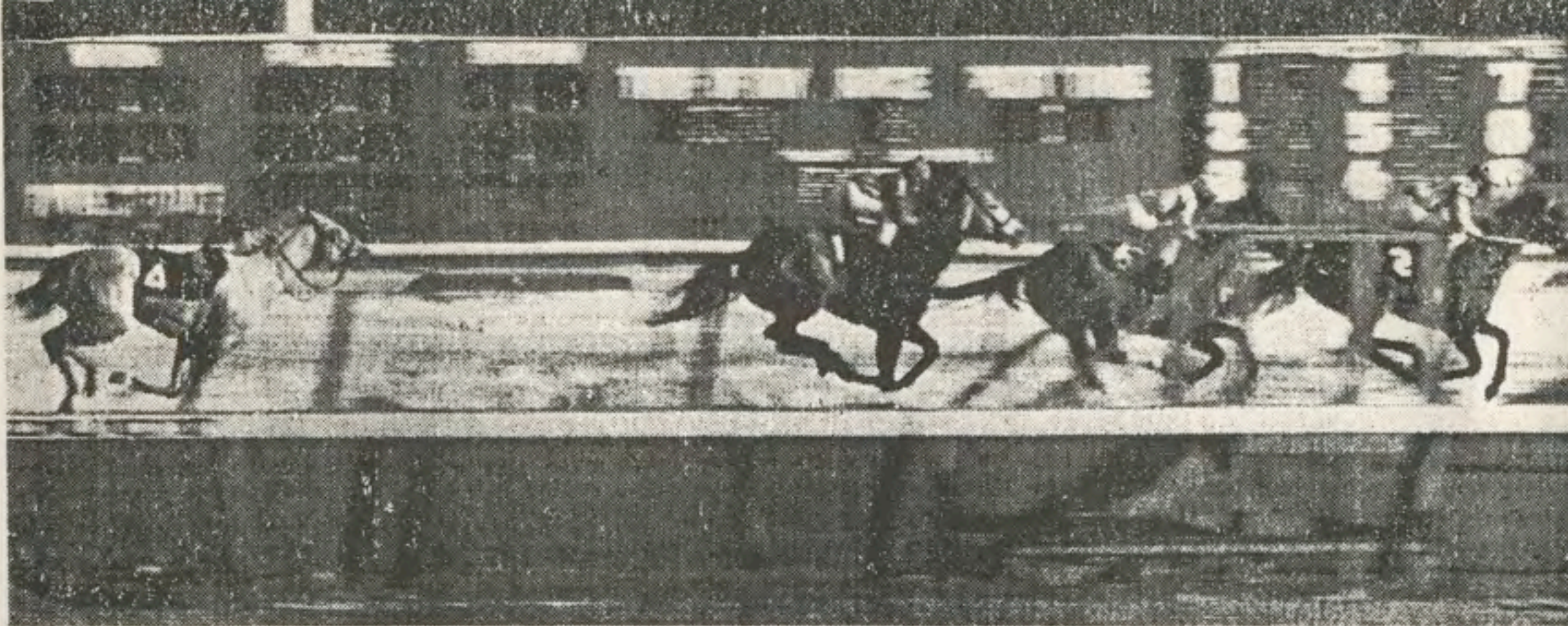
This book is based on a news story by Steve Crist and a photograph by Vic De Lucia which appeared in the New York Times.

It was created from multiple copies of a single image arranged in such a way as to create a visual narrative moving through time and space with discovered poetry emerging from re-aligned text. A Xerox 9400 was used to create the multiples.

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The New York Times/Vic De Lucia

Empress Bullet running riderless after throwing her jockey, Amado Credidio Jr. early in the feature race yesterday at Aqueduct.

Death of a Thoroughbred at Aqueduct

By STEVEN CRIST

It was long after the last bettor had gone home from Aqueduct yesterday, and all but one of the horses that had raced had been cooled out and returned to their stalls. In the fading light of a frigid afternoon, only one sign remained of the gruesome moment a few hours earlier: the white edge of a metal railing on the clubhouse turn, now spattered with frozen blood, that had caused the death of a horse.

Empress Bullet, a light-gray 5-year-old, took her last stride yesterday in the 50th race of her career. In a moment of panic, the riderless mare plunged directly into the edge of the rail, which pierced her heart and lungs.

