

## Little Mexican Boy

I'm ready to roar now, Mr. Bukowski...

I'm ready for it to come out.

Oh, little Mexican boy...what can I say? You came to us with much wailing, and that is how you left. Squad brought you in, leaving a trail of desperate sirens in their wake that dissipated into the pleasant summer evening.

Boy, oh boy, kid;

you sure fucked up THAT birthday party, didn't you?

The medic's measured voice barely betrayed the cake and ice cream that everyone knew was melting away, uneaten: "This is a three-year-old male found unresponsive in a swimming pool...."

How long did we work you, little Mexican boy?

How long did we fumble and thump your heart and try to play it cool?

I can't remember, can you?

I can't remember, but I'll bet it MUST have been at least 90 minutes, because my FitBit counted the chest compressions as steps, well over 5,000 extra, and my arms were sore and stiff the next day.

Not as stiff as you, though, corpus mortis, and all that...

How cruelly you flirted with us, fluttered those youthful ventricles. And you must have laughed as we sputtered, looking down at us; watching us try to decode whatever metered foot your disintegrating circuitry was using to signal us to stop.

And so in a jealous rage we shattered your chest; I myself popped at least one of your ribs, spurred on by your mother's throated sobs that sounded dangerously like laughter in our sweat-filled ears, her terrible aria mingled into polyphony behind an orchestra of shrill monitors and the charging defibrillator.

The department filled somehow, partygoers arriving without me even noticing. And soon wails reverberated,

walls rebounding grief-sounds from all sides,  
focused, parabolic, onto the 3' X 7' trauma table that had become  
the drain we had chosen for you to circle...

...

...you see, the drain in the swimming pool would never accommodate your skinny, wet frame.

We all took turns, cycling in and out of the code.  
Lactic acid accumulated in our muscles and made our arms cry for you. That  
was our intermission, the only cesura you allowed us.

Our emergency room got PACKED, little Mexican boy, by your crying relatives,  
brown and beautiful, weeping with desperate intensity intended  
to bring you back. Their cries and screams made me wonder – just for a second or two –  
if perhaps I hadn't somehow died without noticing it, some ultra-real level of hell, one that Dante  
failed to mention, where grandmothers with thick, gnarled knuckles  
fingered thick, knurled rosary beads, their  
lips wordlessly murmuring to a rhythm of their own.

"Lotta people in there," said Marcie the Tech,  
glancing at our "quiet room."  
Jamie the nurse walked by and said, under her breath:  
"Jesus, how many grandmothers does this kid have?"  
and we all laughed, but not because it was funny.

Dr. Dasuan was making her magic over you, and  
even though we all hated her (she was *such* a bitch to everyone, all the time),  
little Mexican boy, I felt sorry for her.  
Her hands were shaking, and it got worse each time  
we would get you back and lose you again, and she was the one who finally  
finally finally finally oh God FINALLY told your mother it was time to stop.

I was the last one pounding on you, beating you up;  
and when at last I came to my senses and stepped back,  
looked down at your birthday face:  
No funny hat, no ketchup-stained t-shirt, naked as the day you were born,  
only with far more cords attached...  
I couldn't help but wonder why you even bothered being born.