

SOMOS GENTE

In January, I was fortunate to be in attendance at a conference for recipients of grants given through the CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL. While the entire conference, from start to finish, was informative, inspirational, (with none other than JOSÉ MONTOYA as keynote speaker) and validating, the most interesting session was one in which the Chicano/Latino recipients were allowed to meet and express concerns common to us. What came up was a long discussion on who we are—are we Mexican, Chicano, Latino, Hispanic—just what/who are we? When it came right down to it, we all agreed that while some of us may call ourselves by different names or labels, we are all—all the people of the world—PEOPLE. We are all conceived the same way; we are all born the same way; we all have the same necessary bodily functions; we all cry the same; we all bleed the same; and when our hearts break, they break the same way. To that end, we are all PEOPLE. SOMOS GENTE. It is the people that matter, not the skin color, language, citizenship, culture, or ethnicity—**TODOS SOMOS GENTE!**

This issue is dedicated to our mothers, after all, that is another thing that we all have in common—we all came from a woman—our mother. So it is our desire that our readers will think of their own Jefitas—their own mothers—when they read this issue. Whether your mother is still alive or not, think about her: what she gave you, what she taught you, how she loved you. If possible, share this issue with your mother—better yet, buy her a copy of her own! Tell her how you feel about her!

We would like to thank JOSÉ MONTOYA for allowing us to reprint his poems, LA JEFITA and MADRE IMORTAL, as well as two drawings. Also appearing in this issue are two drawings by artist/poet/writer JOSÉ ANTONIO BURCIAGA. Both Josés have been supporters of C/S. ¡Muchísimas gracias! The magazine would also like you to join us in sending your prayers and best wishes to José "Tony" Burciaga. Tony is currently battling a serious illness.

Enjoy the issue. Treasure those things that always remain the same and savour those which pass by you in an instant!

Corina Carrasco
Editor In Chief
C/S

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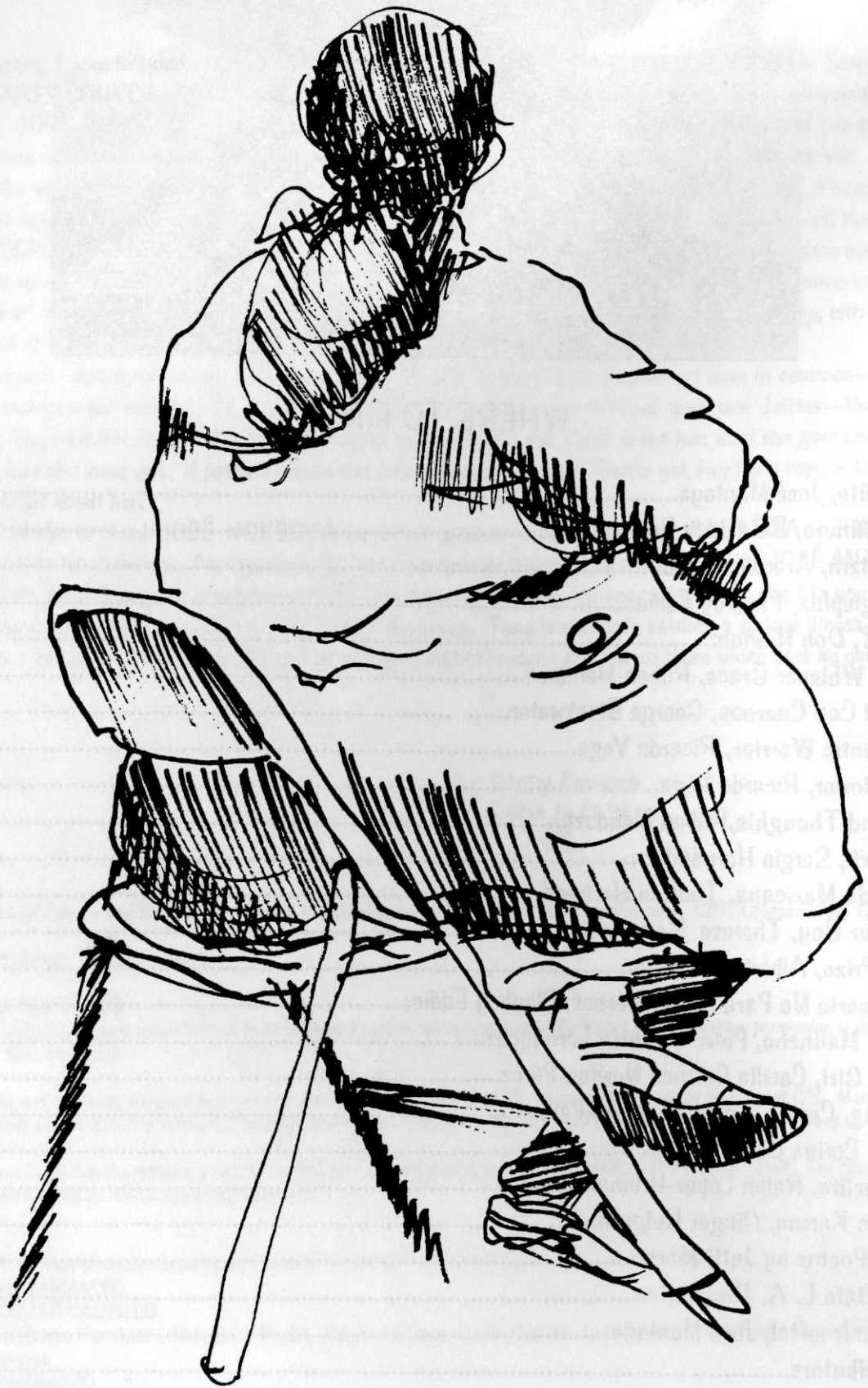
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LA JEFITA - JOSÉ MONTOYA

When I remember the campos
Y las noches and the sounds
of those nights en carpas o
Bagones I remember my jefita's
Palote
Click-clok; clik-clack-clok
Y su tocesita.
(I swear, she never slept!)

Reluctant awakenings a la media
Noche y la luz prendida.

PRRRRRRRRINNNNGGGGG!

A noisy chorro missing the
Basín.

¿Que horas son, 'ama?
Es tarde mi hijito. Cover up
Your little brothers.
Y yo con pena but too sleepy.

Go to bed little mother!

A maternal reply mingled with
The hissing of the hot planchas
Y los frijoles de la hoyá
Boiling musically dando segunda
A los ruidos nocturnos and
The snores of the old man

Lulling sounds y los perros
Ladrando — then the familiar
Hallucinations just before sleep.

And my jefita was no more

But by then it was time to get up!

My old man had a chiflidito
That irritated the world to
Wakefulness.

Wheeeeeeeet! Wheeeeeeeet!

Arriba, cabrones chavalos,
Huevones!

Y todavía la pinche
Noche oscura

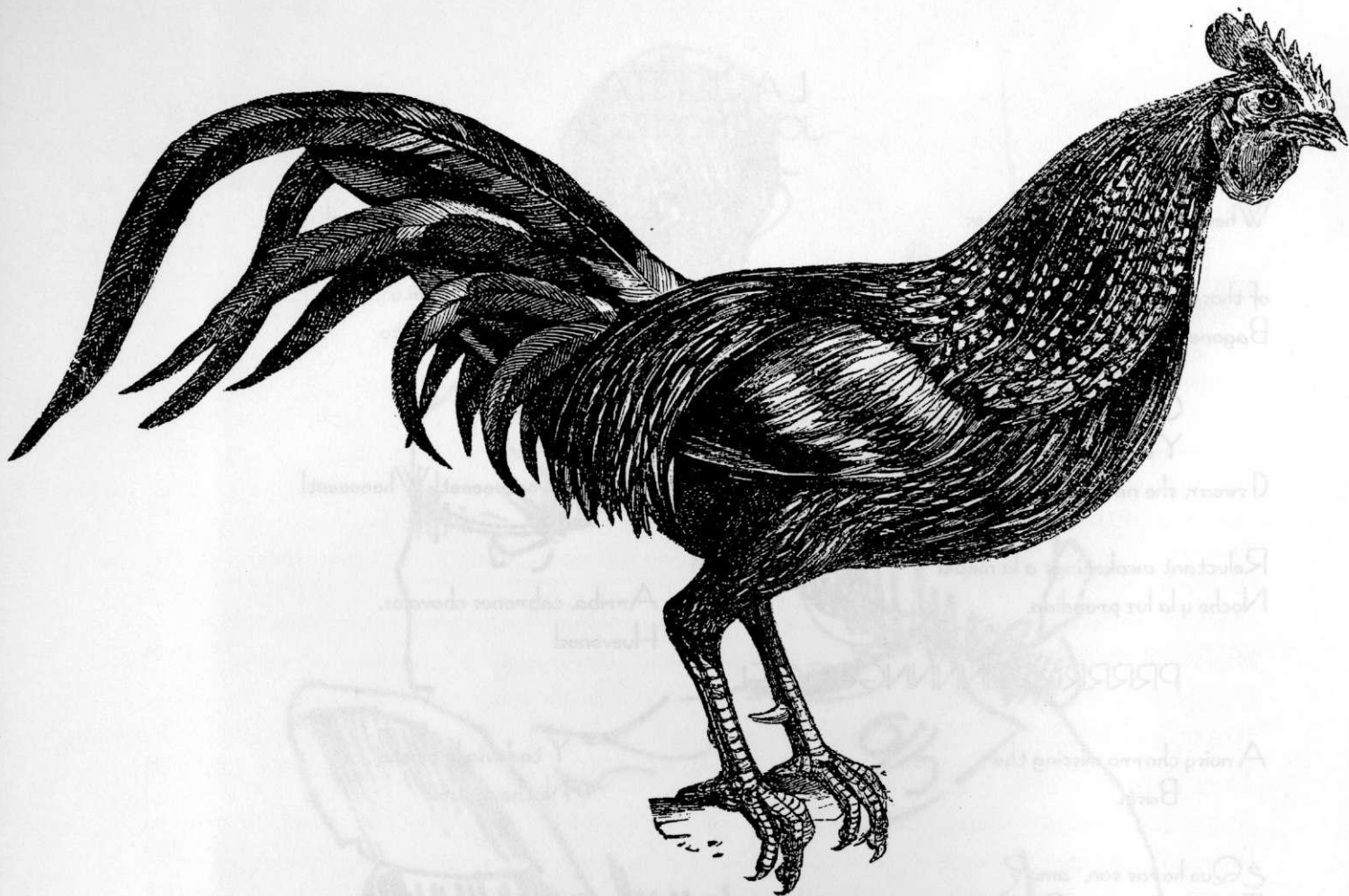
Y la jefita slapping tortillas.

¡Prieta! Help with the lonches!
¡Calientale agua a tu 'apa!

(¡Me la rayo ese! My jefita never slept!)

Y en el fil, pulling her cien
Libras de algoda se sonreía
Mi jefe y decía.

That woman — she only complains
In her sleep.



EL GALLINERO DE MI NANA

Roberto de la Rocha

Beto de chico era desobediente. De repente y sin permiso, se montaba en su tricla (tricicleta) y sin darle cuenta a su mama, se iba de la casa de sus padres y caminaba por las banquetas en sus tres rueditas desde la Meadowvale, por toda la Blake, hasta llegar a la casa de su nana (abuelita). Ella vivía en la Barclay, una de las primeras calles cerca del rio antes de cruzar el puente, en lo que ahora se conoce como el barrio de Frogtown. Tenía un gallinero que estaba en el backyard junto al garache (garage). Y las gallinas eran Rhode Island Reds, de esas que ponen huevos de cascaras del color café claro, con manchas mas oscuras y el sabor de esos blanquillos bien sabrosos. Y yo, cuando me venía a visitarla, a veces me mandaba a recoger los huevos en una canasta. El gallinero no era grande y el animalero consistía de unas diez o catorce gallinas, mas o menos, y dos gallitos. De chavalito me gustaba ir a ver esas gallinas bien nutridas con su plumaje color café rojo resplandeciente — y tambien me gustaba oír las ca-ca-ra-quear. Cuando entraba al gallinero, cacaraqueaban con mas intensidad, porque se sentían molestas al quitarle los huevos, y se huían del nido cuando me acercaba para ver si habían puesto. Pues bien, los nidos estaban dentro de vegetable crates de buen tamaño para que tuvieran lugar donde poner y estaban puestas las cajas about three boxes high, y los nidos compuestos de zacate que yo traía del vacant lot.

I was a disobedient kid almost from the get go. On impulse, I would hop on to my tricycle and disappear from my parent's home without permission, and taking no thought for my mom, I went straight as an arrow along Blake avenue, pedaling my trike to my grandmother's place nine blocks away. Nana's house was on Barclay Street in the Elysian Valley, which neighborhood is alongside the L.A. River. In the Spring the river was a habitat for crawdads (crayfish), cattails, blue,

vermillion, and turquoise dragonflies and polliwogs (tadpoles), which soon turned into toads. And because of the latter, the Valley became known as Frogtown, becoming a Mexican barrio as more of us moved there. It should have been named "Sapotown," porque los sapos son toads y las ranas son frogs. But what the hey! ¿Y que le hace?

My grandmother kept chickens. They were Rhode Island Reds, about twelve or fourteen in number, plus two bantam roosters of the same breed. They were housed in a homemade coop attached to the garage in the backyard. I enjoyed visiting my grandma, and when she would ask me to go collect the light tan eggs with the brown spots, I did that mandado—errand—with great pleasure, because not only did I enjoy some of those tasty eggs that she would heat up, but not soft boil, and then after carefully punching a hole in each end with a toothpick for me, I would take a pinch of salt to my mouth, suck out and swallow the contents, leaving an unbroken egg shell, one more for the collection, ready to be dyed and then stuffed with confetti, awaiting to be broken over someone's head on the coming Easter Sunday. But, I also liked caring for the chickens. They were a well fed flock, gorgeous in their red-brown plumage, and I liked to listen to their clucking, which intensified as they scattered when I moved in to gather the eggs. The nests were in wood crates of a good size, and I would feather their nests with sweet smelling, store-bought straw, mixed in with the wild grass I got from a vacant lot nearby.

Long, wild, green grass sprang up during the springtime in the empty lots of the Elysian Valley, and I would collect an amount in a cardboard box, just enough for the nests from one lot close by, which was between my nana's house and Riverside Drive. And that was way before her home was pulled down and paved over for

the piece of that noxious, noisy freeway that's there now. One could pull out the thick grass in clumps, with the roots clinging to a heavy ball of rich, moist earth that was removed by knocking the dirt against a spot of bare ground.

The chicken coop was a simple affair. It was merely a fenced yard with no roof, built up against the side of the garage, and the chickens roamed about pecking at the ground as I threw feed their way. The makeshift coop had a gate, and I was careful to keep it shut, but sometimes the roosters and the hens would get out or fly up to and over the fence onto the lawn when they had a hankering for some protein in their diet consisting of creepy-crawlies, earth worms and grubs or whatever else they ate that was tempting to their palate that they found crawling around on the soil of the domestic grass which my nana kept well watered. I would have to shoo them back into the coop, and putting up such a squawk, they would head every which way, but generally most would return to the cage except for the wayward ones, which I had to corral, grab, and put back into the gallinero.

Now, the roosters were banty roosters, and were something else! Y yo les tenía mucho cuidado, porque aunque eran chiquillos, they were feisty, angry critters, and when I ventured into the coop to gather the eggs, they would at first hold their ground until I shooshed them away, yet they would turn their heads and each pin one eye on me, and kept on making a nasty sounding noise of slow, "cutt...cutt", and raising the sound of their cutt cutts to a high pitch, like saying, "You'd better watch out boy, we're warning you!" So, you better believe that I kept one eye on them, and didn't dare to turn my back for fear of a sneak attack.

Pues un día me descuidé. But one day I made myself an easy target, distraction being the reason, and I can't recall exactly if I had gone on an egg collecting expedition o entré al gallinero solamente para wachar las gallinas (or I just went into the coop to check out the chickens). Tocó que un hermano de mi mama, mi tío Emilio, me había enseñado a hipnotizarlas.

Y ansina fué, que yo despues agarraba una de ellas, y usando un palito, hacía en la tierra una línea recta, y poniendo la gallina de pie en paralelo con la marca, extendiéndole el pescuezo para abajo, le ponía el pico de la cabeza en un extremo de la línea, y al soltarla, allí se quedaba paralizada, con los ojos cruzados y fijas por un rato. Experimenté con uno de los gallitos, pero de pronto despertó. "Mira Alfalfa," y me dió mi tío ese sobrenombre because my pelo (hair) stuck out at the back of my head, "vas a ver," me dijo, a la vez dándome una lección pragmática para hipnotizar una de ellas, "que las gallinas son muy tontas." Y cogiendo una, se hincó e hizo una raya en la tierra con la mano libre...

My uncle had given me a nickname because I had a cowlick, "Look Alfalfa," said my Uncle Milo while in the process of giving me a live demonstrtion on how to hypnotize a hen, "chickens are real dummies." And now later, having learned how to do it on my own, grabbing a nice fat hen, I held it under my left arm. Next, I used a stick or my fingernail to make a straight line in the dirt, then I set the chicken on the ground gently forcing its beak downward to the mark, and held it there for a short while. So, at a point when the bird looked straight ahead at the line with its eyes crossed, it having almost immediately gone quiet when it began to stare, I released it slowly, and the chicken stood transfixed for a lengthy moment until it shook off the mesmerization, and giving out some cluck clucks, it wandered off to peck distractedly at the ground. Now, I thought that that was a pretty neat trick. Yes indeed, I had my fun!

