Aretha at Fame Studios

I could speak on a hotter than fire riot
time and a woman tying up her Detroit
promises in a rag. The prodigal child
arriving in Muscle Shoals, Alabama—hopefully
to sing freedom for one day.
The migration head swallowing its tail in the year of my birth.
I'm telling the truth when I say she'll meet Dr. King soon.
He'll kiss her on the cheek, tell her (damn
straight) she should demand what's due her.
And you could eat a tune served up more
than a few times, ripe pot liquor
settled around the old meat of the matter.
And I could forget the deal: she's here for business,
not to march. See the white musicians in the studio with her,
not a brother's guitar anywhere in sight?
Young boys playing so good like they've been chased
through the swamps for decades. Like they know
talk going on underneath a sister's clothes.
They got the nerve to have their eyes wide open.
She lifts her voice, starts telling tales out of school.
You're a no good heartbreaker
You're a liar and you're a cheat
Is there any doubt about the color
of the man she conjures? I could discuss her signature
key now but I'm afraid she has raised him
from the dust. he's standing on the other
side of glass and that next note, that next note
might cause him to break fool in front of white folks.
You're a no good heartbreaker
Somebody stop that man.
Somebody stop that man.
Somebody stop that sister from hollering
the naming his sins out loud blues.
Somebody close these white folks' eyes.
Somebody lie to her and keep her from crying.
Somebody tell her a little bit of sweetness
is coming her way quick.