

## the trans archive self-immolates

when you bury fruit,  
it does not always bloom.  
ash mistaken for dirt.  
i can trace the border  
of a field with my finger  
& tell myself *here*.  
i can smudge orange crayon,  
misname the flicker of a boy,  
will-o'-wisp flitting in the dark.

we can dig until our hands  
bloody with the surprise  
of rumor becoming history.

the map is not the terror story.  
violence is never true  
unless someone writes it down.  
every ghost also a threat  
to place your body underground.  
the girl drowned,  
but no one tells which hands  
held her under.  
the boy burned,  
but no one tells who lit the match.

i am trying so hard to remember,  
to recover anything as proof,

but i'm getting the details wrong,  
rearranging strips of torn newspaper  
with only an uncertain tongue.  
i'm like a child rubbing  
gravestones with chalk,  
trying desperately to transcribe  
but still slowly eroding the names.