And, now I remember! It was on that one fateful day, during an operation of the same kind just mentioned, that I lost my perspective, my mind failing to keep everything in view. I had become wholly absorbed in this most singular entertainment when all of a sudden, out of the corner of my eye, I caught sight of a little ball of red-brown feathers, almost in flight, with the wings extended and its head of bright red comb and wattles lowered, and the long, black and green

iridescent neck plumage bristling and flashing brilliantly in the sun, and all of this banty in a rage, coming at me in a rush. So in a hurry, pero de volada I retreated in shock and surprise. Fortunately I had forgotten to close the gate, and I ran as fast as I could go a short distance to the porch, a low landing without a roof attached to my grandmama's house at the back entrance - and I leaped over the tomato plant with the banty rooster right behind me - to hop onto the landing in order to make my escape into the house. But I didn't make it! I tripped and landed butt up, halfway on top of the tomato bush and halfway on top of the landing, with the rooster furiously pecking away at my behind. Y yo, llorosamente gritando por mi nanita, que me viniera a dar auxilio. Crying and shouting for my beloved grandmother, she arrived soon enough to save me from any further attack by the little, hostile rooster, which, immediately afterwards as I was going through the screen doorway holding hard onto my nana's hand, and rubbing away the tears with the other in a tight fist, I turned to see—the triumphant, cocky, pint sized rooster, head held high, strutting his stuff on his way back to the chicken coop. Probably feeling great satisfaction for having taken his revenge, very successfully (I can attest to that) on that meddlesome, egg snatching kid. Y también, si fuera posible que el gallito tan macho como ese pudiera pensarlo, se puede imaginar uno que se iba diciendo, "Y a mí nadie me pone el pico en la línea."

Hay un dicho mexicano que dice, "Dios castiga sin palo ni cuarta," y se le puede añadir, "Solo que por tus malos pasos te caiga por encima un cerco de madera, o que vayas por tu vereda escogida 'y sin quitarme esas pajas', te empieza a dar de latigazos un arriero con su chicote." Y así le tocó al Beto por hijo desobediente, que sin palabra a su mama se iba, y Dios lo castigó bien castigadito, aún no supo hasta muchos años después, que había quebrado el mandamiento de Jesus Cristo, quien es Dios, que dice, "Honra a tu padre y tu madre." —Exodo 20:12.

So, instead of a spanking¹ he got a

punishment was justly meted out to the boy for his disobedience, and he had been told many times not to run off, but he did it anyway. Often he would vamoose (vamos-go) to the river where children would drown sometimes. But it wasn't until many years later that Beto realized that he had been sorely punished by God, his instrument for that penalty being the rooster, for breaking the commandment of God, who is Jesus Christ the son, which says, "Honor your father and your mother." Exodus 20:12

¹ He that spares his rod hates his son...but he that loves him chastens him at times. The stick and the reprimand bestow wisdom, a child left to himself brings shame on his mother. Correct your son, and he will give you peace of mind; he will delight your soul. Proverbs 13:24, 29:15 and 17.

ROBERTO DE LA ROCHA is a writer/artist and one of the members of the original C/S magazine staff.





Felix Perez '95

Malintzin, Marina y Malinche

—Araceli Loredo

—Tenía que cruzar esas puentes que no me dejan pasar para encontrar la paz— exclamó Malintzin.

—Recuerda éso m'ija—le dijo Malintzin a su nieta Marina.

—Pero, ¿cruzar cuáles puentes 'güelita y 'contar qué paz?—preguntaba la niña.

—Un día entenderás Marina. Búscalo m'ija; en ti misma está el entendimiento. No se te olvide escribir en tu diario—respondió Malintzin.

Al decirle ésto a su nietecita, regresó Malintzin a su recámara y empezó a escribir. Ella sabía que pronto llegaría el tiempo en que le tendría que decir a Marina la verdad y revelarles el secreto.

—Hola vieja, ¿dónde está la comida?—preguntaba la hija de Malintzin.

—Ay, hija ¿qué horas son éstas de llegar?—le dijo Malintzin a su hija, Malinche.

—Sí, sí, ya me sé el sermón. Pero tu ya estás vieja y no sabes disfrutar la vida—le contestó Malinche.

—La que no sabe disfrutar eres tu, Malinche—gritó Malintzin.

—Buenas noches, madre—grito Malinche.

Regresó Malintzin a su recámara. Empezó a leer su diario y recordó cuantos meses había durado en traducirlo de nahuatl a español. No lo quería hacer pero sabía que nahuatl regresaría a las entrañas de la tierra y que duraría mucho tiempo para que floreciera el lenguaje de las rosas, del *cuauhitl*, de la lluvia, de la Madre Tierra. Malintzin sabía que habían llegado los hombres blancos para quedarse, que no se iban a ir y por eso empezó la traducción.

El día que terminó, llevó su diario en nahuatl al monte, abrazándolo con el reboso que le había regalado su mamá. Se fué camino hacia el cima del grandioso monte, ese monte donde no hay barreras entre el cielo y lo supremo. Cuando llegó al

monte, encendió el incienso y ofreció su diario a Coatlicue. Entonces lo enterró en la tierra con semillas de rosas y cada invierno regresaba al monte a cortar las rosas que habían florecido del rosal. Ella sabía el secreto, y sabía que un día regresaría el lenguaje de la Madre Tierra.

Todas sus memorias la envolvieron y empezó a leer su diario:

lunes—*Ahora mi padre murió. Estoy feliz. Estoy triste. No sé. Mi mamá me dijo que llorara porque ya no iba a estar él con nosotros. Pero yo no lloré. Solo le dije que ya no podía besarme y acariciarme. Quiso poseerme pero yo no lo dejé. Estoy feliz. Estoy triste.*

martes—*Vivimos con un nuevo padre. Estoy feliz. Estoy triste. Él me dice que estoy muy bonita y recuerdo a mi otro padre. Él me hace recordarlo, él quiere tocar me en los mismos lugares. Yo ya no lo quiero recordar. Ahora fuimos a las montañas y yo me fuí hasta arriba a abrazar las nubes y luego se oscureció y La Luna me cuidó.*

miércoles—*Tengo un hermanito. Estoy feliz. Estoy triste. Mi mamá siempre lo cuida y mi padre siempre quiere llevarme con él. Visito a mi amiga, La Mar. Ella me limpia mis lágrimas y me dice que están amargas y me dice que no me debo amargar. ¿Qué es amargar? Estoy feliz. Estoy triste.*

jueves—*Me fuí de mi casa. Estoy feliz. Estoy triste. Corrí a visitar a La Mar, ella me dijo un secreto. Me dijo que no iba regresar Quetzalcóatl pero que yo era una Diosa y que yo poseía las semillas del nuevo mundo. Me dijo que yo tenía el poder y que me preparara porque pronto vendrían. Vivo entre las diferentes tribus. Primero fuí con los de Xicalango y luego con los de Tabasco. Aprendo su lenguaje y sus costumbres. ¿Quién va a venir?*

viernes—Llegaron hombres blancos. Todos piensan que es Quetzalcóatl. Yo sé la verdad. Me preparo. Me ofrecí para ir con los hombres blancos porque yo sé su secreto. Conocí a Cortés; él me quiere. ¿Lo podré querer yo? Estoy feliz. Estoy triste.

sábado—Llegamos a Cuatzalcualco. Miré a mi madre y a su hijo. Nunca creyeron lo que les dije de mis padres, todavía lo niegan - idiotas. Solamente vinieron a pedirme joyas y ropa. Yo no se las dí, se las dió ese misionero que proclamaba la salvación. ¿Cómo me va a salvar él y de qué me va a salvar? Él no sabe el secreto. Ese misionero no sabe hablarle a La Luna, ni a La Rosa, ni a La Mar. Fuí con Cortés. Tendré su hija. ¿Le negaré la posición de cacique? Estoy feliz. Estoy triste.

domingo—Llegamos a Tenochtitlán. La Mar se enrojeció, se enojó y mandó La Luna a llamarme. La Luna me gritó y me dijo que ya era tiempo para regresar. Ahora también conocí a Juan Jaramillo. El padre nos quiere casar. ¿Qué es casar? Cortés ya no me quiere. Nunca pudo poseerme él ni los otros que lo intentaron. La Luna me abrazó y me llevó con La Mar. Ella me dijo que yo tenía que regresar a Painala. Me dijo que las cosas apenas habían empezado y que muchos me iban a odiar. Pero me recordó que yo era diosa. Me dijo que nunca olvidara el secreto. Me fuí a Painala. Estoy feliz.

Malintzin dejó de llorar; extrañaba a La Mar. Hacía mucho tiempo que no la había visitado. Como cacique de Painala, tenía muchas responsabilidades. A veces oía a La Luna que le cantaba y esas noches dormía sin pesadillas de sus padres. Malintzin tenía que decidir cuando y como le iba a decir a Marina la verdad. Pero ya sabía que el secreto estaba dentro de Marina.

Malinche nunca le había preguntado del secreto. Algunas sabían y otras no, pero Malinche no lo sabía, ella nunca le hablaba a las rosas ni bebía la lluvia de pulque. Para Malinche no habían ofrendas para Coatlicue, sólo las habían para esos del otro tribu. Pero Malintzin estaba feliz porque

ella había oído a Marina cantándole a las rosas. Marina también sabía que La Luna y La Mar cantaban con ella. Era una linda armonía.

Decidió que al día siguiente dejaría sus responsabilidades por un día para preparar a Marina. Ella sería la próxima cacique de Painala, Malintzin ya lo sabía. La Luna empezó a cantar la melodía de los buhos. Malintzin regresó a su recámara. Le mandó saludos a La Mar y la señora de las montañas.

—Mañana iré al monte con Marina—les gritó Malintzin.

Todas las amigas cantaron juntas. La Madre Tierra se conmovió y derramó la lluvia para empezar el nuevo día.

—¡Madre! ¡Vieja! ¡Levántate! Esta tormenta está loca y acaba de temblar—aulló Malinche.

—Cálmate hija, pronto pasará—le contestó Malintzin.

—Yo me voy pa'l otro lado, tú quédate con la niña—gritó Malinche.

—Buenas noches hija—sonrió Malintzin oyendo la dulce melodía.

—M'ija, Marina levántate. Ya es hora de irnos—le decía Malintzin a Marina.

—Güelita, ¿a dónde vamos?—preguntaba Marina.

—Ven cariño, tu sabes, ya es hora—contestó su abuelita.

—Sí, 'güelita ya sé, vamos al monte, ¿verdad?—dijo la niña sonriente.

—Sí, Marina, sí—respondió Malintzin.

Las dos se abrazaron y La Luna las acompañó hasta el monte. Llegaron al rosal y desde arriba podían ver a La Mar. Larosa empezó a hablar y dijo:

—*Cihuapilli ya no, ahora cíhuatl - iniña, ahora eres mujer! Tu piel - cuetlaxtli - es el color tlalli, como la Madre Tierra. En tu sangre - eztli - corre mi vida y la vida de todas nuestras amigas. Yo soy tu nélhuatl igual como tu eres mi raíz. Nunca olvides el secreto: Icuóyotl y Tlazohtlaliztli - Amistad y Amor. Sigue el camino, tu ohtli. Tu tienes tlalnamiquiztli y yolohtli - inteligencia y corazón, lo sabes. Toma esta xóchitl, la flor es tuya. No te preocupes de las espinas -*

*huitzthi - solamente duelen un poco.
Siempre habrá una batalla - una necalli. De
acuerdo de no olvidar, no ilcahhu.*

Marina entendió cada palabra y respondió —Yo también tendré que cruzar esas puentes que no nos dejan pasar para encontrar paz.

Marina ofreció la rosa a Coatlicue, sabiendo que ella era su hermana, y se la comió. Marina, igual que Malintzin y también Malinche, llevaban las semillas del nuevo mundo dentro de ellas. La diferencia era que Marina lo sabía pero su

madre no. La Mar se levantó y abrazó a Marina. La Luna la arrulló y todas cantaban, bailaban y se reían porque todas sabían el secreto. Luego el sol quemó el *copalli* y dentro del humo las amigas y Painala se desaparecieron. Las semillas siguen allí y pronto florecerán nuevamente con el lenguaje de la Madre Tierra.

ARACELI LOREDO



C/S

LATIN WAY 1000

CONVULSI

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HYROGLIPHIX HAND, GUACHATONAL

OME, Ce, Ye, Los Angeles,
LOS, = LAND OF SERPENT.

ANGELES, ALTA, NATION, guides, EVERYONE, living, Equally, SURROUND.

STONES OF THE PAST, SPEAK TO DELIVER,

CRUSHED THE CRUST ON THE SIDE LIKE A RIVER.

FEED THE BRAIN NATURAL GRAIN,

ONLY THOSE OF THE EAGLE SHALL REMAIN,

THE SERPENT WITHIN, HOLDS THE SPEAR.

IF YOU'RE SINCERE, PASS THE FLAMES, WITH JOYFULL TEARS.

LISTEN, THE STONE CONVERTED BACK INTO SPIRITUAL,

AFTER THE DAY OF THE EYE, WE WILL JOIN THE FESTIVAL.

TODAY WE TRAVEL UP THE PYRAMID, NOT TO SACRIFICE.

JESUS DIED & RESURRECTED, ISN'T THAT NICE?

UP WE CLIMB, SOON WE WILL FIND,

WHO IS BEHIND OUR ADVENTUROUS MIND.

FROM LONG AGO WHEN THE PLAN AROSE,

TO SEE WHO WILL TRUST GOD, WHEN WE BATTLE FOES.

WHO WILL CRUMBLE AT THE SIGHT OF ENSLAVEMENT,

666, THE WEAK INTO THE PAVEMENT.

"KAN" USTEDES UNITE FOR PEACE?

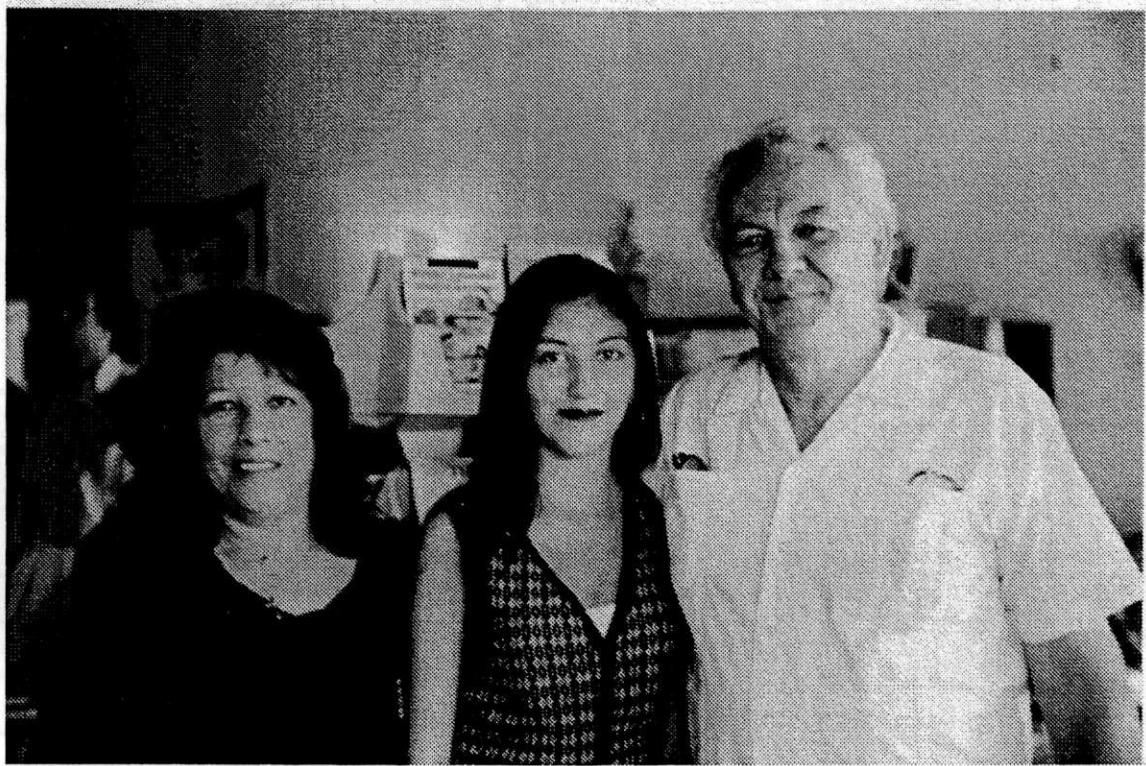
WE ALL ARE INDIOS AZTECA, SOMOS UNO, DIOS ES CHIEF.

WATCH THE SIGNS IN THE LAND,

YOU ARE GUIDED BY HYROGLIPHIX HAND.

ONIMAC
TEUIOTL
TONAL.

HAUBOUETDLE
NELA!



