

## Grief

*Mark Brown*

1.  
is a volatile fuel  
that blazes you far  
into the white desert  
like some 50s speed test pilot  
with goggles and a test track of chaos.  
It burns fast,  
leaves you stranded,  
and then reignites  
just when you think  
you're about to get off.

2.  
A ragged piece of bone  
dragged over a bowl's lip.

An oil drum with just enough  
left to burn.

A leg that breaks nightly.

A basement drain always welling.

A thousand walls stripped  
bare and yellow.

My bones and teeth  
turned to chalk.

Every word a wasp  
digging under my skin.

3.  
If your voice carried any more venom,  
this house would fill with corpses.

4.  
You wear an anger coat  
made of hot coals and raw skin.  
In your pockets, you carry sea anemones,  
a bottle of gall, rusted chain, and at least two fingers.  
Your shoes are made of lava rock.  
Your manicure is by De Sade.  
You tie your hair with old, dry veins  
and powder your face with crushed bone,  
and across your white shoulders, a tattoo reads,  
*There is sunshine in my soul today.*