Empress Bullet had unseated her rider, Amado Credidio Jr., shortly after the start of the featured eighth race, the \$22,000 Whitestone Purse at a mile and an eighth, which began at the top of the stretch in front of the stands and required one circuit of the inner dirt track.

As Credidio, unhurt, dusted himself off, Empress Bullet continued to run with the pack, following the instinct of a good race horse to negotiate a turn, and the instinct of all horses to run in the company of other horses.

Without the weight of a rider, she moved fluidly to the front, looking like a farm horse romping in a paddock. She ran even with Storm Petrel, the early leader and eventual winner. Storm Petrel's rider, Gregg McCarron, expertly reached to his outside and tapped Empress Bullet's mane to steady her rounding the first turn.

Merely touching the gray mare at arm's length told her to maintain her position on the track, and she veered neither inside nor outside, as if she had a pilot.

She raced down the backstretch with Storm Petrel, who was in the process of opening five lengths on the field. McCarron again reached out coming round the stretch turn, and she came to the head of the stretch even with the leader. Then, as if propelled by the

knowledge that the shortest route home is on the inside, she cut to the rail and pulled away.

Empress Bullet crossed the finish line first. The railbirds were smiling in the frigid weather, charmed by the sight of the riderless — and thus disqualified — mare's "winning" the race. In seconds, the amusement turned to gasps.

Without a rider to know that the race was over and pull her up, Empress Bullet continued running at full speed, digging in and trying to win a race that was over. One of the outriders, whom track officials were unable to identify, gave chase, trying to do his job of reining in a loose horse. Empress Bullet, without any guidance, took the clubhouse turn perfectly, as the outrider began to move inside of her.

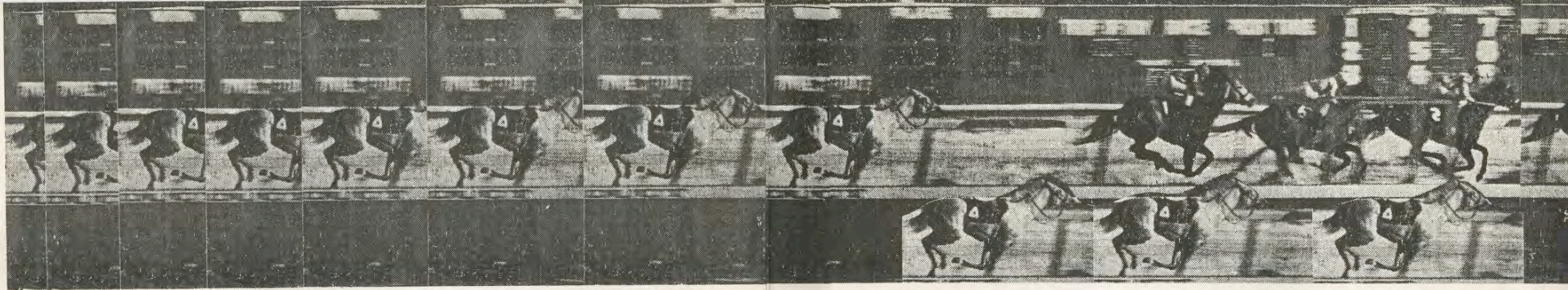
He forced her toward the outer rail, hoping she would pull up. But the mare kept running at full tilt, using the outside rail as her guide.

Midway round the turn, there is a gap in the railing where horses enter

the track in some races that start from a chute leading onto the backstretch. Empress Bullet appeared to panic and ran directly into the protruding edge of the rail where it resumes after the gap.

She impaled herself on the metal, flipping over in a horrifying tangle of pierced flesh and flailing hoofs. The horse ambulance quickly appeared, blocking any view. The official patrol cameras had stopped following her, focusing instead on the other horses as they pulled up. Those with binoculars could see the mare led up a ramp into the ambulance, her right foreleg virtually separated from the rest of her body.

She was humanely destroyed, almost immediately, by injection. There was no comment about the accident from track officials or the outriders, all of whom had left Aqueduct after the final race.



