

Coyotes

By Matthew DeMotts

Off the yawning desert highway stands
A drive-by wedding in some neon chapel,
East of midnight, deep into the stupor hours.

There's a Winnebago out front, doors ajar,
Wheels sanded and dusty, the moonlight glinting
Dimly off her ochre-rusty fender mirrors.

Two in the chapel stumble a little, mutter some,
Stutter, holler, giggle through hasty vows
Scribbled on greasy glove box napkin backs.

Outside, lizards dance under the cold cathode
Indigo and absinthe lights, buzzing relics of a VHS era,
Singing over ancient rock formations as one.

They sing in honeyed hiss-click tones
About the coyote who couldn't stop running,
Chasing after its mate, relentless and insatiable.

The coyote had bolted through the desert,
And as it ran faster and faster began to tear apart,
Layer after layer being flayed by bitter wind.

Fur and flesh and sinew shed away like snakeskin
Into russet desert sand as the skeleton
Continued to run, driven by dogged desire.

By the time he caught her, many years later,
The only thing that remained of him was marrow;
Nothing more than hopeless marrow.

In the chapel is the sudden gasp of a cork
Being pulled from bottom-shelf champagne
And a soprano whoop from the bride.

The dawn is erasing the nighttime now,
And the moon and lizards go back to hiding,
Staggering back to their stomping grounds.

The neon newlyweds ride off into the sunrise
In their beat-up honeymoon home of a car.
Unsure of what to say next, or why, they just howl.