Ode to the Peanut

Cheers, you packets of honey roasted

with Smirnoff Minis offering oral

fixes to smokers of yore

on long overseas flights.

A toast to our politicians united

citizens and super

PACs removed

from the peanut farm.

Prost to our nights at Monk's Pub

under the ‘L’ in the Loop

casting our shells with our philosophies

to the floor in swinish intoxication.

When did you become public enemy #1?

Nut free zones plastered

down the halls of elementary schools,

pledging more permanence

than any no gun zone

soon to be legislated away.

What level of terror alert

if I forget and slip

a PB & J into my daughter's

Hello Kitty lunchbox?

Where the studies to determine

if it's the legume's first world mix

with methylphenidate and SSRIs

that produces a lethal cocktail?

Oh, George Washington Carver,

in your race to succeed,

you forgot to add a sacred amendment,

a powerful lobby to demand subsidies,

some sweet deal requiring peanut oil

in every product on the shelves.

Poor Mr. Peanut,

our one percenter,

unmonocled,

tapped out and fallen

from grace.

Iceland

Poetry saved Egil's life

twice.

The night before his execution

was spent composing a poem

so life affirming,

King Eirik felt justice lay only

in the sparing of such a vessel.

Then again upon the death

of his son,

Egil entombed himself

in his anguish,

surfacing finally with a prayer

of thanks to the gods

for the least of abilities

to turn raw suffering to rhyme.

Misshapen Egil,

hunchbacked outcast,

cold as ice

with his Viking blade,

yet the verse

was the fire,

the volatile heart,

the muse that scalds

for skáld is Icelandic for poet

in this land of fire and ice

where fields smoke and bubble

like Shakespeare's cauldrons,

where stones ignite, spew,

congeal to truth

and ash,

where winter solstice so deep

welcomes each explorer

into the depths

of inner life,

journey to the center.

Poets are forged

simply by bearing witness

to the nature of this land,

this land of temper

and skáld.

Lava Soap Dirge

Pumice stone.

Cat's tongue.

Salt lick.

Steel file.

#40 sandpaper.

The laborer's loofah.

Rough lover of no foreplay,

you got right down

to the nitty-gritty.

As pall bearers,

distant brethren stand

on Walmart shelves erect

overcompensating -

pledging to warm, moisturize, sooth,

douche, calm, smooth, sexualize

via herb, fragrance, aroma therapy,

pH balance.

You must have dissolved

with the last real cowboy I knew.

The day's dirt smiled

under his fingernails

as he greeted you

with a man's handshake

before an epic battle erupted:

elbow grease vs. combine grease,

volcanic suds unearthing

manure,

alfalfa flecks,

WD-40,

tributaries oozing toward the drain

in molten flow

to lie somewhere dormant

save for those rare occurrences

composite of my muscle memory activates

and my hands are soiled

in honest labor,

then from my core

coagulants threaten to surface and spew

and I would sacrifice all that is pure and good

to be baptized again

in your healing abrade.