The Poet Writes to Lorca Hoping for No Response

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Poet Talks at Lorca

I am the one who holds you by the ear
blank white and shirtless, folded in a lump,
wherever they had left you. Buried in some dump?
You are not mine, so let’s make one thing clear:

I spit my blood at you so it becomes
a fire lily reaching from a stump.
It might become a trespass sign, a clump
of brambles raining soot on me in thrums.

I’m told, You be respectful of the dead
who must sit idly by mientras que
we turn each life on its thoughtless head

shaking it down for every penny or clue
to why we are still here. But they, you see,
don’t let me lose what I have learned from you.
The Poet Speaks to Lorca on the Phone

Don’t let me lose what I have learned from you,
part undertaker, part bourgeois prince,
part liberator from my lonely silence
while I sit here alone and bound and nude.

O hands, not Lorcan hands but right on cue—
the bondage—tighter!—so the knot still sings
so you can hear my every moan and wince.
Here O, o here, o here—O, I got to

admit I’m scared to open my mouth, engulf
you in a foreign tongue while you loom
like water on the continental shelf.

I’m calling “you” not knowing to where, to whom…
I’ve never asked me what I call myself,
except on nights when you were in my room.
The Poet In New York

On those dark nights when you were in your room
the city was a thousand flaming eggs
that wouldn’t hatch. Columbia was elite dregs
apt for the sinkerator. Your house, a tomb.

Alone, you might as well have got on Zoom.
You spotted faces when you stretched your legs,
and used a word (would it translate to “fags”?)
I’d never utter, even in my room,

alone as you were. Did you hate yourself that you
would not, could never have a son or daughter?
I do, without your images to confuse:

I tried to leap off your building’s highest tier,
like many of my friends have done or wanted to,
the ladder impaled me like an untouched spear.
The Poet Climbs Lorca’s Apartment Building in New York

The ladder impaled me like an untouched spear –
to get to there, I had to take the stairs.
The lights were on but flickered, like they cared
to make the darkness San Juan says not to fear,

To push through, shielded behind your prayers,
where up becomes the central, wounded, dear
life deemed worth living fully. Near
that darkness, which is lost in earthly nightmares,

I asked, how many of us living in this ghost town
can speak to those behind the thin veneers,
who all that time they coldly free-fell down

passed between the worlds like sonneteers,
and, if they were to speak, would make it known
it’s you who starts on me, it’s you who sneers?
The Poet Writes to “Lorcaboy420” on Grindr Hoping for No Response

It’s you who starts on me. It’s you who sears
me…If ya wanna…lol jk
The message sent at 7:58.
Receiver notifications muted. Tears!

Again, I’m wet and waiting for you here
Can’t I just notify him anyways?
As though to block my need, the screen displays
a pop-up of two boys – they must be queer –

syringes in their arms and fingers on their keypads.
I’m drunk. I came back from the party hoop-less.
I press the little X, delete the ads.

I looked so good, my spangled dress all moonlit.
I lie alone in bed, your Gypsy ballads,
your words laid on my lifting chest, they soothe it.
The Poet Writes to Lorca from the Holy City of Ávila

Your words laid on my lifting chest, they soothe it.
The incense rising in the air surrounds
the Virgin Mary. In the crypt a song resounds.
My song contained inside your breath is muted.

Along the walls are fifteen hundred cruces
giving me the side-eye. What was founded
in Ávila is lost on me, unchaperoned.
But standing on las murallas stirs the muses:

Those friends who’ve died, I find them on my mind.
I should not feel anywhere less clueless
than here, my God, but they have undermined
my faith. The kind of God who soothes is toothless
if He, She, They leave some of us behind
with a stone-cold tear. The steam absorbed in you is ruthless.
The Poet Writes to his Ex, Hoping for No Response

With a stone-cold tear, the steam absorbed in you. Ruthless, the mind has conjured you again. You’re high. A man is crawling, chanting *Semper Fi!* Between us something opens, a new rift.

