

The cloth swung forward, beckoned.
The bull came. Santos leaned over the horn with a name cry,
rescued his lungs by a sequin, feet still as stones.
A flawless execution
except steel and bone collided; the blade bowed and sprang
out of its hot sheath, out of crazed thunder.
The withered flower patch bloomed with new crimson;
the bull mastered desperate legs,
flailing his tongue on the taint in his mouth.
Santos refused to heed his wrist, the wind,
the shrieked advice. He retrieved his sword, cursing.
The centrifuge screamed and silenced unheard. He calmed
himself in his bowl of sweat and whiplash chill:
"We will have total perfection, si, Diablo?"
A bugle played in his head, an aviso.

The bull summoned him,
poised like his bronze kind on the parapet,
posing his invitation low and ready.
Sun flashed along the sword edge, rolling
images, icons of the Virgin, faces of his brother,
el toro, his brother. Santos moved
to the blossoming spot, light with new speed.
A bright swatch of last Sunday's poster of Miguel
spiraled toward the matador's eyes.
Triumphant horn lifted as steel drove down,
a compound arch. Santos heard his name, heard
the wind inside him, heard them fall together.