1948

—Don Newton

“spring” and “love”...that the king and his generals are not the most important people. that Humpty Dumpty died in vain, that the hungry children and their mothers, eyes turned away from official staring gazes of the boss, can take back everything finally, in a final way; that history can be unwound like yarn from the wrong spindle onto the spindle of justice. as we sang in the Sixties while we laughed at the cops on their horses with their long batons— “we can change the world.” that kind of love.

i really don't know why we were so free, we went everywhere and did everything we wanted to do we didn't have to lie very much, even though we did lie, of course, because parents never know how to accept the truth and always think the worst and so they must be reassured.

we had wandered around barefoot in the streets of Rio de Janeiro, riding our bikes all over the city, sitting on cliffs high above the ocean and hitch-hiking sailboat rides in the lagoon, always getting home in time, never an emergency besides broken windows or split lips...and when the bus came roaring through San Miguel de Allende, we'd all grab onto the back of it, holding onto the ladder leading up to the luggage rack on top, 10 or even 20 kids laughing and trying to hold onto each other if they couldn't reach the ladder, sometimes slipping and falling off onto the cobblestones and always, after the bus reached the top of the long climb, having to wait for the driver to slow down way out past the edge of town because he thought it was funny to scare us by speeding off toward Celaya-Salamanca-Irapuato as if he wasn't going to stop.

or in the *Plaza*, after we straightened out who could beat who up, sharing out the tourist-guide jobs with the other little kids — even though they couldn't speak English at all — and getting our 5 pesos apiece from the old-maid schoolteachers and retired businessmen for showing them the historic sites of San Miguel de Allende: *la Casa de la Corregidora*, and the old convent where the American art school had been started, and the steps up to the City Hall where Allende — scarred along his arm and side from his youth as a bullfighter — had galloped up on horseback into the midst of the Spaniards' meeting to tell them that the revolution had begun...in 1810, we told them, and it was supposed to have started in San Miguel but Hidalgo arrived the next evening after the *Crito*, with 5000 people who had marched from Dolores, behind the banner of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, all of them shouting “¡Viva la América!” y “¡Mueran los gachupines!”

the money from the tourists went toward candy and ice cream at the little cafes around the *Plaza*, where me and my brother were kind of celebrities, the only two American kids in town (except for Chris), and the young ex-GI's were good to us, telling us the candy would ruin our teeth and taking pictures of us to send home to their friends in the States. they had all come to San Miguel to study art, get drunk and forget about the Second World War. one of them taught me how to box when it seemed to be necessary — the little homeless kids who slept in the *Plaza* were pushing me around — so it happened that one day an amazing fight took place, with Chuso bloodying my nose and me bloodying his and everybody whistling and clapping and betting on the entertainment. but when the parochial school kid grabbed me and my brother after school, my boxing didn't do me any good. my brother ran away and about ten of them pulled me by my hair across the *Plaza* into the Cathedral and forced me to my knees. “now you're a Catholic,” they said. the priest was hiding behind one of the pillars by the side-altar, peeking out at us. “no i'm not,” i told them. “well, if you're not a Catholic, you're a Communist!” one of them told me, all excited. “o.k, i'm a Communist then.”

but fighting didn't happen every day, a lot of the time we were just as easy as i've ever been, calm and open to everyone and everything, sure of myself in those days before puberty shook everything up. we had a dog named Xuxu, an amazingly strong animal with dark brown hair and unconquerable energy. if we took him for a walk in town, it would take me and my brother all of our strength together just to hold onto his leash as he pulled us up the street. in our house, he chewed up everything and barked at every passing cloud. Juana, *la señora encargada de la casa*, sat in the kitchen and tried to

anything or running around naked in the patio, where our lemon tree bloomed in the sun next to the fountain. and sometimes we would just sit there in the sun like lizards, quiet next to the adobe walls, letting time pass.

every morning very early we walked to the public school, past the immense and strange pink Cathedral glowing in the morning sun above trees full of birds calling each other, welcoming the new day, every afternoon we came home running to Xuxu, our wonderful dog, full of joy as we hiked to the hills, first down across the flat lowland around the river, where the ladies were sitting on rocks with piles of clothing next to the clean-running water, pounding on the clothes with rocks and staining the river with milky plumes of soap.

all around the river, wide fields of tall grass spread out, with old paths running through, out to the ranchos and one old path up to the Tres Cruces, through a rocky arroyo, a steep climb to the top with Xuxu always way ahead of us, leaping from scraggly mesquites to cliffs and back like a goat. and happily chasing the goats along slopes leading to the top.

from above, where the crosses had been put up on the hill, we could see down along the long valley of the Bajío, high mountains in the distance and clear air with a long long way off smoke rising and flattening out high above the valley floor. this was the place we liked best, where nothing could make us be anything we didn't want to be.

we had come to San Miguel after my father was too sick to work as a foreign correspondent in Rio de Janeiro. one day in Rio we were on the beach at Leblon and two men who had been drinking got caught on the sandbar out past the first row of breakers. the surf along that beach is deadly because of the fierce undertow and the unpredictable currents that snake in from the South Atlantic and rip people away far from the shore, in a few seconds. my father rushed into the water because the lifeguard was way up the beach saving somebody else's life and the men were struggling in the waves, looking scared and floundering around. by the time he pulled one man back onto the beach, the other man was very far from shore. my father hurried back into the ocean and managed to bring him back up onto the sand. by this time, my father was gasping for breath and his face was like a picture of a santo, all lined and dark from lack of air. his emphysema wheezing kept on and on as he sat in the sun on the beach, trying to be friendly and polite to the two men's families who were all around us, offering him drinks and giving me and my brother candy. the most vivid thing of all, though, i remember my father's fingernails had turned purple. later he told me it was because all the oxygen in his body was rushing toward his lungs, trying to keep him alive.

so we came to San Miguel de Allende, an old town in the mountains of Guanajuato. everything sparkled and gleamed in the rarefied air, a mile and a half above sea level. our lungs burst with trying to breathe if we ran or jumped around. everything had to be learned again, speaking Spanish instead of Portuguese, finding new places to hide out in, to get away from the grownups.

sometimes i'd sit on the flat brick roof of our house as the sun went down over the Sierra Madre Occidental and look across at the mountains to the north, wondering about all the vast continent beyond, and almost always about New York City: that's where i really wanted to go! that's where the taxis were racing and the big hotels were full of hurrying crowds, fancy ladies smelling good and whispering their secrets and laughing till they cried...judging by the comic books (especially CRIME DOES NOT PAY comics) and stories told by my cosmopolitan friend Chris, New York City would be a very exciting and sexy place where Big Things were happening, big temptations and giant sized adventures every day. i could vaguely remember the tenement neighborhoods of Chicago and so i imagined the huge gray city where the poor kids of the comic books were struggling against fate, drawn into the magical glow of the bright lights and good food of fancy restaurants on their way down the one way road of Crime. but in our games, among the boys out in the streets, we always wanted to be the crooks against the cops, or the Indians against the cowboys. and in the mountains of Mexico, in that place we always thought of as far away from the greater world, we formed the Anti-Boy Scouts of America when we found out how the Boy Scouts' patriotic virtues meant they were waving the American flag in the Halls of Montezuma, while we had learned from the *Profesora* about *los Niños Heroes* and from my father about *Lázaro Cárdenas'* struggle against the American oil millionaires.

in the kitchen of our house in San Miguel, Juana and her daughters and her many friends sat

drinking *atole* and making *tortillas*, telling long stories about everybody in town, and about the *brujas* whose mischief made everyday life so complicated in that part of the world. Juana had been very young when her husband, a tall scraggly man who still wandered the streets and roads around San Miguel, had joined up with Villa's army as the military trains came through San Miguel on their way to the invasion of Mexico City. she was not about to let him go off by himself so she followed him onto the train and stayed with the army all through the difficult campaign, one of the thousands of *soldaderas* who often picked up the rifles of their fallen men and made the difference in determination and courage which yielded victory for the revolutionary armies. we knew her strength from personal experience and never even tried to contradict her if she was convinced she was right. all we would get would be a good smack across the face.

after the armies came back from Mexico City, Juana became an egg-lady and travelled all over that part of Guanajuato from rancho to rancho, a basket over her arm, for many years. she knew almost all of the rancheros and their families and would often take us over long and dusty roads to fiestas at distant, isolated places where all we got to eat was *mole poblano* as hot as it could be made and we never were allowed to drink the water!

as long as we were in San Miguel, our family was her responsibility, she cooked for us, her daughters came and cleaned our house, she took me and my brother everywhere, like to the cemetery on *El Día de los Muertos* where we sat among the graves and waited for sundown to eat the candy *calaveritas*. if my parents had to go away, Juana spread a *metate* at the entrance to the house and slept there, and certainly nobody could have been strong enough or foolish enough to even try to get past her. when my mother went to the *mercado*, Juana would make all the bargains, and to see the respect and nervousness of the market people when she came around would remind us of her importance in the community. at that time in San Miguel, it was common to see the babies with swollen bellies and fly swarming faces and the terrible poverty of the families from the countryside, like one of our friends whose pig had bitten off half her arm when she was little. Juana made a good living for her family because we were living in San Miguel, and years later her daughter still visits my brother and laughs about how she'd chase us with a broom to make us take a bath.

in the evening, sometimes we didn't play with the boys but went up the street to see some of the girls we knew from school. nothing was easy about these visits, though, and everybody had to behave exactly right or there would be no visit.

amor pegado a la reja, las muchachas sentadas y bien arregladas después de bañarse, no muy cerca a los barrotes de hierro, con ojos y bocas bonitas, sus tías y niñas sentadas atrás, adentro de la casa, con caras de jueces o de sargentos...hora tras hora pasando palabra por palabra, charlando y riendo allí en las ventanas, caras morenas con trenzas, o a veces con pelo suelto atrayéndonos a sus cuerpos finos.

in the dark of the long streets, cobbles along the center and high sidewalks with fast running gutters near the center of town, but up the long streets cobbled from side to side. every morning *las señoras con sus escobas*, all of the household waste dumped into the running stream in the center of the street washing down through the town to the river.

living in the highlands, where we travelled around from town to town in my father's 1947 Kaiser, an ill made vehicle ("not even sealed beam headlights!" my father would say, in his strong conviction that the car was worthless, but he himself totally ignorant of any mechanical science). the lonely mountain villages and cobblestoned *pueblitos*, each with its *plaza* and government office, and its square one room restaurant with bullfight posters and one lightbulb at the top center of the room, *carne de res con sopa y arroz*, and my brother and i would always joke that every meal had to have soup to begin it, without soup it would be like not having dinner, *la cena*.

riding the complicated curves and narrow ledges where the Pan-American highway and the other Mexican highways twist among fog shrouded mountains, or else in sunlight green with mesquite and chaparral, wild and open to the sky, where we came upon the terrible spectacle of the man dead in the road, flies on his whiskered face, while his friend stood drunk and crying and hanging onto the edge of the highway and we kept on going right over the dead man (with a bump i can still hear), because of the crying man's *machete* and because, i suppose, we were on our way to someplace very important and

unique, someplace my father had read about. for we travelled and lived our different kind of life in his imagination, following the sun to the south, away from Chicago and the terrible winter where he almost died of the cold.

on Saturdays and Sundays we'd leave the house early to spend the whole day out in the hills, letting Xuxu run and bark at everything and just following him wherever he decided to go. once we took Chris along to show him the Tres Cruces, which he wasn't even paying attention to, telling fantastic unbelievable stories about rich people's parties with swimming pools full of champagne, New York and Miami, playgrounds of millionaires like the wealthy Americans in their palace in Rio...or about his adventures in Europe and Africa or more fables about rich women and their expensive tastes. we were almost up to the top of the hard climb when we saw Xuxu all the way across the *arroyo*, running along the steep edge of the cliff chasing a little black and white goat. then we saw the goat go tumbling down into a scraggly bush just below the edge, and we started yelling at Xuxu to get away from her, to come over to where we were, all of us laughing at the little goat thrashing its feet against the cliff and bleating and tossing its head. by the time we got over to where Xuxu was still barking at the goat, a man was coming down the hill from above us and he was carrying a rifle. Xuxu turned toward him and immediately started barking and jumping around like the crazy little dog that he was. we were calling him back and just as i was going to run over and get him, the man raised the rifle and fired one shot right at him. he crumpled up and lay silent. the man walked past us to the edge of the cliff, reached down and picked the little goat up with one hand and walked away. i remember we had been telling him that the dog wouldn't hurt him, but i don't remember what he looked like or what the gun sounded like. suddenly Xuxu was just lying there, bleeding.

Chris was very quiet for once and we all bent over Xuxu, trying to get him to stand up but he couldn't move, his tongue was out and he was panting and looking up at us. it seemed like for an hour or more we just sat there crying and waiting to see if Xuxu would get up. then Chris jumped up and said he'd go get help and ran off down the *arroyo* while my brother and i stayed there without talking, hardly even breathing as Xuxu's blood kept coming out of him through my shirt that i had wrapped around him.

the horrible thought that our little dog was going to die kept coming back to me but i stopped thinking and instead just sat there numb, looking dumbly back and forth from Xuxu to my brother and back to the little brown dog again, the sun hot and the sky so blue and the rest of the goats all wandering around right next to us. after about another hour, our friend Izzy came up the bottom of the arroyo with his jeep and my father and Chris brought a board up to where we were holding onto Xuxu. we carried him down to the car on the board and then to the doctor's house, but they couldn't do anything, his backbone was shattered and they had to put him to sleep.

for months and years afterwards, Chris told us the amazing story of his rescue mission, how he ran all the way down the arroyo and past the river, where he saw an old woman in her yard with a white horse, and he asked her for the horse, which she let him take, so he galloped into San Miguel to our house where my father and Izzy were playing chess.

as the years went by i decided that maybe for once Chris was telling the truth, and sometimes in the confusion of dreams i mix up Chris riding through the streets to get help for Xuxu with the galloping figure of Allende, on his way to the *Plaza*, just ahead of the running crowd, leading the glorious revolution.

DON NEWTON is active in his community of Glassell Park. Besides working as a machinistk he writes poetry and stories which he reads to the Con Safos Writers' Workshop.



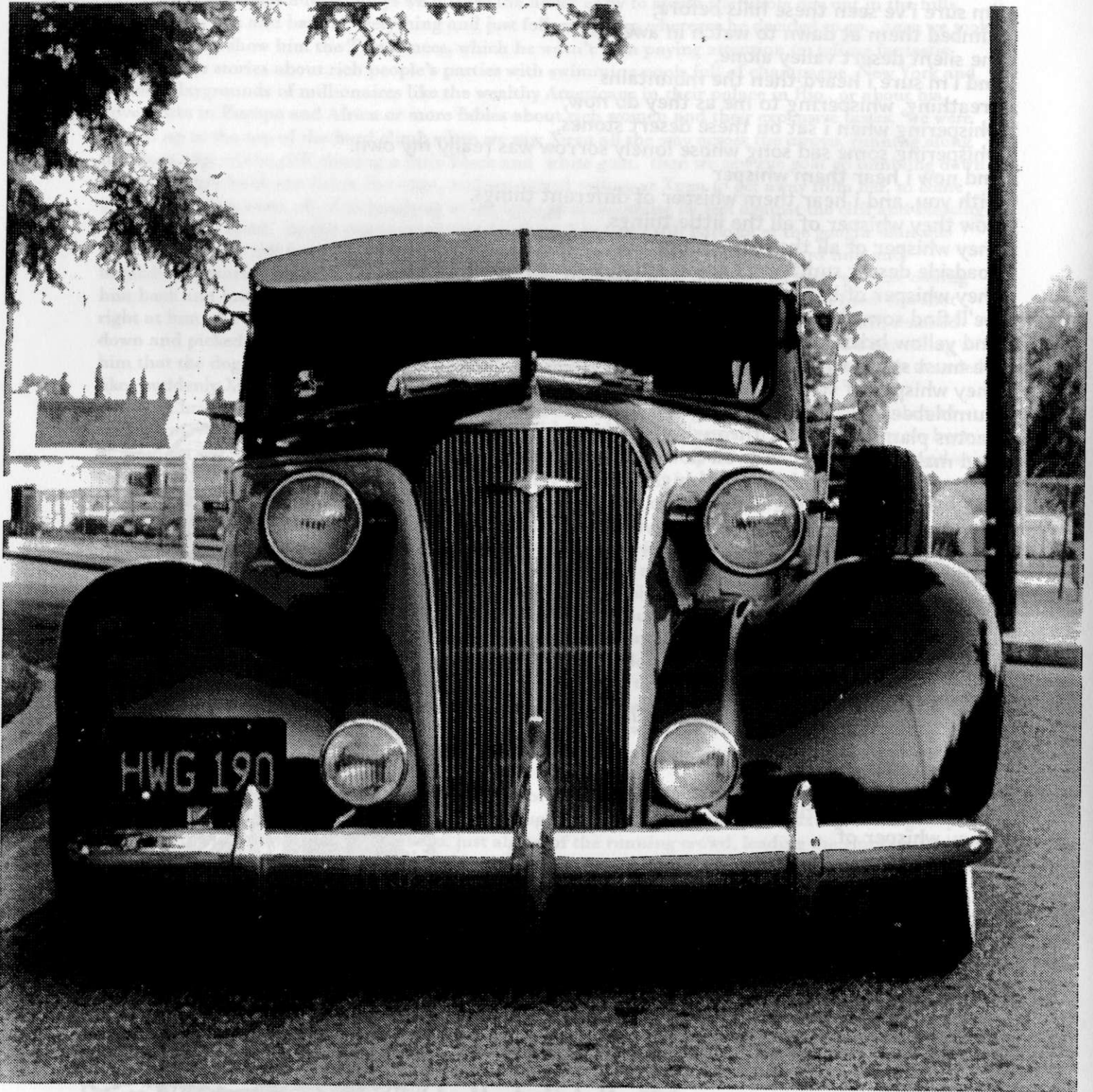
they whisper grace

i'm sure i've seen these hills before,
climbed them at dawn to watch in awe
the silent desert valley alone.
and i'm sure i heard then the mountains
breathing, whispering to me as they do now,
whispering when i sat on these desert stones,
whispering some sad song whose lonely sorrow was really my own.
and now i hear them whisper
with you, and i hear them whisper of different things.
now they whisper of all the little things,
they whisper of all the little things like
roadside desert sunflowers above a flat, wash-streaked valley;
they whisper of beavertail cactus and gold desert poppies
we'll find someday,
and yellow brittlebush flowers, and blue and purple flowers
we must stoop together to see;
they whisper of symmetrical ant hills and scary black bugs that look like
bumblebees,
cactus plants that stick through your thin white shoes
and make you bleed, and red-flowered desert ocotillo trees.
they whisper of all the little things,
they whisper of all the little things like
the eagles, the gypsy kings and stevie ray's little wing;
they whisper of lotería, and cocos frescos, and yaqui
ancestry; of
tecate, and s'mores, and
beans.
they whisper of all the little things,
they whisper of all the little things,
they whisper,
it's not so much us—as it is all the little things.
and
they whisper of
grace in anza-borrego, and
grace in all the little things,
they whisper of
you.