In my new Ikea bed we two sit: together, still; the screws are not yet tight. I turn and risk my being too polite: I won’t be used. I want to be of use. If you want me to, I’ll go, when I am told. Rolling into me, we’re chest to chest. The fear unbends with every breath, but we stay curled as one. To me you have become too clear, staring at me locked in a stranglehold, eyes, blind to those red words that disappear.
Sonnet at Valle de los Caídos

Eyes, blind to these red words
that disappear and are
ignored by the tomb-goers.
There aren’t exactly hordes

of people and fewer birds,
but for those that are
here to learn there are
no signs where they disinterred

his corpse. My aim is not to wade
into their sorrows, negate
the space between exclave

and enclave, but I would say
the stretch is global. Each makes
the body a shallow grave.
Acrostic Sonnet

For you I make my body a shallow grave;
Entombed in need, I half-believed I could be
Done manufacturing an Other to be

Good against. What do we want to save?
All the playas, hostels, Guggenheims?
Ratings online for travel destinations
Create my entire list of recommendations.
In the dream, I shoot you five more times.
A green case falls out of your hand,

Lays there in front of me, but I don’t care.
On second thought, I should run? And
Really, I don’t want to be, I can’t be, ensnared.
Cautious, I lift the lid, and, on command,
A serpent’s arms—it’s you—pull at my hair.
Sonnet with 12 of Lorca’s Lines

For you, my serpent arms pull at my hair
Through the anemones lifted into trees,
Between the I-love-yous and you-love-mes
The plants’ tremble, the stars extend in air.

For what you choose to give, I’ll never ask you.
Your disdain becomes a God; and my complaints
are moments, doves locked on a chain.
If I live without myself, I want to have you.

I’m scared to lose that wonder of your statue
eyes, and the mark placed on my cheek at night
by that one solitary rose of your breath. You’re right,
I’ll never understand how much I have you.

Without my craze of words I am nothing but sick.
I rise and fall in accordance with your hips.
Sonnet in which the poet imagines starting a family with Lorca

I rise and fall in accordance with your hips
and feel evaporated sweat encrust
my fingertips. Our children tossing just
beyond us in their cots, who use their kips
to fib about their daddies’ strong devotion,
curl their defenseless, cochlear bodies alone
in cotton blankets that make them feel a clone
is holding them, so that, por fin, no motion

no stirs, no fuss, and I feel loss, somewhat,
shooting its roots inside my chest. I tried to stave
it off so long, I thought it couldn’t rot

here anymore. I tried to think I could outbrave
forgiving myself for turning death to art, to what
I am: the scars I ask my flesh to save.
Sonnet in Granada

These are the scars I ask my flesh to save
and this, my hooded cloak, I hope conceals
my sin and lets my skin transpire. (All that appeals
during this ghastly sweaty Holy Week heatwave).

And this procession scything the streets I long
to chase after but stop a moment. Stood
stock-still, I let my mind pour forth, a hood
among hoods, giving out into the throng.

And they, the children in the apartment window,
know nothing of tradition and less of fire,
and, freer for it, they might do well to follow

a lesser god, like love, or else they’ll tire
along the path and die embittered and hollow,
so someone else may find what’s hidden there.
Sonnet towards Fuente Vaqueros

So someday I may find what’s hidden there,
I, having dreamt forever of your birthplace,
depart Granada alone and everywhere
spring petals fall, as though to deface

the dusty empty road that narrows
into the verdant valle from the height
of the city, over which the sun’s arrows,
at least one hundred seven Farenheit,

angle through Lorca’s childhood bedroom window
lighting the cradle whose pink blanket wraps
no child, and, dropping to my knees below

the drawing of a boy, I just collapse
because that knock-kneed graphite kid must know
that all I say is whispered from your lips.
Sonnet

When all I say is whispered from your lips
and all I voice is blotched out stars, the black
of underbrush, three amputated arrows, the lack
of wine spilled on the bone, or an eclipse,

and when the song that strays from me
creates a finished, woven garland of cold
resilience against the sun’s shifting hold,
in turn, repeating the night unendingly,

I’ll be the dog of your estate, unable
to sing but singing, all the same, your name
in a language I cannot forget, no matter my aim,
and I’ll join you and your kids at the table

where—here I want to be completely clear—
I am the one who holds you by the ear.
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Your words into my lifting chest and soothes it
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