

The Fourth Break Up.

Fries and yellow beer like sunshine.

A man met his old lover in his new town.

Then the sun set

closing a door

on daylight.

At night, bright stars twinkled in layers of light.

And it was mostly dark.

He told her, "*I am leading you on*".

She went adrift, her eyes flooded with *forget it*.

She was, as the buzzing summer cicadas, desperate for a mate.

Man and woman face to face on the T of a dock

the ground far below the dark water

They could feel the gentle bounce of fluidity.

The stars blurred through streams of salt water

an ocean swelled inside her.

She stayed another day.

He took her to hike

In hills of scrub oaks.

told her the scratches were memories.

They found falls of water in the hot sun
and sat eating apples side by side.

Back in town he strutted, pride,
full of youth, and arrogance.

The green square swelled with art and music
They talked to strangers and held each other close while dancing.
They traded in tickets at a beer fest for a revolving door of hops,
a Russian roulette of fading away.

In morning she drove south
a goose finding warmth in a dry land.
And he explored falling in love with someone new.

Three years later they drifted together again.
The buzz of the cicadas having left her and the pride faded off him.
Now just a man and a woman who, at one time, were friends.
They sat by a cactus, fat, and phallic and she dove into his eyes
a swimmer filled with butterflies.
He told her he had matured,
that he knew how to love
and hugged her
not letting go.

Hurt

My body is skin and bones
And blood and bacteria
My body is hypoglycemia, sensuality, and ginger hair.
My body is green eyes and flippy heart.
And to be injured is

Immediate.

No concerns of when a friend will return my muffin tin.
Or that one sentence you said about my freckles.
There is instead a call to action
a need to get help
to find alternative ways to get things done
To be injured is to boil down to impermanent
To be flooded with grateful for those that hold me up.

To be ill is to be vulnerable
my beast self
To dream of doing simple tasks,
Sweep the floor,
Shop in the market
Hold a hand.

Hope for awake is more powerful than hope for whole
My body is not expected to remain 22.
It is not expected to remain at all.
It is instead expected to give me a home
to experience alive in.

Swing Set

Lilac Wine written by James H. Shelton

*I lost myself on a cool damp night
I gave myself in that misty light
Was hypnotized by a strange delight
Under a lilac tree*

When I was four, my sister was seven.
She went to school.
I stayed home.
I spent time with the garden,
my mother, in the house:
sewing, canning, cleaning.
When my sister came home
we would run head long
to the swing set.
Next to it
was a big beautiful lilac bush.
The air was fragrant with blossoms.
Memory has it in bloom
All year.

*I made wine from the lilac tree
Put my heart in its recipe
It makes me see what I want to see
And be what I want to be*

We would imagine dragonflies
were dragons.
Screaming, "A dragon! A dragon!"
"Swing high"
"Don't fall in the lava".
"Don't let the unsteady earth trick you".

*When I think more than I want to think
I do things I never should do
I drink much more than I ought to drink
Because it brings me back you*

My sister loved Bud light,
A light to her heavy heart.
Sometimes when I have on stone washed jeans
And walk with certain swagger
I am her baby "seester"
I am the untold story of our old age.

Lilac wine is sweet and heady, like my love
Lilac wine, I feel unsteady, like my love
Listen to me, I cannot see clearly
Isn't that she, coming to me nearly here?

Today is The Day of the Dead. Out of my little black boom box
Nina Simone sang, *Lilac Wine*
I swung from sorrow to nostalgia.
Love is so broad.
Instant love,
romantic love,
deep love built by time
timeless love of family.

Lilac wine is sweet and heady where's my love?
Lilac wine, I feel unsteady, where's my love?
Listen to me, why is everything so hazy?
Isn't that she, or am I just going crazy, dear?
Lilac wine, I feel unready for my love
Feel unready for my love

I listen to Lilac Wine and swing,
and smell the fragrant flowers
that are always in bloom.
If only in my mind.

Rocks, time holding still.

My eyes wide as any scientist fresh on a discovery.

No thoughts of safety glasses

Small limbs hunched over in the driveway by an oil stain.

A heavy rock in my tiny hands.

I bring the large rock down on a smaller rock

Over and over.

Then

I watch each rock break in half

This is done to see what they look like inside.

Their colors changed,

they sparkled inside,

dusty grey now surprising

specs of red or black

Sparkles

Like fire

Think for a moment about ignis,

it means fire.

Igneous rocks.

What would an igneous rock say about its life as lava.

What does it think about heat?

Is it better being still?

Having moss grow in your pockets?

If I was a rock I would definitely be sedimentary.

I mean, there have been moments, I may have been metamorphic
But I am not that changed.

I have always been gathering small bits of things.

A new word that vibrates

A song that tickles

Seeing something sparkle inside.