

this is my (first) poem about being a stripper

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this is my (first) poem about
being a stripper
I made 50 dollars my first night
and they let me keep 25
cause it was my first
after that, 175 just to play
i drove home in a white and blue
cadillac
white body with one blue door
and no heat
it was december
it was detroit
it was a polar vortex
i was driving down 8 mile
my windshield was frozen
i called my ex girlfriend
i said
it's below zero
and i'm driving down 8 mile
and i don't have any heat
and i can't see through my
windshield
i get out
and attempt to scrape the ice
with my pleaser heels
then my debit card
i was crying
she was yelling
i was in a coney island parking
lot
i don't remember
what happened next
somehow i made it home
no heat there either
i lived in a nest
a blanket fort
with a space heater running
all day and all night
major fire hazard
i shaved my legs
in my bedroom
with dr. Bronners soap
and a pot of boiled water
because the shower
was a sawed off pipe
from the ceiling of the basement
and
when the electricity went out
for a week that winter

we slept like kittens
5 curled on one mattress
by the dying light of a
rubble filled fireplace
i gave myself a
classic name
something you'd hear in an old
movie
i wore lacy one-piece negligees
and
thigh high back seam nylons
dark red lipstick, cat eyes
danced to things like
the Kill Bill theme song
or Tov Lo's Habits
absurdly up-beat club remixes
i danced for oil moguls
an African prince
construction foremen
the first time i gave it all
was to a fast food franchise
owner
he paid me 2600 dollars
and a stack of coupons
for free muffins
at home I rained the muffin
coupons
on my friends
the whole house
was draped in
dried roses
saved
from the Trader Joe's dumpster
i bought my own car
then i crashed it
one week later
it was a white out
on I-94
i called my ex boyfriend
i said
do you remember that time
i couldn't talk
for a week
what do you think
is wrong
with me
he said
not really
i think you're fine

i was home alone that winter
when the pipes froze
then thawed and burst
water gushing down the stairs
i had to wade
through the flooded basement
to unplug the submerged
space heaters
it was 4 am
and i ate a pot of lentil soup
swaddled
in coats and blankets
i had been sweating
in a thong bikini
earlier that night
i loved
the strip club dressing room
the gaudy
red and gold carpet
the mirrors
the perfume
the girls
getting spray tanned
in the bathroom
pretzels filled
with peanut-butter
carrot sticks and celery
the house mom
with tiny treasures
serving-size mouthwash
needle and thread
bright pink plastic razors
lip gloss

it was 2014
we had Obama
we had Michael Brown
and Tamir Rice
a naive sense of hope
things could only get better
to date that was
my coldest winter
now the summers
with their floods
and screams for revolution
getting louder
are a bigger threat
a hotter sex