

FRONTIER

Srikanth Reddy

I've rigged a tripwire round the perimeter.
The perimeter is secure. I'm prone,
and the rime's soaked under my undershirt;
I've got cross hairs on a wall-eyed spider

incumbent on her web. She's preying
on a monarch in the glimmering glade—
a straggler—citrous sunsets rimmed
with nightfall on either venom'd wing,

and I get this trigger-happy feeling, click
recoil . . . I've got my cross hairs on
a webby smoking hole. I'm number one,
the taper with the crooked wick,

the pin in the grenade. A frontiersman,
that's what I am. Oh, my mother loved
a frontiersman, and her mother before her . . .
they'll never bring us back alive. Who fears man

am I, and the rampant coughing horse he rides
down from the foothills, into the prime.
He's come for me; I've got my cross hairs on
his tiny bobbing throat. Let's see what bobs inside.