—rubén mendoza



"CON Safos Classic"



2/5

Angel Con Cuernos

George "Chapo" Blackwater

I used to help her dig through the large trash bins until we got the entire bolt out. Sometimes there were a few oil spots on the outer layers of cloth but these would be unrolled and the rest of the bolt would be perfectly fine.

During WWII, sewing factories in the garment district, located in the Skid Row section of Los Angeles, would discard all the thread and half-bolts of cloth left at the end of a run of G.I. shirts and hospital gowns. Entire factories were devoted to the salvage of rags. All but the best cotton and wool were discarded. Synthetic cloth was thrown into the trash. My mother knew where these troves lay hidden.

Going to the garment district with my mother was an adventure for me when I was a little boy. Seeking cloth treasure was taken seriously because from this treasure came new shirts for me and my dad, dresses and blouses for my sister and curtains for the house. The last person to get anything out of the endeavor was—you guessed it—my mother.

We'd roll up several shopping bags and she'd take my hand. We'd walk to the end of the 9 Car line across the street from Lincoln Park. There used to be a skating rink there. Blacks were allowed to skate there on Tuesday. Thursday was Mexican night. I wasn't allowed out at night and so I longed to go skating.

We'd look in the empty rink as we walked by and my mother would tousle my hair and tell me, "We're going to take you skating...On a Saturday." There was a firm commitment in her voice that only became clear to me as I grew older. I never went skating there.

Once we were walking by the hedges in front of the rink when she grabbed me and ducked behind two bushes. I stuck my head out to see what was going on. A taxi filled with sailors had just pulled up to the curb. The sailors piled on top of two young Mexican boys. The boys wore drapes—the zoot-suit pants that were so much in vogue during those years. The sailors beat the crap out of those boys. A street car conductor yelled at them to stop. One of the sailors called out, "These Mexican pachucos are raping our wives while we're off fighting in the war."

My mother held me tighter. I could hear her whisper in my ear, "And your Uncle Efren is in a foxhole somewhere in Italy fighting for his country." One of the guys that got beat up was Fernie Pacheco. He lived three houses away from us. Later, he joined

the paratroopers and was killed sometime near the end of the war.

My mother had very little formal education. She got to the Fourth Grade before she had to quit school to go to work. She washed dishes in a Chinese restaurant. The owner used to warn her not to go out front because she would scare the customers away. He tried to seduce her one night. My mother resisted and got fired for her effort.

A little later in the war, she got a job at the Monterey Gardens. It was a pseudo-Mexican restaurant on Broadway near First Street.

Los Angeles had four dailies then: The Times, The Daily News, The Herald, The Los Angeles Express, and La Opinión. The newspaper buildings were all clustered in the same area near the restaurant. With all those newspapers and the railroad depot right down the street, the place was crawling with reporters, war correspondents, and G.I.'s. They crowded into the Monterey Gardens for some "Spanish" food as they euphemistically called it.

Mom was a real looker in those days and she would good naturedly put down the reporter's and G.I.'s attempts to pinch her butt—while saving her tips in large mayonnaise jars.

I used to go to the restaurant after school to help her make cole slaw and carrot salad for the next day—and to help her count those tips. The house we lived in cost thirty-five hundred dollars. That was a lot of money in those days. A working man could expect to earn about eighty dollars a month. My mother saved her tips and paid for our house before the end of the war. She also saved a sign she tore down from a house she had once thought of renting. It read:

For Rent
No dogs
No Mexicans.

After the war, a few people from the *barrio* formed an active group called the Community Service Organization. My mother was right there. At first they devoted themselves to getting street lights and paved streets into the Mexican neighborhoods. As time went on they got a little more militant and spoke out against police brutality and political corruption. César Chávez, of the United Farm Workers, was once a part of that group. They helped get Chicanos elected to office—guys like Ed Roybal who was running for

Los Angeles City Council and later became a congressman.

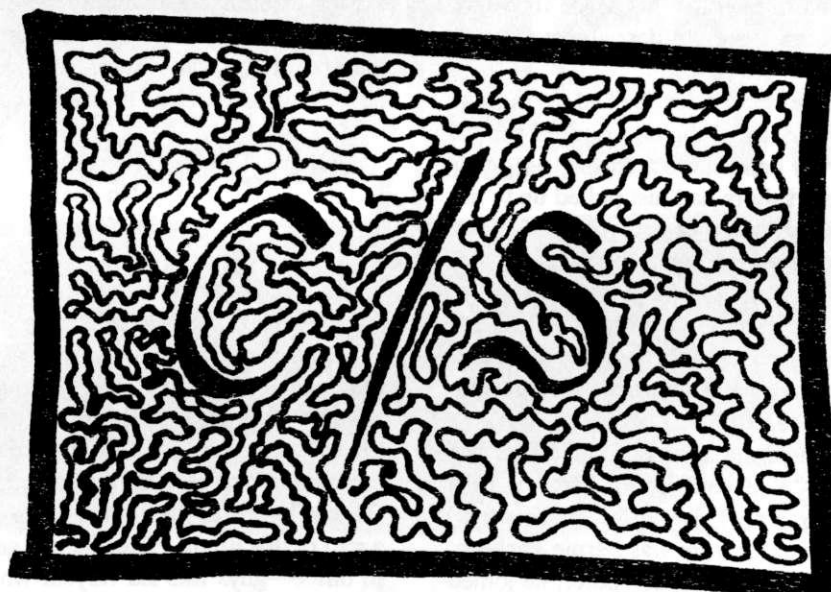
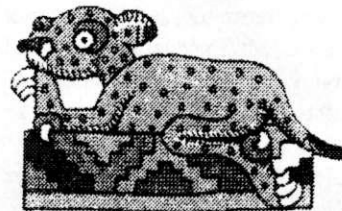
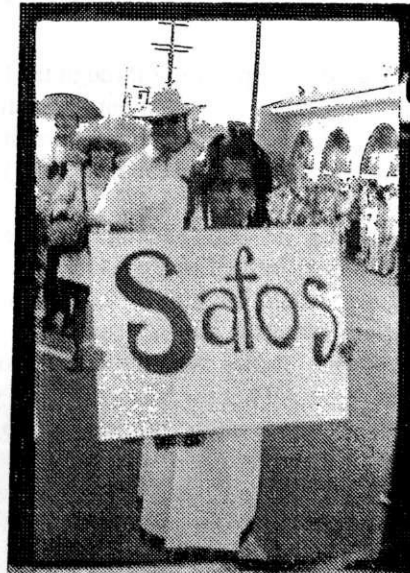
Years later, I became active in the Chicano Movement because of the early training I had at my mother's knee. Don't think mama stopped being liberal because of her advancing age, either.

I came home one day from Laguna Park. I had a big *chichón* on my head. The police had rioted that day and I got in the way of a storm trooper's boot. It was the day Rubén Salazar was killed. Calmly applying cold compresses to my swollen noggin, with a gleam in her eye mom leaned close to my ear and asked, "Did you get in a few licks, *mi hijito*?"

I'm just a *ruco molacho* now but every now and then I think of my mother out trying to get Chicanos to register to vote, stuffing envelopes to get the right politician elected and telling the high school counselor to get screwed when he tried to channel me into trade school.

Doing her own sewing, cutting my hair, ironing for others, scrounging the garbage bins at the Sizzler for meat scraps for her dog, snitching cuttings from Mary Pickford's pampered geraniums, and singing Mexican revolutionary songs for my enjoyment are the ways I remember her best. And she'd roll over in her grave if I forgot to mention her *chile verde* and that she was the first lady on our block to learn to do the Mambo.

GEORGE BLACKWATER (aka George "Chapo" Meneses) is a writer born on the Hualapai Reservation in Arizona. He grew up in East Los Angeles and is a retired high school principal. He lives in Bishop, California.



cjo

Wildflower

dear gracious alluring wildflower
never impart your true source
you are delicate
your significance
more remote than people appreciate
or can cherish

bide your time and emerge
only when the heart is there
to equal yours

solely a bloom
but when there is subsistence
to nourish your vitality
for affection

select and capture
an unselfish breeze to another flower
that will be favorable for blossoming
into the maiden you can be

—Ricardo Vega



Romantic Warrior

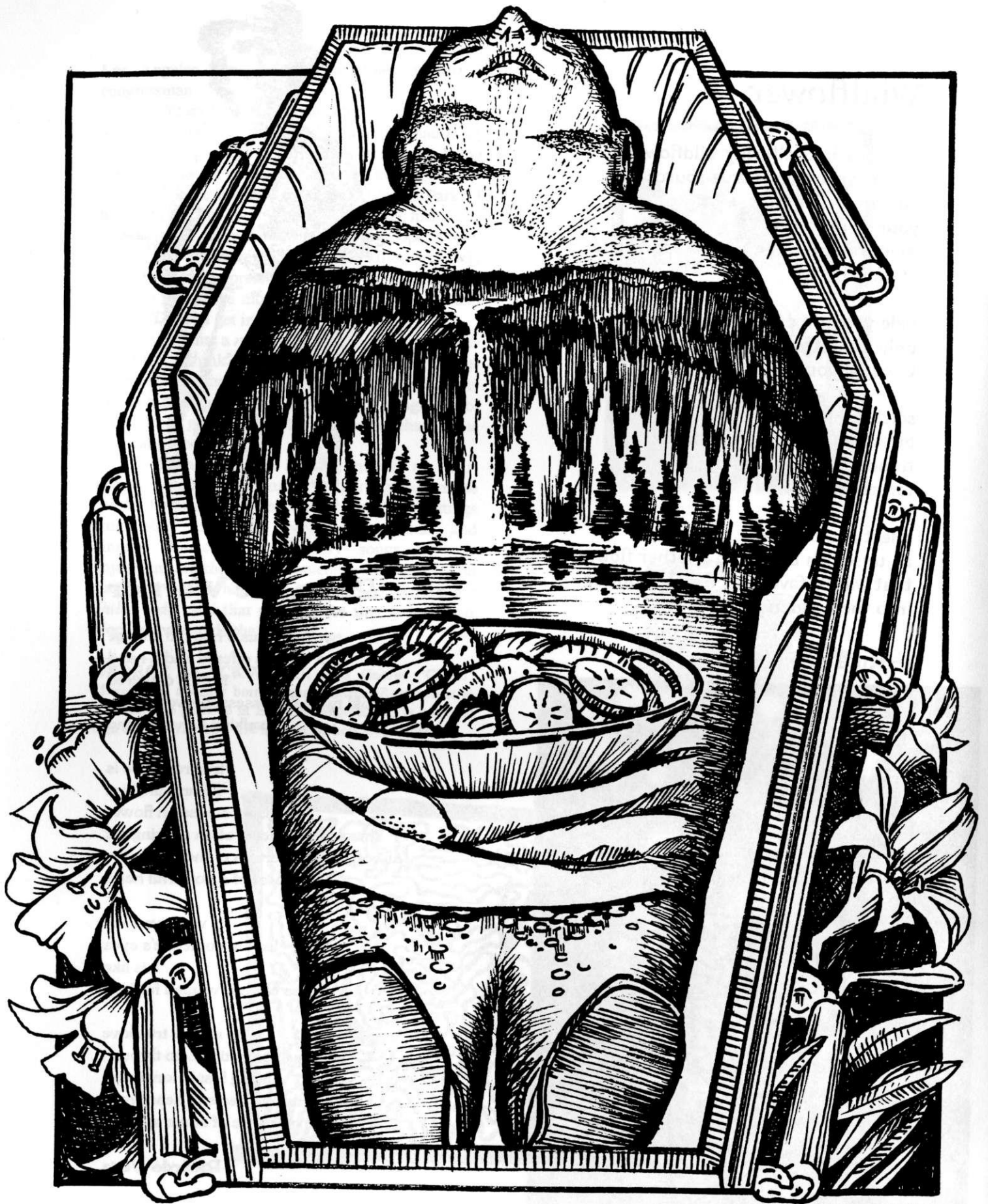
two individuals hope to engage
a hand is offered and a hand
is then captured
behold two self-possessed sweethearts
walking hand in hand

true romance is
a hummingbird
caressing a passion flower
the pleasing meow of an adoring cat
all consuming warmth of the sun's rays
the beat of a powerful heart

when you see
love in someone's eyes
it is like
a chalice of your wanted feelings

to realize true love
you must sometimes go through
being lost in loneliness
the humbling affects of heartbreak
and the experience of stone sadness

—Ricardo Vega



MIK PEREZ '95

SECOND THOUGHTS

—RUBÉN MENDOZA

He started, as usual, by noticing his feet. These shoes were a bit small and cramped, but they would do. At the bottom of his left foot, though, he could feel a small pebble, or a sliver of a toenail perhaps, which poked into his sole each time he wiggled his shoe. He dreaded the thought of stepping down on this foot, because he knew he would not be able to remove the thing which poked at him. So he just wiggled his toes and scrunched his muscles to try to shift the thing to a more comfortable position.

There was also something nagging at him, some thought he could not yet grasp. It was something he was forgetting, perhaps, some feeling or idea that shivered there on the edge of his consciousness like an elusive shadow he was not sure he'd seen. It would come to him, though. He was certain.

He worked his way up his legs. The ankles and knees felt more stiff and rigid than usual. He tried bending them, but this brought dull pain and a tingling sensation at the base of his spine, both of which subsided when he gave up efforts to move. He needed his pain-killers if he wanted to make it to the store to pick up some cucumbers and shrimp. He'd promised her he would make her some of his famous *mariscos campechanos*. Crab, avocado, tomatoes, clams, onions, *cilantro*, *abulón*, cucumbers, and shrimp. Every Sunday evening for years now he'd made enough for the two of them to enjoy while the sun went down.

But this week the *mariscos* would have to wait, maybe until tomorrow. He continued up his thighs to his groin. His thighs were numb, and his groin felt like some kind of black void of un-feeling. The urge to fornicate had begun to subside years ago with his youth, but this was different. It felt now as though nothing were there, as though there never had been. In a way, he felt strange relief in this. He reached for his penis to make sure it was still there, but then thought better of it. There was no rush. It could wait.

He noticed next his stomach and his intestines, which no longer grumbled with the gastrointestinal difficulties of the past few years. He sighed in relief at this merciful, if temporary, respite, and moved up to his chest. His heart was very quiet, and his lungs felt somehow cleaned of the layers of blackness years of smoking had coated them with. He seemed to breathe easier now, and he attributed this to the dryness of the room.

The shadow still shivered there in his mind, but suddenly he noticed that the pain in his legs was gone, even when he moved them. He stretched out his fingers and marveled at the ease with which he created two wrinkled fists at his sides. The arthritis had decided to leave him today, and he smiled. Again, he attributed this to the climate.

Up his neck to his face...he felt his cheeks, clean-shaven and sticky, perhaps with sweat. He rolled his eyes around and ground his teeth, then licked the fronts of his top row of teeth. They were a little dirty—he had not brushed since...since...for quite a while, but that also could wait a bit longer.

Finally, he came to his brain. He could feel it working there in the darkness, sending and receiving electro-chemical signals through synapses and neurotransmitters which branched out to every point in his body. One plus one equals two, he thought, just to make sure everything was working okay. Two and two is five, he thought, just for fun. He smiled.

Now he could turn his attention outside himself. Still, that thing nagged at him. But he knew he would remember it in time, and he listened around him. A voice spoke in solemn tones in another room close by. He thought he heard his name mentioned, and there were other familiar things in what the voice said, but he couldn't quite grasp them. Now that the pain in his legs was gone, he was thinking again about going to the market for some cucumbers and fresh shrimp. He'd promised her he would make it for her.

He heard music. It was sad: an organ, and a voice which sang in Spanish above the instrument. He could smell a strange chemical smell, something oddly familiar—formaldehyde, perhaps, and that shimmering idea almost crystallized as he struggled to hold it within the smell, but then he smelled her. In all the years he'd known her, she'd always worn a light floral scent which mixed well with the smells of her body. He smelled it now and smiled, because for some reason, it reminded him of that evening above Monument Valley.

At the time, the moment had passed almost unnoticed like so many others in youth—probably lasting no more than a second. Yet now he grasped at it desperately as her smell filled his lungs because he knew it had something to do with what he was supposed to remember. Her smell was like orchids, and as it filled him, he closed his eyes and thought about that evening.

They were young, and he remembered, as they sat against each other on a wall overlooking the valley, how in love they'd been. They'd watched the setting desert sun paint the valley dark red as the warm early evening wind kissed them both and lulled them into silence. Her hair smelled like warm rain, and he remembered the heat of her body pressing up against his.

Even at that age, he had known for quite some time already that there was no God. And yet here, in this valley, he felt something far greater than himself, some ineffable presence beyond himself which brought him close to tears, and close to something he knew he might never grasp. It threatened to swallow him up, and he remembered how his breath had escaped his lungs as that thing held him in its power, pushing him with its sheer immensity until it reached a deafening point and he'd turned suddenly and buried his face into her neck in some strange mixture of desperate fear and exultation. Her smell of orchids and warm rain had filled him up and saved him. Afterwards, that moment above the valley was forever wed, through mysterious synaptic connections and pathways he would never understand, to the smells of her body and perfume.

