

Pick Up My Golden Shovel

Poetry by Ali Mechelle
@alisonc_mechelle

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Introduction: What is Golden Shovel Poetry?

[Golden Shovel](#) is a poetic form created by [Terrance Hayes](#) and inspired by the poetry of Gwendolyn Brooks. I was introduced to the form while studying at the University of North Alabama.

Golden shovel poetry follows these six basic rules:

- Take a line (or lines) from a poem you admire.
- Use each word in the line (or lines) as an end word in your poem.
- Keep the end words in order.
- Give credit to the poet who originally wrote the line (or lines).
- The new poem does not have to be about the same subject as the poem that offers the end words.

I first practiced this style of poetry at a workshop led by Joy Harjo, when she was the visiting writer at the University of North Alabama. I practiced it more frequently throughout my creative writing courses.

The next few pages consist of poems I created during that time. Keep in mind, I took some creative liberties when it came to following the rules.

Each Body Has Its Art

To be one of many is, for each
 of us, to be built differently. But what if your body
 is one of the fattest? You may know it has
 a beauty to see, and even though its
 view is imperfect, you may think it a work of art
 But what of people who think it simply fat? Some may say its
 beauty is acceptable, even though it is fat. *Precious,*
Lord, take my hand, give whatever You have prescribed.

It can be hard to see how all and each
 were made by God. That you are not least lovable because your body
 is the fattest. You can miss the golden layer, the fact it has
 a warm embrace. And even through its
 sickness and health, it should be deemed a work of art,
 because God made it with Godly hands. But its
 beauty is hard to notice if you don't see yourself as precious,
 simply because you're the fattest. *Lord, I need what You have prescribed.*

Is there a prayer? One that will make us see
 that the flaws created by lies were plastered on each body
 We are more than the skinniness or fat a body has
 We are the love a body can give. When it holds babies within its
 arms, and traces faces like works of art
 because God made them with Godly hands. But its
 beauty has been rarely noticed because we haven't seen ourselves as precious
 We must take the medicine God has prescribed.

Inspiration: "[Still, Do I Keep My Look, My Identity](#)" by Gwendolyn Brooks

A Physical Light is in the Room

A yearning for a love, a
yearning for love. Not just the physical
yearning for touch. More than movements beyond the light
This yearning for love. Movements between thighs, is
not an answer, to yearning for love. Letting someone in
doesn't quench this thirst for love. It's more than the
yearning for love. It's the hope of making room.

*Inspiration: "[An Aspect of Love, Alive in the Ice and Fire](#)" by
Gwendolyn Brooks*

We Die Soon

Instead of living as one, we
persist as enemies afraid to die
because we fear what comes soon
after. So much about me and so little about we,
that we forget our former ties. Unity allowed to die

And now we fear what comes soon
after. When all is said and done, and we
let the fear that divides us incite us to die

We are forced to meet again when fighting what comes soon

Inspiration: "[We Real Cool](#)" by Gwendolyn Brooks