

Lamp

the wretched noise of prized possessions falling
groundward sounds of nothing--all vacuum
and silence, tension--moments prior to
impact are slowed like flies who watch the hands

of humans swat at them and dodge, agile
with taunting buzz--the lamp is breaking now
the lamp your grandpa made before he died
his carved initials split in two, the N

and S can spell his name no longer. Your
attachment can't be read by lamplight. Your
soft hands can't retread the grooves imprinted
by calluses that softened underground.

You thought you swept it all away--the shard
you found the next year sliced your hand open.

This
Is a Love Poem

ev'ry sentence:

syn.co

pation like

jazz

music in 12/8 10/8--

there's rhythm to it

but no-

one could ever count it

except the

(following that

white baton)

band

you

moving

like-chalk-on-

chalk-boards--

smooth

and ol'-fashion; you

tap-slide grin your way

into me--

did you ever

dream?--

of being a mountaineer?--

If there was a gun

looming under your nose

would you: stick out your tongue and taste

the long

chrome

barrel

or close your eyes?

This
Is Not a Love Poem

i think i want to

shut my eyes
stub my pinky toe on the door frame

close my hand in the car door
touch the edge of a pan coming out of the oven

break my leg falling from the second floor balcony
lose a tooth playing basketball at the park

get hit by a squealing truck in a crosswalk
stabbed in the parking lot leaving work at 2am

have my parents murdered and delivered
promptly somewhere new

i think i want to

(go far away)

get sunburnt in Tahiti
scrape my knee on a mountainside

back slowly away from a rattlesnake
have a minor heart attack while skydiving

Instead--i get to
watch the first few strands

of hair fall out--
i set them on the nightstand

glen brought from home
to 'make me feel
at home' but find them
calling to me,--i

think I want to

twist them

into the symbol for infinity

Regina

You turned your pockets
out at gunpoint--the man was
handsome, all square jaw and
stubble, wearing a leather jacket he was
cool you had thought
when you saw him grin at you
in the casino.
--you played in the acres of your grandparents' farm
in your youth, they were green in the spring
and tan in the summer,
and rode horses
 and never tied your hair up
 it was your mane
floating behind you in the wind long as your shadow--
if not for the
 circumstance
 you would be the one jumping
him--you had already imagined popping
the buttons
off his shirt
and running
your tongue
down the hair
on his chest,
--you remember brushing Ingrid with
one hand and
 not wearing a shirt
 and being so proud of the tan lines from your first bra--
teasing his nipple with
one hand and
 undoing the button on his jeans
with the other--
you rode for hours, hugging Ingrid to your chest and
thinking you will never stretch further than the expanse
of the flexible blue cream California sky--
but the gun came out and
his face

had turned
eyes blackening you
stopped

betrayal was always ready waiting patiently
as your

shadow

but you

never saw it trailing

golden behind you

Firebreather

It probably doesn't matter whether or not I include all the insignificant details. I'm only writing this as catharsis, not because he had any actual friends or living relatives. Well, who knows, really, I never learned a lick about his family. He kept me in the dark on everything: being from Florida, living homeless for six years, keeping a gun under his side of the mattress, having two children he abandoned in 1988. In life he was clean, handsome, suave--now just an urn eternally smirking from my mantle. Grief is imagining his stubble grazing my cheek again; rage is--

We lived free, burning ugly holes in our pockets but just buying new pants; price tags were so far from reality but I still dreamt of them. My womb and his business grew hot with the spark he sweetly mercilessly lit. Grief is a one-two punch, you find out that your old life is dead, and then you find out that it never lived at all. The funeral director told me my husband was a scammer, a Ponzi-scheme fanatic who hadn't even given me his real name, my knees buckled. If you loved Sean as Sean or any other man he pretended to be, may your pain be tenfold that of any other grief, may you hurt for lifetimes--He caused nothing but pain in this world and His legacy shall remain so. His child will never grow to be anything he should be, malnourished and crying each night. I cannot believe

that a man so charming that I took one look and slipped an imaginary ring on my finger-- I'm going to season your ashes with salt and eat them myself, savoring every black bite and washing it down with a tall glass of water--He always called me that when He wanted something, "my tall glass of water," like I would baptise you and make you new. The fire ate you and one glass of water cannot douse the flame.