And now as he thought about that moment, he suddenly realized what he had been feeling as he looked out at that valley so many years ago, and what he had been trying all his life to remember and understand. The idea crystallized in his brain. It was so clear to him now, and he could no longer ignore it. It was so clear, and he wanted, needed, desperately to tell her, before it was too late.

"Honey," he tried to whisper. He could tell she was very near. "Honey, listen to me. That time at Monument Valley, when we were so young, on the way to New Orleans, remember? Honey, it wasn't the valley, or the wind, or your perfume. It was inside me.

The...the valley was just a valley, and the wind was just wind, and your smell...your smell was just your smell. And the valley, and the wind, and your smell, will always be there.

"But at that moment, they were everything. Everything. Do you understand? For that second, they were everything because I made them everything. I made the valley beautiful. I made the wind sublime. I made your smell ecstatic. And in return, they made me real, for however brief a moment, because these feelings, and the beauty, and the ecstasy, all came from inside of me—and from nowhere else. These were things that came from inside me and from nowhere else.

"These things were my experience of the valley—they allowed me to experience the valley, to appreciate it all, and no one could ever take that away from me. This ability to appreciate it all, even for a second, made me real for that brief second, and that's all we can ever really hope for...but that's enough. They made me human, and that's enough. They are what makes us real, and human. They are what makes us, honey. Do you understand?"

He had not actually spoken as she stood above him crying (he couldn't), but she was nodding, and he knew some-how she'd heard. He had remembered and she heard him. *I just need some cucumbers and shrimp*, he thought, and she nodded. *I love you*, he thought, and still she nodded. He breathed a sigh of relief and felt his body relax. He could rest; she knew. She understood.

He smiled, and then, suddenly, another second began. He started, as usual, by noticing his feet.

RUBEN MENDOZA is a native of San José, California. He is a 1994 graduate of USC where he majored in Literature. Look for his poem, "They Whisper Grace", in this issue.




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ARNIE and PORFI

In the last issue of C/S mag Porfi had given the ever bragging Arnie a dose of his seldom used but potent Mata Rata Salsa...rumored to have strange effects upon the faint of tongue.....

by
SERG
HERNANDEZ
5/95



BALLS OF FIRE... AYE MADRE... Arnie yells as the potent Habanero chili kick in with a vengeance

AYEEE..WHAT THE HELL IS THAT...



Arnie staggers out of the restaurant belching fire, tears steam from his bulging eyes...however something else has appeared from the smoke.



WHO..WHO.. IN THE HELL ARE... YOU

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS

A small figure of a woman has appeared out of the fiery mist...she takes a long cautious look at Arnie before she speaks.....



I am the spirit of the revolution, and who are you... Arnie is frozen in fear and cannot speak. The woman continues, "I have been in that bottle for many years now...I am finally out...finally free...!



QUE FASA... POSOLE BREATH

HAVE I GONE MAD

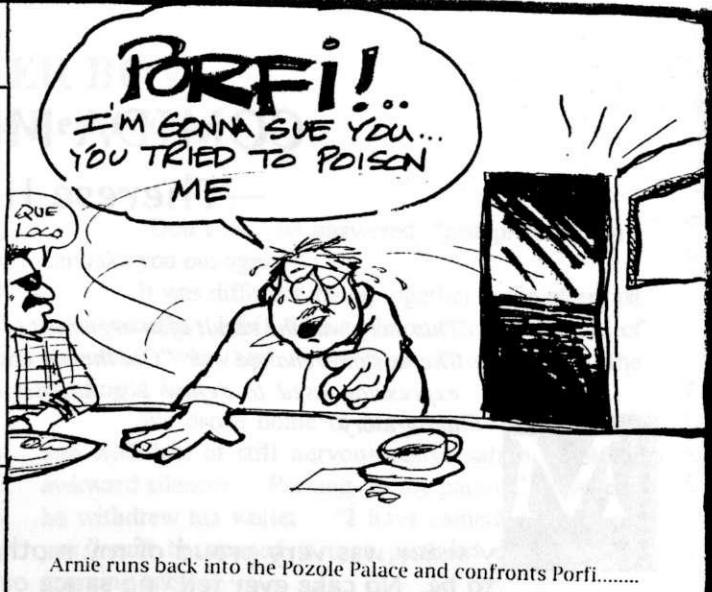
WHERE DID YOU COME FROM ?

FROM THAT BURRITO GRAVEYARD YOU CALL A STOMACH



The bottle not only contained the hottest dam chili that Arnie has ever tasted but something else.. something weird.

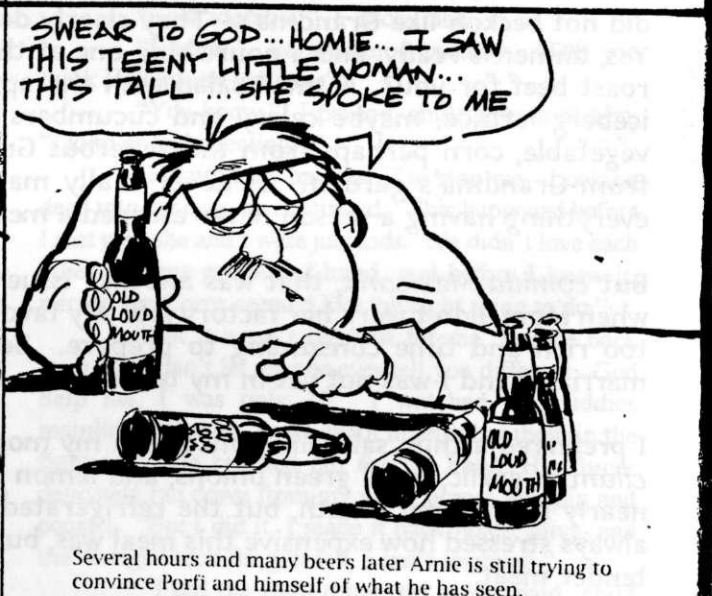
Arnie is convinced that he is going mad and makes a bee line for the safety of Porfi's place.



Arnie runs back into the Pozole Palace and confronts Porfi.....

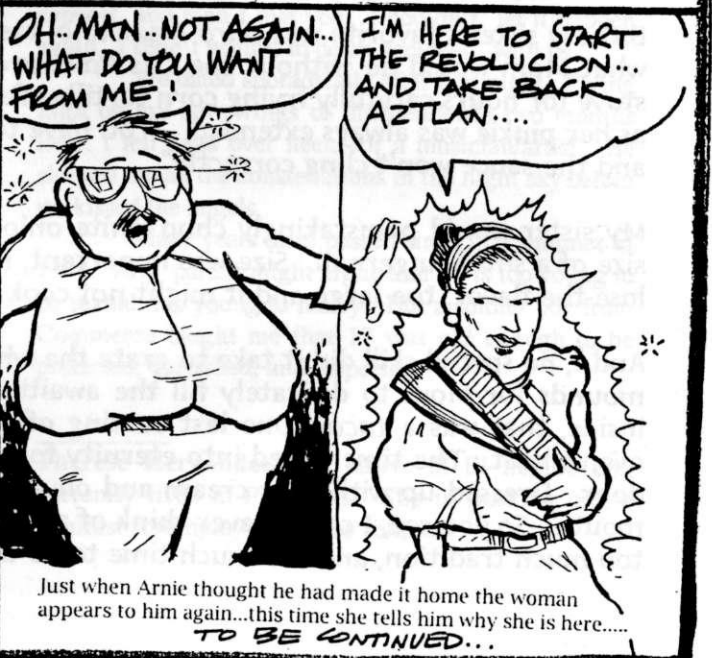


Porfi cools Arnie down and offers him a beer....but Arnie is not dissuaded he is positive that he has seen something supernatural.



Several hours and many beers later Arnie is still trying to convince Porfi and himself of what he has seen.

Finally Arnie, self appointed mayor and Notary Public of the barrio musters enough courage to stagger home...However someone is waiting for him.



Just when Arnie thought he had made it home the woman appears to him again...this time she tells him why she is here....
TO BE CONTINUED...

COMIDA MEXICANA

—Therese Hernández

This story was the result of an argument of who could hurt each other the most. The last interchange was, "Oh, the big enchilada." I replied, "Well, that's an expression used to define Los Angeles." He answered with, "I meant it derogatory."

M

My sister was very proud of my mother's ability in the kitchen. She had a right to be. No cake ever fell, no sauce or soup too salty. The smell of home cooking did not beckon like Grandma's. They clearly defined my mother's strength and character. Yes, dinner is ready, and a nourishing one at that. Heavy on the protein, extra chicken or roast beef for you? A small salad with the appropriate color combination of tomato vs. iceberg lettuce, maybe celery and cucumbers or radish were allowed. Only one starch vegetable, corn perhaps from the generous Green Giant? Or thick and luscious zucchini from Grandma's garden? It never really mattered, but the regularity, the order, and everything having a reason never escaped a meal.

But *comida Mexicana*, that was another issue entirely. It was only prepared on Fridays when Mom didn't work her factory job. My favorite meal was in the summertime. *Mole* was too rich and time consuming to prepare. Besides, it was a meal for celebrations, like marriage, and I was not yet in my teens.

I preferred a thin, salsa-like concoction my mother called Abalone cocktail. Fresh tomato, *cilantro*, garlic, small green onions, and lemon juice mixed with fiery hot tiny *chiles*. They nearly burned my mouth, but the refrigerated liquid beckoned me over and over. Mom always stressed how expensive this meal was, but I could never get enough of the chewy, yet tender meat.

But my sister's favorite was *puro Mexicano*, tasty and time consuming. I always wondered what Mom would do without the *Las Palmas* canned sauce? She'd stand in front of the stove for hours carefully frying corn tortilla after corn tortilla lifting with index and thumb as her pinkie was always extended. "You have to turn it the right way, or it'll come out flat and the sauce won't cling correctly".

My sister would painstakingly chop white onion after green ones in uniform squares the size of a small fingernail. Size was important, never minced, that would become soggy and lose the flavor, too large and it might not cook completely.

And I, no special skill did it take to grate the white jack cheese and cheddar. I'd leave small mounds for Mom to delicately fill the awaiting sauce covered tortillas. Never put meat inside, that was a *taco*! One last coating of sauce and more cheese before entering the oven's heat. The time ticked into eternity for my sister until that tray emitted out of the door. Dressed up with sour cream and olives, all that work ready for someone's hungry mouth. So you see, I could never think of an *enchilada* as derogatory, it's too much effort, too much tradition, and too much time to be treated flippantly.

SOLDIER BOY

— Therese Hernández

I pulled down the dusty photo albums during Spring cleaning. Tiptoeing to reach the volumes, the weight became unbalanced, and one book fell open to the page of my high school prom.

Without my wire-framed glasses, I appeared carefree in my nearsighted bliss. A salon-scented hairstyle and obligatory orchid corsage decorated my antique, flowing black dress. My escort was dressed in a '70's bell-bottomed white tuxedo, accentuating his morenito, nearly mulatto complexion. He wore aviator-style tinted glasses, a thick and droopy black mustache with his full, almost kinky black hair past his shoulders. As my back leaned into his chest, his arm circled my waist, and his other hand gently cradled mine.

I was all of a tender 17, and he a 21-year old ex-Marine Viet Nam veteran. I can still remember passing drinks out at the prom table. "Okay, that's two Tom Collins, four Tequila Sunrises, and a Harvey Wallbanger for me". Being of legal drinking age, he ordered cocktails for the whole group, and I grinned rebelliously at the glaring, fuming nuns chaperoning the event.

Four months had passed since we had begun dating. Our compatibility rarely wavered, and passions grew hot as the summer air seared. Concerned, my older sister worriedly asked, "Are you using birth control?" "Not yet," I answered slowly, "If we're still together in the fall, maybe."

Summer burned all through late July, he ended our romance, and I was crushed. The Santa Ana winds blew away nearly all the smog that summer. Elderly neighbors said El Sereno looked like an Art Deco postcard, but I hardly noticed.

I replayed every conversation, every last moment together through my head, but it made no sense. I couldn't understand his decision. He had no way of knowing about my Fall resolution, and my pride wouldn't tell him. My moods swung from moping to anger, to complete indifference. I was determined to focus my energy on campus life that Fall. The breeze blew a friendly chill with new friends and the excitement of learning.

In late December, an unexpected knock sounded at the door. There he stood with a two-pound box of See's chocolates and our favorite band's newest album covered in Christmas wrapping.

"I'm embarrassed," I stammered, blushing. "I have nothing for you."

"Don't be," he answered, "just promise me I can take you out again."

It was different being together again after just a few months. I felt like a platonic friend instead of someone who had never been satisfied with the evening's kiss.

We drove home in his metallic blue custom van with bits of still nervous conversation breaking awkward silences. Parking in my parents' driveway, he withdrew his wallet. "I have something to show you," and he opened it to a picture of a chubby, grinning baby.

"How adorable!" I exclaimed.

"I know," he answered proudly, "Did you think I'd have an ugly one?!"

"You know," I paused, smiling back at him, "I kind of had a feeling..."

He raised his hand as if to stop me. Looking deep into my eyes, he continued, "This happened before I met you, she and I were just kids. We didn't love each other. Things got out of hand, and before I knew it, joining the Corps seemed like the right thing to do."

"But it wasn't the best for me, I came back from Hell, don't let anyone ever tell you different. God help me, I was only 19. I watched my buddies mainlining heroin. I saw death mainlining them in the fighting." He reached out for my hand. His finger delicately ran down from my wrist, across my vein and paused. "But I did it. I made it back home, alive, and the things I took for granted, I can't anymore."

"I did the right thing, got a job, paid child support, and then I met you. I couldn't let it happen again. I didn't want it to be an accident...with us."

We dated sporadically after that night. Flying high on my new wings of independence two months later, I fell head over heels for a musician/artist. He showed me all the constellations in the night sky before we kissed the angels.

Many years have passed since that summer of 1974. Any parent might argue that 17 is too young to be sexual, too young to marry. But a soldier boy from Commerce taught me that 17 was old enough to be protected, cherished, and respected.

Therese Hernández is a native of El Sereno and currently lives in Pasadena. She is working on a feminist screenplay and hates "oldies".

The Prize

—Alberto Ledesma

In 1982, four years before Immigration granted resident status to my entire family, I thought that I would be deported. I was sixteen years old and though I had just been awarded a scholarship to go to visit Washington, D.C., I was terrified that upon my arrival to the nation's capital, I would be sent back to México.

It all started in Ms. Wolfe's Current Affairs class. Well known as Fremont High's best teacher, Ms. Wolfe took great pride in preparing her pupils for college, drilling all her students with the kind of information that only political pundits could appreciate. Whether it was a positive proportion of lucky guesses on the quizzes I took, or the good fortune of being one of the most articulate of that year's crop of sophomores, Ms. Wolfe quickly identified me as one of the "smart" ones.

The responsibilities that accompanied being labeled as smart by Ms. Wolfe were not great; all I had to do was repeat useless, and oftentimes imaginary trivia—the kind that made celebrities out of wimpy-looking men who managed to phrase their answers in the form of a question every night on Jeopardy. Another benefit to the label, however, was membership in the school's debate team, something I truly enjoyed.

Every Wednesday, at lunch time, Ms. Wolfe had the half-dozen that she had selected from the almost three thousand students of Fremont High, joust each other with arguments and counter-arguments about almost every issue that had made that year's cover of Time. As the students took the podium, as they fumbled through their notecarded facts, red-faced and wildeyed, making sure to use the thumb for emphasis, Ms. Wolfe sat in the back of her classroom enjoying the show, taking careful notes of who made what good point, and who expressed that unconfident pose.

Soon, I became one of Ms. Wolfe's favorites to watch, as I was especially adept at turning my opponent's arguments against him. In class, she would sometimes ask me to repeat the points that I had made earlier at lunch, while my classmates grimaced unapprovingly, knowing that I had borrowed those points from them.

"The problem with the death penalty," I would assert confidently, "is not that it is state sanctioned murder, as my opponent wants us to believe." Then, after taking a pause, I would blow out my chest and proudly enunciated, "the problem with the death penalty is that our society has not used it effectively to deter murders." It really did not matter what I argued. If what I said sounded remotely reasonable, I would usually win the debate.

About a month before summer arrived, Ms. Wolfe asked me to come see her after class. She told me that she had submitted my name to a community scholarship committee that wanted to send a "Hispanic" student to Washington, D.C. All I had to do was show up for an interview. I did not think much about what the trip to Washington meant, at that point I just felt good about the compliment that Ms. Wolfe had paid me. After all, not even Edward, the only straight A student in school had been recommended.

At home, no one knew about Ms. Wolfe's recommendation. I did not see much of my mother or father because I worked at a restaurant until late. When I arrived home, I locked myself in the only bedroom of the house, where I read and did my homework. On weekends, father liked to spend most of his day at the race track or playing billiards, and mother spent most of her time doing housework or saying rosaries. It thus came as a surprise to them to find out that I had won the trip to Washington.

The committee had been impressed with me from the moment that I entered the room. I usually wore a tie and black slacks after school because it was the required uniform for my work as a busboy at Chuck's Restaurant. They understood my choice of wardrobe as a good case of anticipated protocol—something which the other competing students lacked.

The interview consisted of three questions: they asked me to discuss what kind of leadership I thought the Hispanic community needed; what were my aspirations in college, and what questions I would ask my congressman in Washington. Because I was undocumented, I panicked at the thought that I would have to face "my congressman," a man for whom neither my parents nor I could ever vote for under our present condition. I recognized at that point what going to Washington involved. In spite of my nervousness, I kept my cool, letting the other students answer ahead of me. I then decided that I would not like to go to Washington, but I did not want to disappoint Ms. Wolfe. This is when I

concluded that the best way to lose the competition was by being vague, but not obnoxious so that Ms. Wolfe could hear some good things about me.

