

ask me anything

at bars
bartenders ask
what's the name on your card
and i say
grantham
and they look confused
so i say
joseph
and they look confused
so i say
joseph grantham
and they bring me back
my card
and to life
and i give them a tip

at panera bread
they ask
chips apple or baguette
and i say *apple*
but i always throw the apple
away
or at someone

at grocery stores
they ask
did you find everything all right
and i say
everything wasn't all right
but yes
i found everything

love poem

i love pickles
and you
you love pickles
and not me

things she told me on the phone

she told me
when i think
of you
i think
of the color
maroon
i thought
but i am
blue
a dark blue

she told me
you've got
a kansas city accent
but only when you talk
on the phone
i thought
maybe my father
is to blame
but i lived there
for two years
when i was ages
one and two
maybe being born there
forever gave me
a kansas city accent

she told me
you need to stop
calling me
or maybe i just heard that
in her voice

dad poem

i have a father
he is my dad
he grew up
in kansas city

he was born
on the same street
as charlie parker
but it was a long street

he had a friend
called tuna
tuna shot hoops
and always played quarterback
in the pick-up games
tuna was a success
with the ladies
when i met tuna
he was an older tuna
but he was still shooting hoops

the sound of my father's voice
is midwestern
and did you know that he has a small notebook
in which he records
the amount of dollars
and cents
he spends
on a tank of gas
each time

he fills
his car
he has filled
multiple notebooks
with this information
do you have a father
who does this too?

one more thing

when i am trying
to sound personable
i put on
the voice
of my father
and it always works

poem for derick

derick stand next to me
the color of your shirt
brings out something special
in my eyes
but also derick
there's something
you must know
you have one of the worst names
a person could have

good body

the kid in our neighborhood
with the good body
he went missing

he had a body that could breathe
and a body that could run and do push-ups
but we always knew he'd go missing

and when they found him
he was all sorts of beaten up and bloody
but he was wearing his favorite shirt
and we said

look at that

would you look at that

that's a great t shirt

no i didn't

i got a job
one summer
working for
famous amos cookies
no i didn't

slow poem

people are so slow
in new york city
so you have to
kill them
and climb over
their dead bodies
to get
where you're going
but you better hope
no one thinks
you're slow
today i was walking
behind a man
who sneezed
with every step
and then he hocked
and spit
into the dirt
next to a tree
and when i passed
by the glob
it shined in the sun
like a diamond
or a piece
of broken glass
and i wanted
to pick it up