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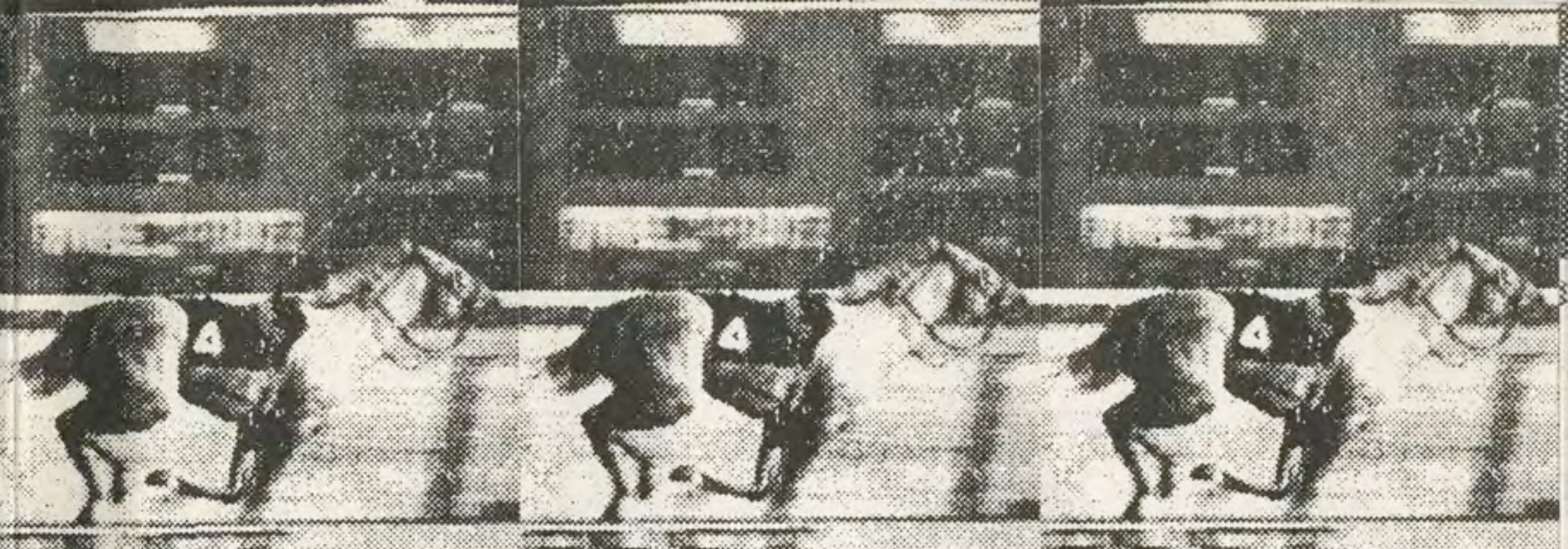
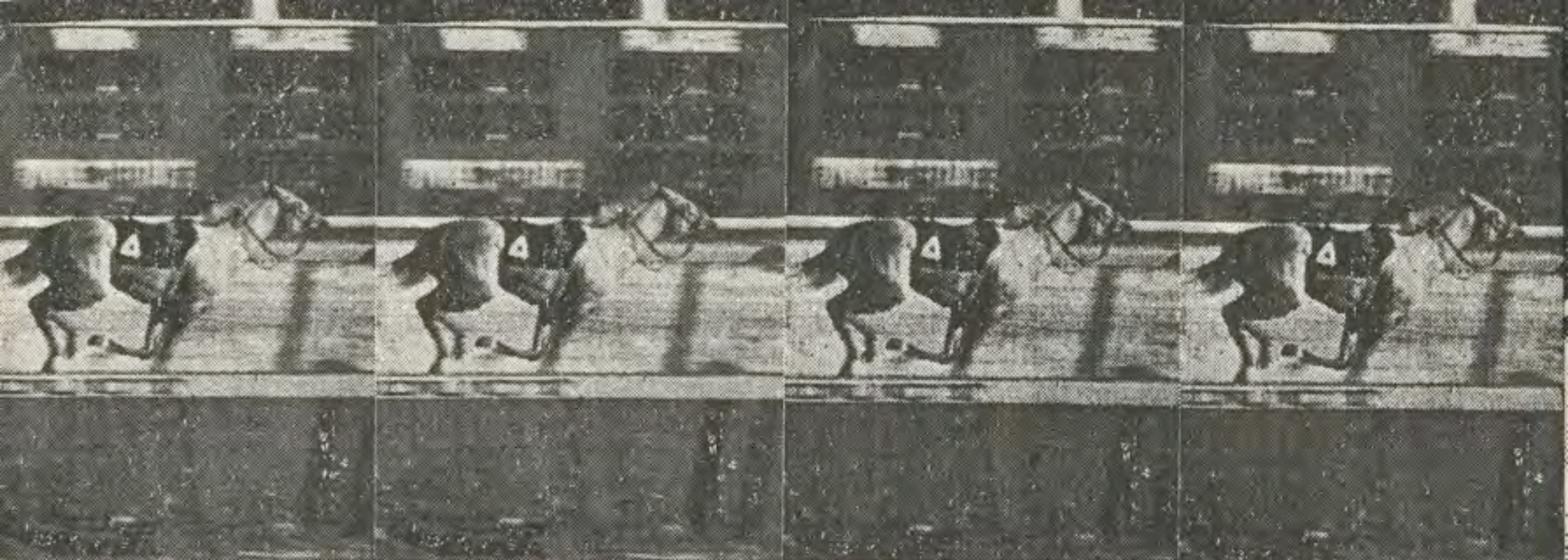
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