It never occurred to me that, in the United States, one of the hallmarks of a good politician is the way that he skirts controversy only to answer questions without really addressing the issues. This is the way that I came across that afternoon. I won unwillingly and accepted the all-expense paid prize. I did not want to decline the scholarship because I thought that doing so would arouse unwanted questions about my immigration status. I tried to be as reticent as I could, but the committee only interpreted that as eccentric behavior and congratulated me on it. I could do nothing wrong right.

When I told father the good news he smiled, thought for a second, then frowned. He looked at mother for a long while before he uttered a word. "Do you see what your son has done?" he asked my mother. "He is going to go to where all the politicians are and he is going to get us all deported!" I said nothing back, since I thought the same as father. As always, it was mother who found the silver lining, "but don't you see, your son will be the first one in the family to get on an airplane. Not even your cousins have done that." That afternoon, father and I went to the local shopping mall where he bought me a bell-bottomed black polyester three piece suit, so that I would not attract attention, he said.

The airplane ride to Washington was truly excruciating. Ms. Wolfe had given me a small leather notebook, in which I drew distorted pictures of myself as a prisoner, as a man trapped inside a coffin, and as a caged bird. Every time we stumbled over an air pocket, I felt all the anxiety I had sitting inside my belly, and the tense chords of my neck.

When we finally arrived in Washington, I could barely move, yet I managed to pick myself up from the seat I had taken refuge in and stepped out into the humid Washington air. A white man with what seemed to me to be a policeman's uniform held up a small cardboard placard with my name. Fatalistically, I walked towards him, ready for the inevitable. He told me that he was the *chauffeur* for the Shoreham Hotel, the place where I would be staying, and informed me that I was one of three students who had arrived in the last fifteen minutes.

It was on my way to the hotel, while riding on a gray van with three other students who looked nothing like me that I realized that the trip that I had been sent on was part of a program for "America's next generation of political leaders." "The Presidential Classroom," as the program was called, gathered "promising" high school students in order to expose them to the best that Washington had to offer. Indeed, it was as I read the pamphlet that the *chauffeur* handed me, that I noticed that one of the first trips that the students of the program would be taken on was to the FBI Building. We pulled into the elegant driveway of the hotel with me feeling the blood curdle in my veins.

My roommates were two juniors from Indiana. They had gotten to the room hours before me and had already begun to unpack their blue camelhair sports coats by the time I walked in the door. I found out from them that the program that we were participating in was of some renown. Only four students from Indiana, they said, had made it this year. And unlike me they had to pay thousands of dollars to participate. Needless to say, the more I heard about the program, the more tense I felt about being a part of it. I looked for other Mexicans from California like me, but only managed to find two other "Hispanics" in my group, a Cuban girl from Florida, and a Puerto Rican boy from the island itself.

It was clear that most of the students that participated in the program were from much more affluent backgrounds than myself. On the first night in Washington, I felt extremely out of place wearing the tan pajamas that my sister had given me as a reward for my achievement. The other boys had embroidered robes to match their sleepwear, along with matching slippers. They also had a number of expensive looking toiletries, some of which I had never seen before in my life. It took me no time at all to realize that my presence in the program was due to some kind of equal opportunity policy, and that my discomfort would not diminish anytime soon.

On the first day of the program, all two hundred students were escorted to a massive hall. The sheer size of the room impressed me, but not more than the elegant baroque detail that adorned it. I noticed then, that the day the other students and I had arrived we had entered through one of the hotel's back doors, and had missed seeing the ornate splendor that was so apparent now.

"For the next two weeks, you will be exposed to a side of Washington that few other citizens have had the privilege to witness. You will visit the White House, the Pentagon, the Supreme Court, the Smithsonian, and you will speak directly with your parents' senator and congressman; but you will not visit as tourists, you will visit as the future leaders of this country, upon whose hands the prosperity of our United States rests." With these words, the director of the program welcomed us, or at least welcomed the other students while he terrified me. I sat at the back of the hall, eyeing the exit door as I listened to what the speakers that followed said. They spoke of the unique opportunity we had, and mentioned how many of the participants of the program had become influential Washington players—one was even a senator. I listened half-heartedly, trying to conceive in my mind just how long

it would take me to walk all the way back to Oakland.

The first place that we were to visit was Capitol Hill, to see our congressman. I arrived, amid a sea of blue blazer, khaki pant and pennyloafed young men, wearing the much-too-comfortable black polyester three piece suit that my father had bought me. We were divided according to state, taken into a large hall with many elegant tables and chairs and asked to wait. There were many of us from northern California, but I was the only Latino in the bunch. It did not take us long to see "our" congressman. It seemed that "our" representative took great pride in having his photograph taken with such an illustrious group of students.

Our congressman turned out to be a black man whom I had seen on television before, when he had made sympathetic comments about a group of Mexican farmworkers who had been on a long hunger-strike. I recognized him immediately, but I did not say a word. The other students, however, spoke hastily. Many mentioned that they were prominent officers of their school government and that they aspired to be great politicians themselves. I remained quiet, trying as the seconds passed, to vanish altogether. In the end, our congressman shook all of our hands, gave us tiny American flags, and had us pose for the picture. That night I slept better than the one before and almost managed to forget the impending visit to the FBI Building.

The reason that I was afraid of going to the FBI Building was obvious. Even father knew that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was composed of the best detectives on earth; if anyone knew that I was undocumented, it would be them. Surely, I thought, they must investigate all who visit their building. After all, hadn't I read in Ms. Wolfe's class that all the federal buildings in Washington had beefed up their security after President Reagan had been shot? I would be found out that day, I thought.

When we arrived at the FBI Building, I felt hot, with the collar of my black polyester suit drenched by the sweat that ran profusely down my neck. We proceeded into the building, across two ominous looking metal detectors and into what looked like a museum. There were exhibits on the walls and items contained in glass cases: the machine gun that once belonged to Al Capone, an FBI standard issue bulletproof vest, and innumerable pictures of famous FBI men. That is when I noticed it. At first I thought that it was my anxiety that made me think that everyone was looking at me. But when I saw a group of blonde girls huddled together, giggling and pointing their fingers at me, I was convinced that at last I had been caught. Soon I would be handcuffed and deported.

I continued down the hall, following the group of students led by a woman with an FBI badge. I held on to the booklet that we had been given when we first came in, almost tearing it, while behind me I heard smirks and whispers. Soon, I noticed that even the woman who was guiding our group was looking directly at me, although she had a smile on her face. In my mind I thought that the group was going through some kind of collective sadism, that upon finding out about my "illegality," they had been amused, and now enjoyed watching me suffer. I noticed that kids I did not know were also looking towards me, all with that same grin that made me curse them under my breath.

Then, one of the boys from Indiana with whom I was sharing the hotel room walked towards me. He was looking to the ground, as if trying to evade my stare. He walked slowly, with a half cocked smile that symbolized the greatest kind of arrogance to me. It was not my fault that I was undocumented, I thought. My father had been trying to fix our papers for years, but had been unsuccessful. One lawyer had taken hundreds of dollars from him, only to tell him that there was no chance to legalize our status. There was now a woman who promised a good result, but only if my father married a citizen. The marriage would not be real, of course, only a necessary ritual to satisfy the immigration authorities. Mother, however, would not allow this alternative. After all, father was already married.

The boy from Indiana faced me now. He could not find the words to speak, and mumbled something that I could not really hear at first. I had seen a Mexican movie once about a man who had found out that he had some incurable disease and that he was about to die. Right before he died, he told his sweetheart that he finally felt free from the pain that his illness had been causing him. That was how I felt as the boy from Indiana stood in front of me. I was certain that I would not be going back to the hotel room with him, that I would not have to feel ashamed about my poverty anymore, that I would not have to feel ashamed about my poverty anymore. I would not have to politely excuse my broken English or feel awkward about the way I dressed, because they finally knew who I was—a wetback!

He came close to me, much closer than I anticipated and told me in a clear voice that my pant zipper had been unzipped for most of the day. It took me a while to register what he said, that he had not mentioned immigration in any of the words he spoke, and then I laughed heartily. I looked down and sure enough the zipper of the slacks that accompanied my black, polyester three piece suit was wide open, revealing the off-white Y front of my Fruit of the Looms. I reached down and, in front of all those who had been spectating, fumbled with the zipper so much that I broke it. I took my coat off and held



it across my arms in such a way that it covered the broken zipper. But I really did not care about that.

As we rode back to the hotel on the chartered bus, I felt free, as if I had survived a kind of death that few people come back from. I still heard whispers and smirks behind me, but I smiled, knowing that my secret was safe. Who would look for an undocumented immigrant amid a group of elite, spoiled rich brats, I thought. I was safe.

When I returned home, I told father and mother about the event and they could not stop laughing. When relatives came, they would invite me to tell the story over again, and I would even bring out the black pants to show them.

How I had fooled them.

ALBERTO LEDESMA is a native of México. He was raised in Oakland, California. He is a Doctoral candidate at UC Berkeley. Alberto is currently writing his thesis titled, "The Representation of Undocumented Immigrants in Chicano Narrative."

If you'd like me to...



La Muerte, no para
A los fierros.

C/S
D. G. P. W.

GUACHA
RAZA

LA MUERTE, NO PARA A LOS HEROES,

IF YOU HAVN'T HEARD OF THEM,
THEY STILL LIVED.

HISTORY HOLDS THE MEMORY,
OF SOME THAT DID.

BUT IT HASN'T CAPTURED MANY THAT
HAVE GIVEN THEIR HEARTS,
TO BRING LIGHT INTO A WORLD,
THAT CAN BE SOMETIMES DARK.

IT'S LIKE NEVER SEEING THE EAGLE,
BUT YOU KNOW IT EXISTS!

JUST LIKE THE GRAINS OF SAND,
THERE IS PLENTY FOR THE HERO'S LIST.

HEROES LIVE ON, EVEN IF THEY HAVE DIED.

THERE IS ONE IN EVERYONE,

IF YOU JUST LOOK INSIDE
THE SOUL OF MAN,

KNOWS WHAT MUST BE DONE,

BUT NOT KNOWING MENTALLY,

IS WHAT MAKES LIFE FUN

THE HERO LIVES ON, EVEN AFTER HE'S
GONE.

LA MUERTE NO PARA A LOS HEROES,

A HERO'S WORK IS NEVER
DONE.

ALZA,



© DM 951

Doña Malinche

—PeterValentínFernández

*Nada cambia un mundo como una mujer
en la realidad de su sueño*

A mirror on the *cabeza* of a fowl
tells all

a galaxy unravels.

Comets travel paths unknown

Tenochtitlán submerges.

They come from the east

pale *hombres* with

eyes of gold

who may be *Quetzalcóatl*

returning to the Valley of Mexico

in 1 *Acatl*, 1519, like he said he would.

Tu mamá dijo que muriste when you were an infant

Pero you were raised by a *cacique en Tabasco*

just miles away from *Paynala* your place of birth.

Refined and wise and linguistically blessed

tu cacique, to please the leader of these

horse men,

te regaló al capitán quien te nombró Doña

Marina

y te presentó a su amigo Puertocanero

pero en realidad fuiste de el

Y yo soy yo

o niño de una de las otras veinte señoritas de

tu pueblo que fueron regaladas también

o de Luísa o Elvira of Francisca, muchachas de otros

pueblos que se quedaron con los de Cortés.

Y por eso Doña Marina, la gente calls you

Malinche.

Que lástima

no es tu culpa que te encanicaste con Hernán

y siempre todos sabían tu facilidad con

la lengua Náhuatl.

Al lado de tu capitán

pasas fronteras lista y mezclando el

orden del siglo.

Eres mujer reconocida entre la gente

bajo la sombra del mero Tenochtitlán

y su culto de Huichilopochtli

de corazones gotiando lágrimas.

Soñasté Tenochtitlán

volasté con un pajarito brillante

y visté en su cabeza un espejo

lleno de imágenes de mañanas

y de volada fuiste trucha

y la primera Chicana.

Cada loco con su tema.

The eleventh Christian month, 1519,

You and *Cortés* on the causeway across Lake

Texcoco to *Tenochtitlán*

your dreams become real

as did those of *tlatoani Xocoyotzin*

even after your flight months later

por la noche triste on the same causeway

of your *primer triunfo*

slowed by *soldados españoles* drowning with wealth

and *Azteca* rangers capturing prisoners during the

roul.

Safely back on land

you hear them as you run, their howling, their

torment, their hearts pumping in your hand

as their bloody bodies bounce

down the incline of *el Templo Mayor*.

Vera Cruz, la primavera de quince veinte y uno

tu capitán marches again to *Tenochtitlán*

y tu esposo sails away

leaving you to *Cortés*.

Thereafter the son of your love is me.

Instinctual about the sky

you tell your man *el tlatoani* suffers

for he's seen *un hombre*

con dos cabezas on the paths of his universe.

While snakes swallow *aguilas* in a strange sky

quenching their thirst with falling stars

that seek the wetness of *sangre*.

-La vida no vale nada-

says *Moctezuma* and you tell your captain.

The Seige of the city begins:

cannon balls grind *el Templo Mayor* to sand

floating launches flame *Azteca* civilization

bodies wash against the causeways bloated to

oblivion.

Tenochtitlán falls.

Doña Marina surveys the ruin of New Spain from the

edge fo the *Zócalo*

and turns her back

to

gangs of vanquished

who

curse you

Malinche

and whips and dogs and blows devour them in the

new

order.

Pues así es la vida

and I am yours *de todos modos*.

Tu who changed *el pensamiento del sol*

Malinche

Ceciguata de mi mundo mezclado

última Mujer de Aztlán.



LITTLE GIRL

A precious little girl with big brown eyes,
feeling like she should be hidden, in disguise.
She was lost in her thoughts until she was found,
lost in her thoughts with a messed up background.
Little girl, don't be so sad...
don't take the abuse when they hit you if you're bad.
Still scarred from the memories that lie within,
thinking why all this pain had to begin.
when the next teardrop falls, it'll all be too late;
you'll be trapped in a world filled up with fate.
Still too little, still too young to be mad,
still wondering why you haven't found mom and dad.
What can I say, little one...?
You had nothing left, so you picked up a gun.
With a gun in one hand, you think of the past.
All these months, all these years are going by fast.
There's no turning back, it's all over now.
You wanted to be heard, but you didn't know how.
Little girl, they'll soon come to realize, they'll soon start to relate.
But as soon as they start to understand, it'll all be too late.
You've had a broken past, and broken dreams.
A life not worth living is what it seems.
Give them some time, pretty soon you'll come around.
Pretty soon, darling, your soul will be found.
Well, all I could've said was to hope and to pray.
But I guess you didn't listen to what I had to say.
You took your own life without a moment to spare.
The whole game of life just doesn't play fair.

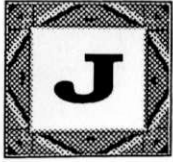
FALLING

I feel like I'm getting smaller and smaller every day.
I want someone to pat me on the back and tell me
"Everything's gonna be OK."
I want to cry on your shoulder until everything is fine.
If you feel what I feel, you could cry on mine.
Please help me, help me calm my fears.
When I look into your eyes, do you see my tears?
I keep yelling and yelling, over and over.
I yell because I'm mad. I hide because I'm sad.
I want people to understand that my heart is healing.
Healing from the pain, the pain hurts so much.
My fist, my fist I clutch.
As I fall asleep, I think about life, it isn't fair.
I try telling people, but people don't care.
I'm falling and I've been falling, but now
I think I've finally fallen.

Cecilia Carmen Newton-Pérez

JULIA

—Corina Carrasco



Julia lay in bed listening to the rain, unable to sleep. Without looking at the clock, she knew it was about 1:30 in the morning. Soon, Alonzo would stagger in the back door, waking the children, demanding to be fed after drinking at El Encanto all night long.

The thunder began a few minutes after two. Julia prepared to get up and help her husband get into dry clothes. He was sure to have been caught in the sudden downpour on his four block walk from the bar. She readied his clothes and took them to the kitchen along with the mop so she could clean the mud he'd track into the house.

Julia was not surprised to hear Alonzo curse her as he fell against the door. "*¡Julia! ¡Abreme la puerta, cabrona!*" She quickly opened the door so he'd quiet down and not wake the children.

When she tried to help him walk into the kitchen, he pushed her away so hard that she was thrown across the kitchen, smashing her hip against the counter. Alonzo staggered to the table, sat down, and yelled at her to feed him. He was hungry and he wanted his dinner. He didn't care that it was almost 2:30 in the morning.

*"Andale pronto. Ya sabes qué siempre llevo con hambre. ¿Porqué no me tienes la cena lista? ¡mensa!"*¹

Julia hurried to the refrigerator and took out last night's dinner. Alonzo, seeing that she was going to heat something already cold, jumped up from his chair and knocked the food out of her hand, scattering orange grains of *arroz*, morsels of cold *pollo* along with congealed fat and pieces of the *cazuela* Julia's dead mother had given her that last Christmas she was alive. As the debris spread, it covered Julia, the table, the wall and the kitchen floor.

As Julia rushed to clean the mess, Alonzo struck her hard across the face. "Now see what you did? *Que cochinado has hecho. Pero no te vas a salir tan fácil. Dame de comer. ¡Te digo qué tengo hambre! ¡Dame de comer! ¡Ahorita!*"² Julia rushed to the refrigerator to see what else she might have to satisfy her demanding husband.

