

without the glasses

the end of a long day
crossing the andes
from chile
to argentina
a long line
at la frontera

a young woman
in military fatigues
directing traffic
one vehicle
to one line
one to the other
anibal explains
that both motorcycles
are his
he has both sets of papers
she won't make an exception

he walks back
'she is stupid'
he says it's useless
i walk to her
i'm polite
her uniform is tailored
to her young body
everything is official
including her cap
and insignia
except
her shades have white rims
quite stylish

i explain that
he has the papers
my spanish is marginal

i notice
how beautiful she is
and i tell her
she says thank you
i ask
can i see you
without the glasses
she hesitates
then removes them
'dios'
is all i say

i walk back
to the bikes
and she calls out to me
to move my bike
to the other line
the glasses
are back on