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From Yale to Berlin and Paris, a second false start at Yale, a year in London, graduate school in Texas and New York, six years in Virginia, and the last nine years in Amsterdam like a perpetual summer holiday complete with rain and necessary repairs. I’m paid to teach what I would read for free: Conrad and Henry James, Faulkner and Ford Madox Ford, still chasing questions set adrift in seminars with Kuehn and Thorburn a quarter century ago. Two bright, multilingual daughters and a wife who’s a better man than I am. The moral of the story? This much at least: a) things happen by chance; and b) chance is never wholly accidental.