As she did so, Alonzo continued to chastise her for not being fast enough. She hurried and as she did so, she tried to hide her tears from Alonzo so he wouldn't have yet another reason to criticize her. She located some *chorizo con huevos* and some *frijoles*. Hurriedly Julia made Alonzo four *burritos*. As she rolled the last of the *tortillas*, Alonzo yelled at her that he'd have to go feed himself because she was so slow. With this, he again jumped from his chair and rushed to the refrigerator where he proceeded to turn everything inside of it upside down. When he'd done that, he took his right arm and swiftly emptied the refrigerator of its contents. "*No hay nada que comer. Pura cochinado y comida podrida. ¿Porque no traes comida buena? Yo gano buen dinero...muy bueno para que me des esta mierda que siempre me das.*"³

Julia placed the plate of *burritos* on the table and began to clean the mess Alonzo had made. She silently prayed that he'd leave her alone. She prayed that he'd eat his food and pass out quickly.

*"Mira que marranero. No puedes darme de comer cuando tengo hambre. No puedes mantener la casa limpia. Mira nomas que marranero has hecho. ¿Pa'qué me sirves si no puedes darme lo que te pido?"*⁴ With this, he grabbed Julia by her long, dark braids and pulled her up to him. As she tried to balance herself, Alonzo

¹ "Hurry up. You know I'm always hungry when I get home. Why don't you have my dinner ready for me, idiot!"

² "...What a mess you've made. But you won't get away so easily. Feed me. I tell you I'm hungry! Feed me! Now!"

³ "There's nothing to eat. Only pig slop and rotten food. Why don't you buy good food? I earn good money...too good for you to feed me this shit you always give me."

⁴ "Look at the mess. You can't feed me when I'm hungry. You can't keep the house clean. What a mess you've made. What are you good for if you can't even give me what I ask of you?"

sneered at her. "*¿Qué pasa, no quieres darme lo que quiero? Andale, haber sí para eso sirves!*"⁵ He held her hair tightly in his left hand as his right fist grabbed her flannel nightgown and tore it from her body, reaching for her breasts.

Above his laughter, Julia heard one of her children crying. She looked and saw Alma, only three years old, watching in horror what her father was doing to her mother. Julia called out to Alma that it was okay. She should go back to bed. Julia told her she'd be in to see her soon.

When Alonzo heard Julia calling out to Alma, he turned to the terrified child and lunged at her. "*¡Andale, vete, desgraciada o te voy a dar como a tu mamá!*"⁶ Fearing that Alonzo would beat the innocent child, Julia grabbed Alonzo's arm yelling, "*¡Dejala! ¡Ella no te ha hecho nada! ¡Dejala! ¡Pegame a mí!*"⁷ She was not fast enough or strong enough. The strong, muscular arm had already struck the child, sending her across the room, screaming, her mouth red with blood.

Julia, fearing for her child's safety, grabbed the mop and began to hit Alonzo with its handle. Alonzo grabbed it from her and broke it in half, flinging it at her and started toward Alma who lay in the corner, crying and wiping at the blood on her mouth. Julia, desperate to spare her baby any further injury and maddened by the child's anguished cries, reached for whatever she could find to use against Alonzo in her daughter's defense. She reached for a cast iron skillet but lost her grip on it because of its weight. The next thing she grabbed a hold of and was able to hang on to was the handle of a knife she'd used to prepare dinner last night. It sat in the drainboard on the sink. She yelled at Alonzo to leave the child alone.

"*¡Dejala! ¡Dejala o te voy a matar!*"⁸ Alonzo looked over his shoulder in disgust at his wife. But when he saw the knife in her hands and the look in her eyes, he realized that she meant it. He slowly let go of Alma. He turned his body toward his wife and tried to reach for the knife.

"*¡No! ¡No me lo vas a quitar! ¡Vete de esta casa! Ya no más. ¡Basta! El marrano eres tú, no yo...ya no te aguanto más. Vete ahorita. Vete para siempre. ¡Vete o te mato! ¡Largate!*"⁹

Somehow Alonzo knew that she meant it. The look in her eyes. The determination of her stance. The force of her words. The absence of tears. The strength. She meant it. Alonzo feared that if he didn't leave, Julia would make him pay for all the nights he'd come home late and drunk...for all the times he'd beaten her...for all the times he'd humiliated her in front of the kids...for all the times he'd beaten the children...for all the years he had made her suffer...

Slowly, Alonzo backed away from Julia. He kept backing up until he reached the door. He turned the doorknob, knowing that there was no turning back now, and opened the door. With sudden sobriety and alertness, Alonzo didn't dare take his eyes off of this woman who was suddenly a stranger. He didn't know this woman. This woman was not his woman. His woman was weak; this woman was strong. His woman was obedient; this woman was defiant. His woman was childlike; this woman was independent. His woman was worn and tired; this woman was strong and determined.

Alonzo kept on walking backwards in disbelief and shock. He walked out of the house...out of the yard...down the driveway...into the rain soaked street...out of Julia's life...never to return.

⁵ "What's the matter? You don't want to give me what I want? Come on! Let's see if you're good for that!"

⁶ "Go on you little wretch or I'll give you some of the same!"

⁷ "Leave her alone! She hasn't done anything to you! Leave her alone! Hit ME!"

⁸ "Leave her alone or I'll kill you!"

⁹ "No! You won't take it from me! Get out of this house! No more. Enough! You are a pig, not me...I won't take any more! Go now! Leave forever. Go or I will kill you! Get out!"

CORINA CARRASCO writes whenever she can find time between her family and community volunteer duties. She lives in Glendale with her three children. It is her hope that, someday soon, Chicanas will be able to focus their strength on other problems that plague our communities instead of having to focus them on protecting themselves against the men who "love" them.



5.

MANUELITA
Mi Querida Abuelita
—Ralph F. López-Urbina

More than anything else,
it was your eyes that always captured my attention
—their gaze setting my heart ablaze with ecstasy
the instant you stepped into my thoughts.
Cozying up to their unaffected warmth
across a lifetime of memories
coats the cliché
the eyes are windows of the soul
with fresh remembrance.

So well I remember
Manuelita,
mi querida abuelita,
—a thousand Monarchs cuddled
in the cocoon of my corazón
bursting from my eyes, my ears, my mouth
—fluttering to the *taconas* of my happy heart
—twittering, buckling, gliding
in a festive *jarabe* of love,
as you ran a comb through my unruly hair
al salir a nuestra parranda;
the subtle smile
resting on your pretty face,
offering the perfect countenance for
the love-crystallized sweetness
sparkling in your sorrowful eyes.

Ah, those *ojos*, Manuelita,
mi querida abuelita
—parting their ambivalence with curious eyes,
I entered a world of saints and angels;
imbibing with a child's relish
your sweet milk of kindness
—and more than even that,
I danced *caracoles* by the light
of their vigilant beams
and laughed and played the day away
—and when the storm came,
I huddled close and, miming
their instructive gaze, stared skyward,
mouth agape, as magical *culebras*
bolted fiercely from the billowing gloom
—and gazing even deeper, I splashed
and tumbled carefree
in the tidal wave of passion
they sent roaring the shore of my being,
your tsunami of love
beaching itself in my heart.

Your body's long been at rest
Manuelita,
mi querida abuelita
—yet your Mona Lisa eyes watch over me
from the canvas of my bittersweet heart;

I've many portraits
en mi galería de amor, abuelita,
intimate *retratos* of our happy *parrandas*
all those Sundays ago;
y tengo la galería cerquita, abuelita
—just a heartbeat away,
and I visit you regularly, *abuelita*
—everyday!
con cada latido de mi corazón,
te visito.

Still, I miss you, Manuelita
mi querida abuelita,
I miss your culinary magic
—*tus frijolititos, tus tacos rete-sabrosos,*
your delicious, *pollo en mole,*
the pat-pat-pat of your delicate hands
shaping a ball of *masa*
into a giant flour *tortilla*
—*al estilo Sonorense;*
I miss your *comida de cuaresma;*
your *lentejas, tortas de camarón*
—*tus nopalitos en chile colorado;*
and when Christmas rolls by, I miss your *tales,*
the ancient *atole* you brewed,
the deep fried *buñuelos* dipped in *miel de pancha;*
I miss the appetizing *olores* of your *comida*
—the way they hopped the air currents coursing through
your *cocina* and taxied their way to all the *cuartos*
of our humble *casita*, skirting up to my nose,
and flirting with my sense of smell,
titillating and exciting my taste buds
—swelling them to an orgasm of salivary desire,
provoking a growl from the Grizzly
happily esconced in my belly,

Te extraño porque te amo, Manuelita
mi querida abuelita:
I love you for your lion's courage;
for your noble dissimulation
in parrying the cruel stabs of life;
te amo por tu profunda fe en Dios,
—for the simple and sincere way
that you embraced Jesus Christ as your Savior;
I love you for your greatness of heart
—*por tu manera fácil de perdonar hasta esos*
que te hirieron injustamente;
I love you for your ready compassion
toward those compelled to endure
great pain and suffering;
y mas...mas que nadie mas,
te admiro y te respeto because you came closer
to the ideal of human perfection
than anyone I've ever known
—or have yet to meet.

barrio karma

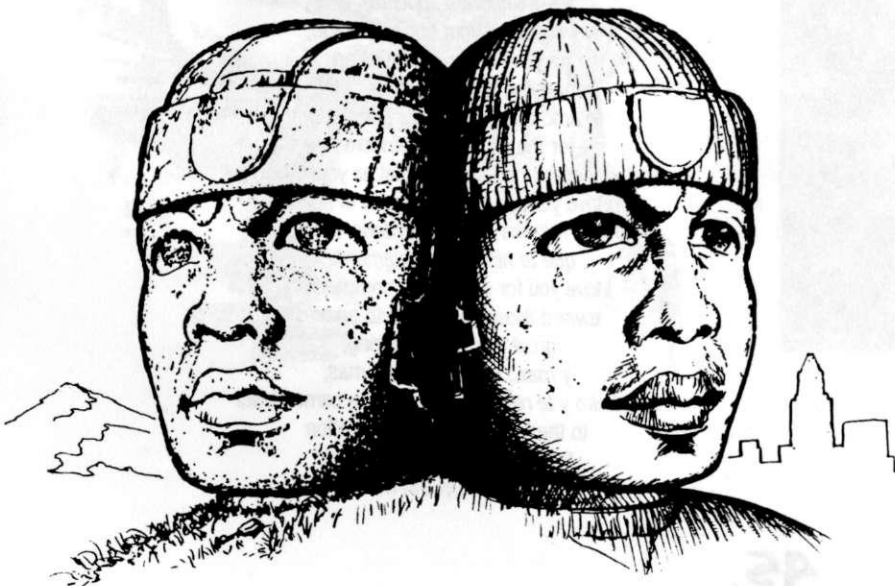
on the way
to wards cleaning up some karma
I go screaming back through the old barrio
looking for Carlos
though I know he is long gone
checking in at the old hangouts
going slow by the park
and slow again by Rachel Del Valle's house
this is deep in the barrio
there is bingo at Immaculate Conception, Queen of Peace, Immaculate Heart
a dance at the American Legion Post
there are merchant marines who bring back the world for us
gathered in their faces and leathered hands
there are long embraces and fast fights
words yelled out across streets
reunions and celebrations
home from prison, back from the war
which war, which war?

diseases of the barrio body
my cousin robert died from a spray of police bullets
and yes, they were wrong
cousin david we lost to aids
and the sad part is, that if you look
my story is not so different from yours

a good time ends in a slow night
and a bad morning

this barrio is busy
it is busy with words and sinners
saints and sadness with sadness that is all consuming
sadness that drips, that is tangible
that you take with you

I am screaming through the barrio





looking in all the wrong places
because right here
between the mexican passion and the chicano pain
of a hard life and hard work
there are models for growing old
there is joy
there is consuelo espinosa holguin, still dancing at ninety
so many words and languages, laughter and love
forged from hands and hope and don't you forget it
right there
in the middle of the neighborhood
just around the corner
beyond our cemeteries that are soft with memory and magnolias
and the bend of the bayou
down the road
there is room in texas
this barrio seems to have a million places to hide

home sweet home as sweet as a southern rain
where are the places we hide our love
set me free in a texas sunset
where are the places we find our faith
I am screaming through the thick

weedgrass grows in the cracks
and there are lazy, easy places that will fool you with their slowness
will it let us clean our karma
will it heal us
and let me celebrate
without
and within

Ginger Holguin

BEAUTY

You promise me
Beauty?

Only if I buy...
Only if I drink...
Only if I wear...
Only if I apply...
to my face
to my legs
to my body
to my hair

Beauty?

It comes from a jar
It comes from a surgeon's knife
It comes from,
from,
from,
whatever you sell me

Beauty?

You tell me that it can be bought!

NO!

You can't sell it!

Beauty?

It is earned,
Wrinkle by wrinkle,
As time paints my face
With the self I create.

Beauty?

It is a mantle
That slowly settles
Over me
As I become myself.

LITTLE WHITE DOLL

Little white doll
In brown hands
What do you tell me?
I am less beautiful
Than you.

Little white doll
Your features
Finely chiseled.
Mine are molded
Of broader clay.

Little white doll
How can I love myself?
When you say
That beautiful
Is not me.

GENIE

Bottles sit on my vanity.
I rub them
to evoke the genie
of youth and beauty.

Rubbing, rubbing
yet the genie
fails to appear.

Oh well, maybe
I'm rubbing
the wrong bottle.

Back to the cosmetic counter
rows of bottles
enticing, sensual shapes
promises of magical powers.

Oh yes!
The genie of youth
will be in this bottle!

Rubbing, rubbing. Nothing.
Bottles, buy more bottles.
Rubbing, rubbing...

The genie eludes me.

Rubbing, rubbing
I do get something
for my efforts.
Blisters.

TOYS

MY FIRST BARBIE
BOUGHT FOR YOUNG GIRLS
DESIGNED TO MAKE
WARDROBE CHANGES
EASY FOR LITTLE FINGERS.

BLOCK KACHINA FIGURES
GIVEN TO HOPI CHILDREN
COLORFUL, SOLID
EASY FOR LITTLE FINGERS.

CULTURAL ICONS
TO TEACH THEM THE WAY.

CRYSTAL BARBIE
SILVER LAMÉ
SUNTAN BARBIE
SLIM AND SEXY.

FROG KACHINA
BRINGER OF RAIN,
CORN KACHINA
BRINGER OF FOOD.

BARBIE'S PERFECT FIGURE
FROM A FACTORY MOLD,
KACHINA, TAKING THE FORM OF
THE WOOD

JUTTI MARSH

"TIEMPO DE SEMBRAR"



A Department of Chicano Studies



Newsletter, Vol. II, June 1995

Edited by Antonette Garcia

EL CORRIDO: A MURAL AND A SONG By Enrique Gonzalez

El corrido y el mural son vehículos para educar a las masas populares en México y Los Estados Unidos. En la comunidad de Boyle Heights en el este de Los Angeles tenemos un ejemplo de este paralelismo entre el corrido y el mural donde se encuentre un mural con nombre de "El Corrido de Boyle Heights." Este se ubica en la calle Soto norte y la avenida Cesar Chavez; en el se plasma la historia y la cultura Chicana.

El corrido Mexicano constituye un verdadero genero-musical. Sus características son como las de los héroes que lo inspiraron entre ellos Francisco Villa y Zapata; estos tienen una profunda identidad con las masas populares de la sociedad Mexicana. Según Jas Reuter, autor de La Música Popular de México, el corrido se desarrolló en las esferas populares de la sociedad Mexicana ("Una manifestación específicamente Mexicana") como una expresión, porque una gran parte de él era analfabeta. Este problema se había acentuado durante el porfiriato que había convertido a obreros y campesinos en semi esclavos al servicio de los intereses extranjeros en México.

Siendo el corrido una forma de narración se usaba para promover los ideales revolucionarios. También para contar sucesos tales como historias de asesinos, de bandidos famosos, crítica política, carreras de caballos, accidentes ferroviarios, héroes y batallas famosas, fusilamientos y tragedias personales. De igual forma Reuter nos dice que el corrido era como un periódico de los analfabetas, "era el noticiero accesible en los poblados alejados de los medios de los medios de información."

Después de la Revolución Mexicana de 1910-1917, surgieron los murales con el mismo propósito del corrido: Educar, informar y idealizar a la sociedad Mexicana. Como nos dicen los autores, Eva Sperling Crockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sanchez, de Sign From The Heart. "After the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1917, murals again served as an artistic vehicle for educating a largely illiterate populace about the ideals of the new society and virtues and evils of the past". Como podemos ver, por lo ya tratado, el corrido y el muralismo han sido usados como medios para educar a las masas.

El mural ha tenido la misma función en los Estados Unidos durante el "Movimiento Chicano" de los 60's. El muralismo reclamaba derechos civiles y justicia social ante las clases dominantes. De acuerdo a Sign From The Heart. "In the mid-60's, murals again provided an important organizing tool and a means for the reclamation of their specific cultural heritage."

Tomando en cuenta el paralelismo de los dos géneros, el corrido como medio auditivo y el mural como medio visual, ambos tienen el mismo propósito: Educar al pueblo sobre lo que ocurre en su comunidad.

Reuter Jas, La Musica Popular de Mexico, 1986 edition 1, Pp.122; pp.124.

Eva Sperling Crockcroft & Holly Barnet-Sanchez, Sign From The Heart, 1990 edition. Pp.5.



**CHICANO STUDIES SENIOR
ELECTED TO REGIONAL OFFICE,
ATTENDS CONFERENCE**

University Times Report

This spring quarter, students from the Chicano Studies Department attended the National Association of Chicano Studies national conference in Spokane, Washington. The conference brought together 1,800 scholars from around the nation.

