

Josh Bell

LOVE DOUBLE-WIDE (YOUR LOVE IS LIKE A BAD TATTOO)

Your love is like a bad tattoo.
I've done too much time
in this trailer park and I will
burn your double-wide down

except I'm lazy. Your love
is like a bad tattoo although
you put it on the back of my
eye. It starts "Ramona" and I

can't read the rest anymore.
I'm tired but I remember what
it says. Something I won't
repeat is what. I said "love"

but meant a word that sounds
like "trigger" and means
"You're dead." Look it up
if you don't believe me.

Find it near "damn fool"
and "dear god" if there ever
was such a dictionary. And if
there was, you sure already

read it. I studied some Latin
strictly due to you: *Semper
fidelis, semper idem, semper
paratus*. Always faithful,

ready, and the same. Me or you,
what a question. Anymore

I'm like some Ophelia who took
the other route, fat, drugged,

and gone to seed. Alive though.
Lounging in the wading pool
outside fair Hamlette's double-wide
in my best plastic sunglasses

and checking my periphery as if
epiphanies might have to sneak
right up on the likes of me. I'm in
need of some coy flowers, a cocktail.

Somebody bring my notebook, too.
I'll write one of my patented I didn't
kill myself notes: *Hello cruel world*
I'm still not leaving again, it's me.

Your love is like a bad tattoo
deep on my superstructure.
What monks scribble on bones
in ossuaries, I imagine. My latest

affectation is pretending you are
a house I'm haunting with my life.
You don't think I'm pretending.
Somebody bring me my hood.