

Sixfold Poetry Submission: Tequila Shots, Seatbelts and Others

1. Tequila Shots on a Thursday are a Bad Idea

Tequila shots left me breathless,
Liaisons tumbling in a ghost
Bottle; how was I left with something
Less, swallowing empty air?
Sturdy, steady, steeling to grasp
At the crease in the quilt, pursing
My lips but you can't wake me,
I sleep like the dead. The morning left
A palate, stains oozing without
Purpose, undecided by sunrise;
I didn't recognize, or maybe
Reckon with, a rainbow bunted
With garbage bins, and now
I'm wiping away chocolate ice
Cream because haze burdens
The hungover. Memories left me
A gift, guitar-shaped, but it was
Your name I lolled in the fortress
Of drink, the castle of drunk,
Homespun lust. Pretzels left
Salt stinging on my lips, and I chewed
Them up and spit them into a palm,
Leaves cracked in spring's yawn.
I saw a cactus amongst the sickly
Bloom of zinnias because Zephyr

Chucked a cloud in the name
Of versatility. Bruised,
Unrelenting in the memory search
For how I cut the bridge
Of my nose; burning sage
Left me with less sage. Loose,
Natural, blind because I fell
Asleep on the toilet and squeezed
My nail into my wrist. I hated
Spelling your name without
Remorse, huffing when I realized
That the alcohol left me with nothing
But bold patterns and storms
Swirling in the shape
Of your fingerprint.

2. Citrus

Drop

Acid the ball the beat

An album barreling

Like the screech

Of hooves around

The barrel itself

Damn

That animal can sprint

Lung dust

Citrus cunt

The lemons

Are stunning nipples across

California did you taste

Them when you bit

My sour neck

Stolen rein chains

Chorus in adobe brick

Scriptures yellowing

Orange blossom

Bushes

Strands in gold is the only

Way to the top through

The bottom and upwards

Flamingos

Startled by the echo of am I

Angry that I'm single

Or angry that I'm taken

Shaking the patchouli

Soaked lips

Membrane pattering

Rinds in tact because the fresh

Bloom cuts corners

And I portray

A tang

3. Flank

Steak, rustic,
the fleshy side
I squeezed, spurred
on by a virgin,
stabilized by a verb.
Flank me, copper,
my hips pungent
with meat juice,
isn't that pleasant—
but I did tend cattle
in my youth, so shut
up about it. Cleaved,
Grass-fed, and crystal
glasses cupping numbness—
greyhound, screwdriver
sea-breeze, cosmopolitan.
Do you know these
as I do? (intimately?)
Grapefruit cheeks, orange
elbows, cranberry pupils and tits
up in a bar, because I wish
my ribs showed.
The shape
of the blank slate,
freckled smile
sharp in the mirror,
but a craving
to filet
the fat away
overpowers the stench
of positivity (bleached
sand and roasted
yellow starch);
Gluttonous,
bovine reflection, you're nasty,
drunk like the dog, the tool,
the ocean mist—
but I can't wear a bikini
because dimpled skin
stains more than
ribeye secretions.

4. The Darkness Question

If it is dark and there is no one
Around to experience it—

To see, or not see, it, to taste
It (stale coffee and sea urchin),

To hear it because it is loud,
Crickets garnering a knack

For harmony, a hum of the earth
Unheard in the sun, to feel it

(Empty)—

Is it really dark?
A coin toss, the light switch

Whispered, suggesting
That light and shadow

Are heads and tails, opposite:
Blond strands sand-stained, a meadow

Oozing with an orchestra of
Fluorescent blades, and the intensity

Of a blistering sunburn,
Mottled, but you are levitating;

Or

Bruises, pores, holes, a grave—
Midnight mulch, a brunette

Put to death, a downturn
Of a broken street lamp licking

The dusk; I'm sorry.
Apologies for the stooping,

Shovels and rope, no noose,

Just a bloom that I cannot accept.

So don't answer me because—
Because light and shadow

Are,
Indeed,

The same.
This decision was mutual,

Voted on by a hollow flute,
An inkless pen, the shell

Of an avocado and the pearly
Opal of a sunset-scented muscle,

Inhaling the symbiotic
Fortune of the quality

With which the air—glow,
gloom, and all— vibrates.

5. Seatbelt

Call me a sophist, manipulation melting like
 dust on my tongue,
 but last night, in my dream, you came up from behind,
 slid your hands around me
 and locked your fingers together, squeezed
 my stomach, fitting against
 the arch of my back, clicked in like a seat
 belt, and whispered
 something I wracked my brain to remember.
 Suture me, I'm splitting
 apart— but I also seemed to float off of the ground
 after you breathed against
 the hollow of my spine, spoke in the space between
 the back of my ear
 and the alertness of my neck. You unclicked.
 What is a seat belt
 if not a stitch, clasping together skin against
 all steam-laden forces?
 What is a whisper if not a shout fucked
 into submission, forced
 into hoarse evaporation? Goddamnit, what did you
 tell me, was it something
 about seals? The surface of Jupiter? The temperature
 of turned-on blood matching
 that of a star when it chills? When I woke, head in profile,
 stomach against a chaste
 mattress, I exhaled a memory and blew it against
 the slice of dawn;
 I'm sorry for the dimples I caused in your cheeks,
 But won't apologize
 For wasting this dream story on the soft cartilage and veins
 Of your deaf, married ears.