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## Tequila

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come and kiss me, once, quickly. The proper mousing cat  
would purr and purr and purr, buried  
now out back with the plastic  
plank-footed soldiers. The youngest child  
dug a tiger trap, excavated lost languages,  
spoke in new tongues. Funeral black, please,  
for the soldiers and cat, he said.

Here is the view to the west  
from the garden chair now:  
the neighbour with an oddly curved  
spine from the decade spent  
with children perched on her hips, though also  
climbing mountains at odd angles,  
commas for eyebrows. Bent, now

over her full  
heads of lettuce and climbing  
sweet peas and he's imagining her well-kept

lawn. He knows her for her walk, and brown-  
spotted skin under  
sunglasses, straw hat, shorts the colour  
of tuberose plants that nestle against  
the house. In the lawn chair, he contemplates

The Proposed Demolition of Nineteen Churches  
in London. His three languages shored-up  
in coves for later recovery. Yes, this beard  
must surely start to grow again  
what with all the sun. Lester leaps in

## MICHAEL LEE JOHNSON

### Tequila

Single life is—tequila with lime,  
shots of travelers, jacks, diamonds, and then spades,  
holding back aces—  
mocking jokers  
paraplegic aged tumblers of the night trip.  
Poltergeist define as another frame,  
a dancer in the corner shadows.  
Single lady don't eat the worm.  
beneath the belt, bashful, very loud, yet unspoken.  
Your man lacks verb, a traitor to your skin.