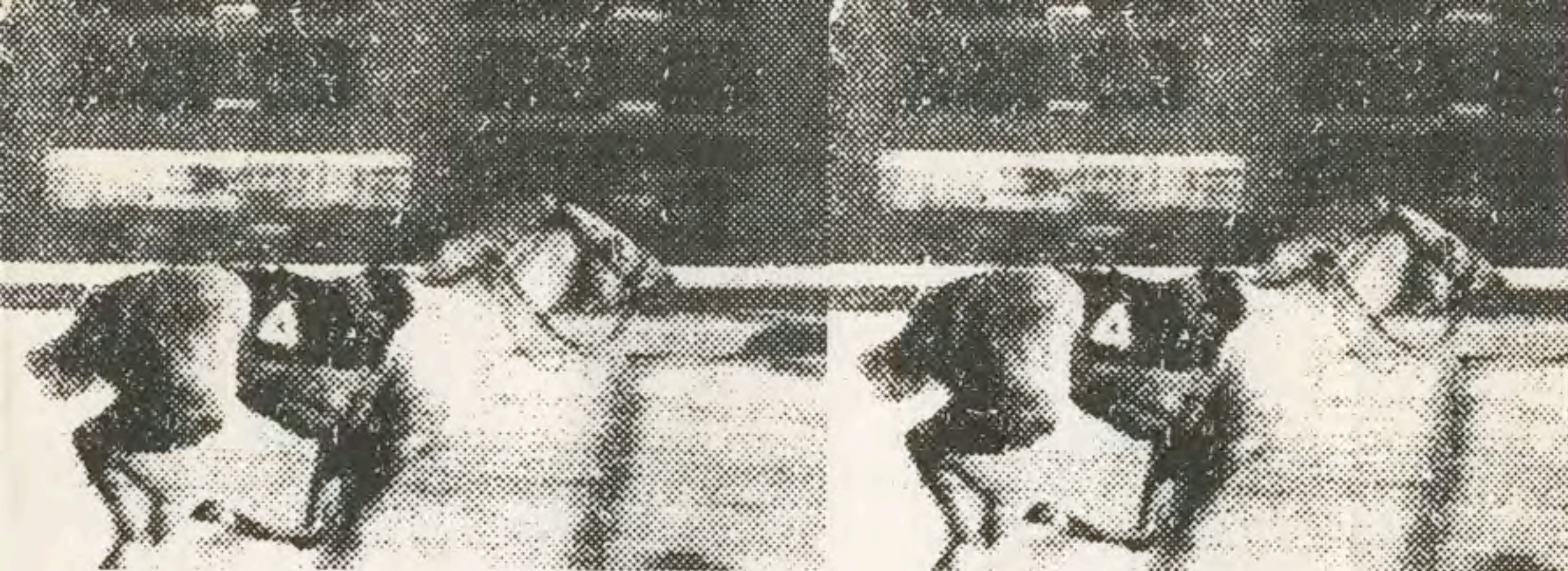
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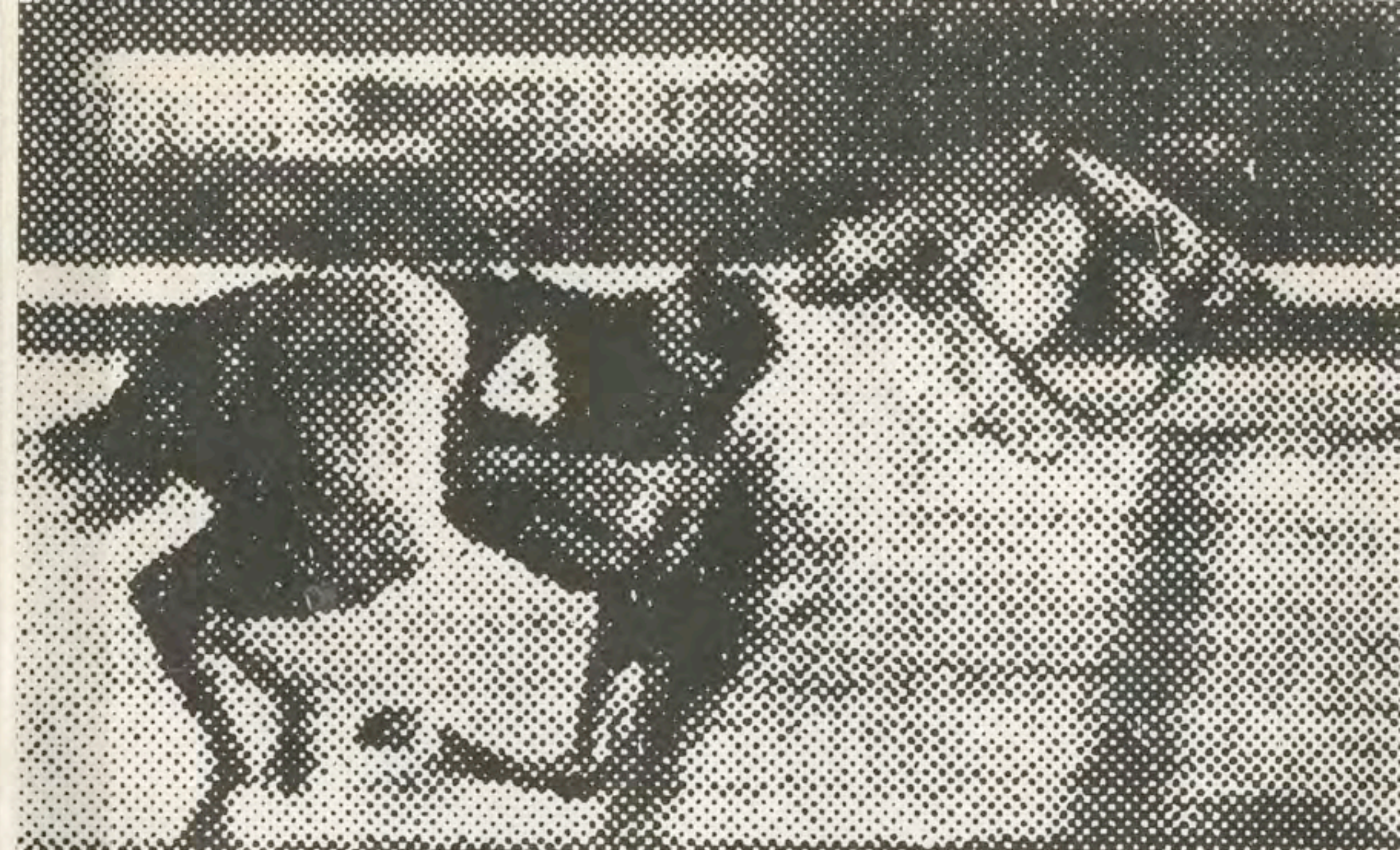
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WITHOUT A RIDER TO KNOW THAT THE RACE WAS OVER AND PULL HER UP, EMPRESS BULLET CONTINUED RUNNING AT FULL SPEED, TRYING TO WIN A RACE THAT WAS OVER.

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