

I. Self Portrait 1956

Look closely at your lines again -
Your life comes back through them, All
that waiting in line.

The dark, thick lines around
Your neck and nose, the thin lines
Of your hair, here and there.

The lines of South Africa
Etched on your face, where they drew A
line at you, where they crossed a line.

Where they threw the rule book at you.
How you drew and drew and drew
Resistance in the lines of protest

How you recoiled from police lines How
you traced the thin line, between right
and wrong,

back to your fragile self, bloodlines.
Uncertain, the lines drawn like a song
line on your face, your face, your face.