

*I want to love the **motherland***

I want to know her

her, of scorching summers and rainy winters
her, of lush fields
her, home to my family before me

I want her to know me

me, uncertain of the past
me, ardent in my hope
me, several borders away

I want her to know my love

my love, brilliant in her earnestness
my love, unabashedly joyful
my love, with me in every space but this

oh, that the motherland would know me

Can I speak to her still, if I do not dream in Spanish?
¿si solo viene en susurros?

Because when I whisper back,
my tongue does not fail me
but the words go unheard

I want to speak freely
Of myself and my love
I want the motherland to hold us both
I want her people – my people – to welcome us

Can I atone for the years of distance,
for the times I was not proud –
not of this, not of anything

The waves at Tulate were enough to drag me under

A *jocote* made me sick, my own body
Betraying my love of the orange
flesh. I could not climb the volcano.

I want to honor the defiance of a huipil
But can I wear one, not having known the same pain?
Born in a different land,
I feel I am a stranger