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Folklorico

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I'm tired of borders
hearing that word in
the news exalting walls
but I let borders
guide me even
in Fresno California's
belly button where
my home borders
the intersection
of two freeways
borders carsong
and smog I exhale
bony boundaries like
prayers meaning
unknowingly I sift
for god when I sigh
I ask for counsel
in instruction
manuals blueprints
eight counts and chain
links my hips
have slimmed them
-selves fitting
between borders
narrowing parentheses
to brackets reading

stages and dance
floors as scripts
delivering box
steps like deadpan
dialogue I'd listen
for math in music
blur each region's folk
baile into a melting
pot of dance moves
so lost untangling
my flat feet ignoring
the song's story in order
to hear commands
from maestros to get
into formations
so much pressure
to form diamonds
and Xs all of us
used to filling boxes
with Xs I still sweat
checking demographic
boxes on ballots
filling in bubbles
on state tests which
option best defines
juxtaposition
find X what is
your race select
all that apply I am
also scared of cars
and get to work
or class strutting in
near-straight lines
along sidewalks
homes on one side
on the other car-
song this is how my
hips learned borders
can sway
after years paralleling
margins stage-silent

stoic as white
pickets my hips
snapped into curly
brackets now
they hunch like
elders giving in
to laugh lines
when I perform
folklorico amid
marking steps
like items off to-
do lists my calves
reveal a ripeness
my hips yield
a little life to
our straight lines
with their wavers
and winds I see many
fellow danzantes
have already
discovered the fruit
their movements
produce they forsake
conformity for candid
smiles like lollipops
from Mexicali we
bring the spicy
to match the sweet
we flourish into
fences when we get
our lines straight
coloring inside
them then color-
ful inside them
when we stomp
out onto stages
we scrape them
up we crave
order we pave
chaos with our feet
even when we file

behind each
other like documents
we season our steps
separately we create
a fine line