

Self Portrait with a Line from Lorca

after the painting Huapango Torero by Ana Segovia

Can I measure this distance between barbed wire and stone
wall bearing all the red delirium of spring,
between dawn and hunger and who has the upper hand...

*How is it that something as small as a pistol or a knife can do away
with a man who is a bull? Or*
a woman crowned by the farewell party of free speech?

There's just this rose in my fist, and in the other, a pale sheet,
not of surrender but the torn petticoat from Lorca's white
wedding. It was enough to hollow my mind. Enough to enter

this field the way I enter a sky full of bedroom windows.
One, witness to a bystander's silence,
one is my child self, and another, the face of the bull.

You can't see them, but women are singing across
the sugarcane, the sorghum, avocados,
and the wild Blue Agave. Their song carries me into the evening.

To know, like night, I begin again, entering these selves as
I climb through, step over each threshold
of who I am to test this outlawed animal mettle of our

youth, because I want to know who you are under this half-
blanched moon at the side of the hour's
road and its unending fields that I now claim as my own.