

ORIGINAL OULIPIAN FORM IDEA

The Pretentious Bohemian Meal Thief Poem

1) The author sits down for a meal in a restaurant or cafeteria (most preferably as obscure/pretentious a place as possible). This table must have at least five people seated around it prior to the author's arrival. The author asks "Hey, can I sit here?," and tries best as possible to say nothing more for the duration of his or her meal other than blunt, direct answers to questions asked directly to him or her (i.e., "What's your name?" / "Greg").

2) The author listens to / observes the table for the following items of information, which are later used as variables for the construction of the poem:

(A) The name of the first person to be addressed directly by another inhabitant of the table

EX: (Kwame)

(B) The amount of time (in minutes) between the time the author sits down and the time the first person to leave the table does so

EX: (5)

(C) The name of every author, artist, film, song or book mentioned by the table's inhabitants

EX: ("Run the World", Mean Girls, Halloween)

(D) The food group of the main course of the loudest person at the table

EX: (poultry)

(E) The names of any current or former romantic interest mentioned by the table's inhabitants

EX: (Lee, Kevin, French Professor, Shontae)

(F) The hair color of the person sitting two seats away from you counter-clockwise

EX: (brown)

(G) The name of the most difficult class or chore mentioned by the person seated on your left

EX: (working behind that desk)

3) The poem has (B) stanzas. The first stanza follows an "ABAABB" rhyme scheme for as long as it extends, but cannot extend longer than six lines. The second stanza is a rhyming couplet. The subsequent stanzas alternate in that pattern.

The third stanza should have the letters found within (A) used three times each and

contain an reference to the first value of (C).

One stanza should have half the amount of syllables found within the first stanza, and contains allusions to both (F) and (D)

One stanza should have double the amount of syllables found in the first stanza, should contain a self-congratulatory reference to (G), and the last word should rhyme with a value of (E)

Every stanza following the third stanza must reference a new value of (C) or (E). If the author runs out of new values to reference, they make an educated guess at to what other possible values would have been mentioned had the table congregated longer.

EX:

my workweek makes it hard to take
a breath; i don't have time to sleep.
i dare myself to stay awake...
(my world is running without brakes)

my work, untouched, is turning brown
(i have the foulest grades in town?)

my days are all blown at my desk, my dreams all foam with stale regrets
my eyelid's gunk becomes grotesque... (i start to shit bad poetry).
and yesterday? well, i forget...
(so why is it i'm not upset?)
i'm drowning in a verbal sea
(i meant that metaphorically...)

this goddamn poem (best left unseen)
is gaudier than halloween

from my own form, this poem sprouts...
(professors need it done today...)
although this poem makes me pout...
i think i'll have to send this out.
i'm sorry i've not much to say
(who wants to hear it, anyway?)

OULIPIAN FORM: BEAUTIFUL OUTLAW

mr. next

he's khaki-clad and fully buried in the bar light, gently buzzed and valiantly sequestered betwixt a personal squad of jubilant drunkettes.

the man is alien; swaying effeminate hips with slick, unjagged fluidity, quietly misplaced in this mass of boozy, buxom cleavage.

i circle him. these vivacious, ditzy girls (with sexy dresses) are shackled to us (the proud queer quota gays) as my jealous eyes zoom back (fixated)

towards his foxy, virtuous form. it's dumb to ask khaki-boy to grind in this kind of zoo (could turn into a jail), but i quip

away the fear and just press closer. mr. clock and mr. logic can't quash my zeal as i eek out the hardest words since leaving mr. last.... but he says

he has a boy back home (all joy is zapped). apologies ensue; mr. khakis is a lovely hoax. "well," i say, (as i cry on my burqa) "i'll forge onwards for"...