# JOHN A. NIEVES Spin-the-Globe Charades

#### Spin One

I am acting like a wall with one portico adorned by a cockatrice and subtle lichens. She swings and I crumble. Then

she stands over me. I act like a man; she acts like the state. Her knee sinks into my throat. I pretend she is choking me, or

I am choking, or I see something startling in the sky. She cocks her head back, mouths the song of sirens.

## Spin Two

I am doing a rather obvious tree; she, too, is creating a simple impression: thick fog rolling over low hills. I'm part of an orchard.

She fills me, and then rifle reports and marching and clanking. At my base, I hold my toes just right to represent a memorial plaque, to imply

what happened here has sunk deep, has rolled itself up in the rocky soil. And she is moss, so green and dense and always facing north.

## **Spin Three**

With the score tied, and the other couple on the couch, she arches into a rainbow over my creeping vines. I send tendrils into skulls,

and statues of skulls. In a second she'll be thin rain beading in the same hollow eye my bloom presses through. My hand, down below, resembles

a group of sitting men, pulsing, chanting, clucking. Her hands become their hands and the shadows of their hands. My eyes, the ritual, the bees.

#### **The Final Spin**

Now we are winning. She is a red brick house braced tight against the prairie that was my back. I breathe hard and the wind shrieks

through the tall grass. Then I am someone digging and she is someone dragging another someone toward the new ditch. The dead one's eyes bulge

red and its lips seem more cracked than possible. The skin is all rise and fall, pock and peak. I am now the ditch and I welcome the dead. I have so much room.