With the encouragement of Dr. Irene I. Blea, Chairperson of CHS, Hermanas Unidas, a feminist organization, sent eight women to the conference. Their assignment was to network, attend sessions that would empower their research, and also to have fun.

The group networked sufficiently enough to elect Elizabeth Aceves as the Southern California Regional Student Representative to the association. Aceves is a senior, majoring in Chicano Studies, and plans to attend graduate school after graduation. She has begun researching her thesis proposal in the area of immigrant women in the Los Angeles area.

While at the conference, Aceves attended two sessions where leading scholars presented and analyzed issues on immigration. "I realize how very little we know about the women who are immigrating to our region," she said. "Most of the research is done from a male perspective. A feminist perspective will be my direct contribution."

Aceves' regional representative responsibilities include communicating with students about their needs and to insure that they have a say in the national association. Other students from Chicano Studies attending the conference included: Aurora Garcia, Lissete Gomez, Pauline Medrano, Araceli Pelayo, Araceli Valdez--all undergraduates. Graduated students Lena Solis and Meg Garduno also attended the event.

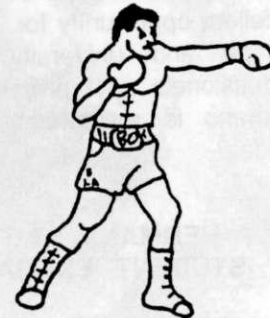
Next year's conference will be held in Chicago, Illinois. Tucson, Arizona will host the event in 1997, and Mexico City in 1998. According to Blea, "The opportunity for students to attend the conference has always existed, and will continue to exist. We just need to plan early."

The National Association of Chicano Studies conference is open to all students, regardless of race. In October, the Department of Chicano Studies at Cal State, L.A., will host a regional NACS conference. For more information call (213) 343-2190.

Caged Dove

Jailed bird
Put there by the hands
Of what is "Just"
Caged dove
Waiting for the light
Of freedom to open
it's wings to love
Again.

--Jeffrey De La Torre



BOXER

Irish, Italians, Blacks, Mexicans,

Puerto Ricans, Chicanos...

La raza oprimida at the time

Looking to get out of the barrio/ghetto
Looking for fame, money, and women
Looking to make it "Big Time"

Trying to find it in a rugged road full of

Upper cuts, Rabbit punches, Kidney punches,

Jabs, and a lucky punch to score the quick K.O.!

So that at the end of this rugged and hard road
they can be called.

"Campeón Del Mundo"

--Jeffrey De La Torre

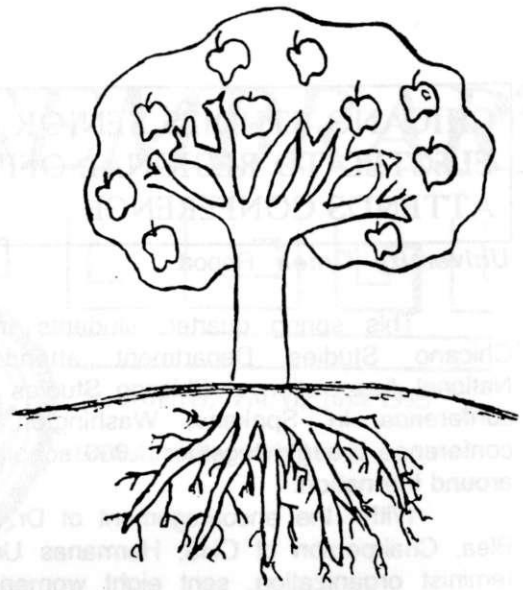


CHS STUDENT GOES TO WASHINGTON D.C.

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) has awarded Pauline Medrano, a student in Chicano Studies, a summer internship working with the Department of Commerce, a federal agency in Washington, D.C. A panel of federal employees from the department of Commerce selected Medrano to be a part of their work force in the Office of Budget. "This is an excellent opportunity for me to network with other college and university students and various professionals as I prepare to go to law school." Medrano is a founding member of Hermanas Unidas.

HERMANA PARTICIPATES IN STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The co-founder and member of "Hermanas Unidas," Aurora Garcia, was accepted by the National Student Exchange Program on campus, to take part studying at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, for an entire academic year. Her exchange will begin Fall of 1995, through Spring of 1996. As a Chicano Studies major this experience will enable Aurora to engage in and study the rich cultural diversity of Mexican-American and Native-American people in the Southwest. Aurora encourages every student at C.S.U.L.A. to visit the International Student Affairs Office and participate in the National and International Student Exchanges around the country and the world. The Chicano Studies Department and "Hermanas Unidas" are proud of their hermanita!

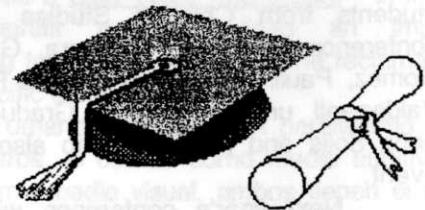


ÁRBOL CHICANO

- The earth - Aztlán
- The roots - Nuestra cultura
- The trunk - Nuestros antepasados
- The Branches - Nuestra familia
- The leaves - Nuestras vidas
- The fruits - Nuestros hijos con las semillas para enriquecer nuestra cultura.

--Jeffrey De La Torre

CONGRATULATIONS CHS CLASS OF 1995!

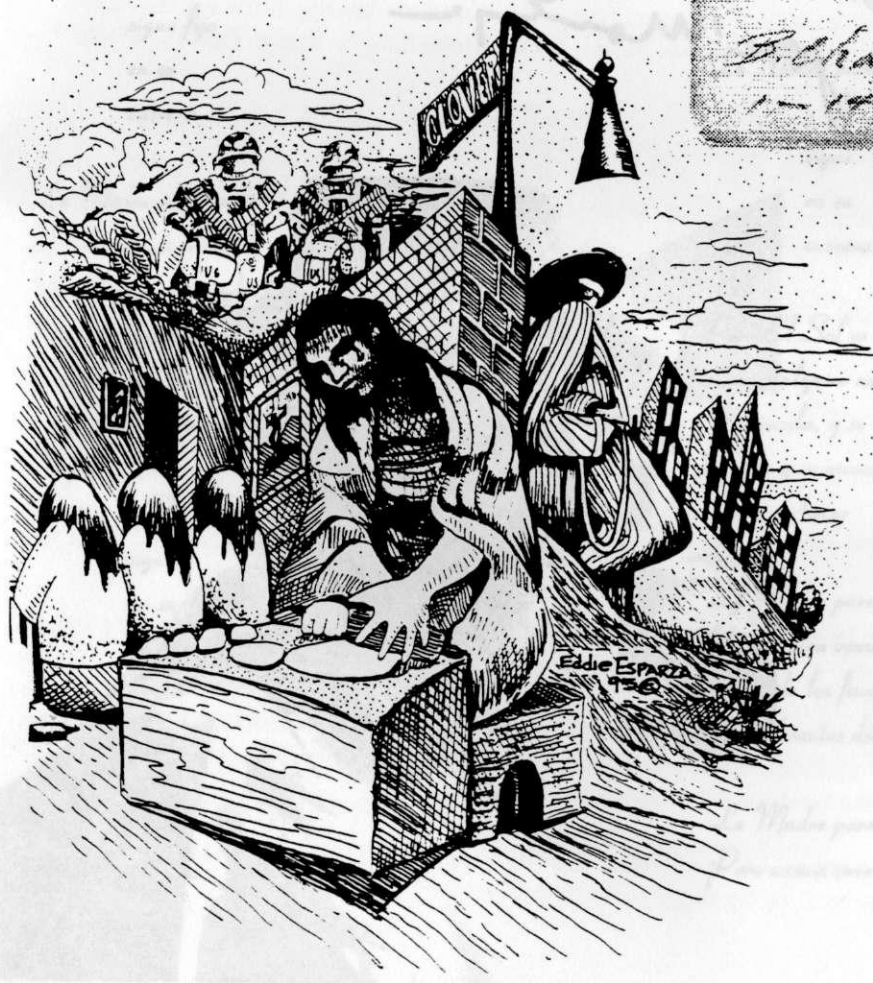


PRODUCED BY STUDENTS IN CHS 205, COMPOSITION IN CHICANO STUDIES

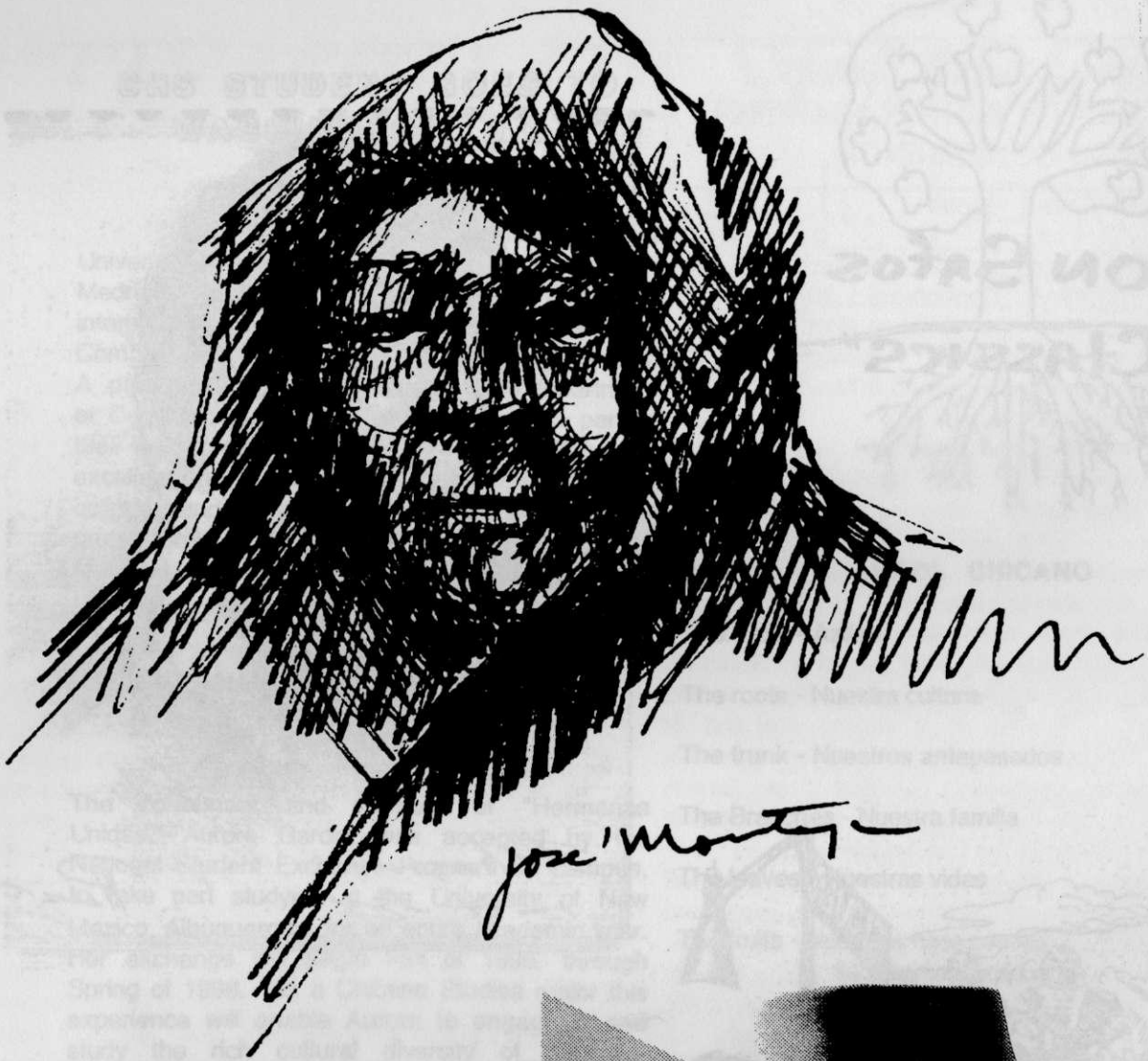
California State University, Los Angeles



"CON SAFOS CLASSICS"



c/s



Jose Montoya



PRODUCED BY STUDENTS IN CHS 285 COMMUNITY

California State University, Los Angeles

Madre Inmortal

José Montoya

La Madre pare, sufre
y El Sol
sigue
en su
carrera

La Madre, cariñosamente
Nos da la luz del día
Y con ternura y devoción
Nos provee el pan
Y nos prohíbe el hambre
y El Sol
sigue fijo
en su
carrera

La Madre pare, sufre
Y con cada angustia
Una arruga, con cada
Pena un razgo al corazón
Estoicamente ve a sus
Hijos morir y a sus hijas
Sufrir
y El Sol
sigue
en su
carrera

Madre irónica
Te alavamos
Te veneramos
Te maltratamos

Te cantamos canciones
Proclamandote nuestro
Agradecimiento para
Abandonarte después
De tantos años de
Ternura sin darte
Siquiera las gracias—
Sin admitir
El conocimiento
Qué sin tus enseñanzas
No podríamos sobrevivir
En esta vida de amarguras

La Madre pare, sufre
y El Sol
sigue
en su
carrera

Pero El Sol se opaca
Con cualquier nube
Miniscula, y se
Retira y se esconde
Al anochecer

La Madre pare, sufre
Y sabe bien como
Gozar de los favores
Relumbrantes del Sol

La Madre pare, sufre
¡Pero nunca muere!

ABOUT THE WRITERS AND ARTISTS

***Notes on most contributors appear with their work, except where aesthetically not possible.

JOSÉ ANTONIO BURCIAGA is a native of El Paso, Texas. He is an award winning writer, poet, artist, muralist, humorist, and supporter of Chicano causas. "Tony" is a founding member of the comedy group Culture Clash. He has published several books, including, Restless Serpents, Undocumented Love, Drink Cultura, WeeDee Peepo, and the soon to be released, Spilling the Beans. He lives in Menlo Park, California with his wife, Cecilia. They have two children, Rebecca and Tony.

GINGER HOLGUÍN was born and raised in a Texas barrio. She was educated at Cal Arts, NYU, and ELAC. She is a lighting designer and producer and is currently the Production Manager at the Japan America Theatre.

OSCAR R. CASTILLO lives in Whittier. He is a free lance photographer and artist. Oscar majored in Two-Dimensional Design at CSUN and film production at UCLA.

PETERVALENTÍN FERNÁNDEZ is a teacher, tutor, writer and poet from Amelia. He rode the last Red Car to Wilmas and stayed.

SERGIO HERNÁNDEZ is a painter, graphic artist, and illustrator. He was one of the artists of the original C/S magazine. He is a graduate of CSUN.

RALPH F. LÓPEZ-URBINA was born and raised in East L. A. (Dogtown, Lincoln). He is one of the founding members of the original Con Safos magazine. Ralph is a retired youth counselor and teacher. He is a free lance writer living in Baldwin Park with his wife, Isabel.

EDWARD MACIAS MOMPPELLER is an artist and writer from North East Los Angeles.

JUTTI MARSH was born and raised and educated in the Los Angeles area. She is a third grade bilingual teacher. She is active in church and community activities. Jutti writes poetry in her spare time.

DANIEL MARQUEZ and VICTORIA ALEXANDER MARQUEZ are multi-faceted artists living in Whittier, California.

JOSÉ MONTOYA was born in Escoba, New Mexico, raised in Albuquerque and California. He is a multi-disciplinary artist: poet, painter, writer, and musician. Montoya is a founding member of the Rebel Chicano Art Front, better known as the Royal Chicano Air Force, a group of poets and artists in Sacramento, Califas. He is the author of El Sol Y Los De Abajo and Other RCAF Poems and In Formation: 20 Years of Joda. José is currently a painter and Professor of Art at Cal State University, Sacramento.

CECILIA CARMEN NEWTON-PEREZ is fourteen years old. She grew up in Glassell Park. She now attends Franklin High School. She has been a writer and artist for most of her life.

FELIX PEREZ was born in the San Fernando Valley. He is a self-taught artist who has worked extensively in Art Production, and painting murals.

BERTA E. SOSA TORRES creates beautiful papel picado images. In an effort to feed the "creative soul" of children and continue the ancient tradition and craft of papel picado, she teaches workshops for both children and adults. Berta is responsible for the papel picado images on our cover which she especially created to enhance the art work of Beto de la Rocha.

RICARDO VEGA is a native of Sacramento, California. He spent 15 years as a teacato but has been clean for nine years. He recently obtained a B.A. in Sociology from CSU Sacramento. He is a drug counselor in Sacramento.

CON SAFOS IS BACK & HERE TO STAY

Mama, `ama, mommy, mom, madre, otra mama, nana, abuelita, abuela, grandmother, mama grande, gracias por todo. May everyday be Mother's Day.

Our Spring/Summer 1995 issue is dedicated to our mothers and grandmothers who gave us life and the capacity to love and be loved, and infused the spirit of a rich historical cultural heritage in us enabling us to experience their vision and fortitude and cariño. They will always exist, writes regular C/S writer and Contributing Editor Peter V. Fernández to his mother, Magdalena:

Magdalena

All I know and read and hear
says you're dead
qué lástima
mother
pero vives en Mi toditito
siempre.
Así es la vida.

Our cover, "A Chía con Todo Amor", is a re-creation of a 1974 painting of Chicano artist Beto de la Rocha's mother Cecilia, who died earlier this year. She was a wonderful and loving mother who was very proud of her extremely gifted children, Roberto, Isaac, and daughter Carola to whom C/S offers its condolences.

The cover is embellished by the beautiful nopales corazones designed in papel picado by artist Berta Sosa.

The Editors.

The C/S Literary Group is funded through a California Arts Council (CAC) Multicultural entry Grant, 1993-98. Our thanks to the Council...and to our supporters Dr. Alfonso M. Baez, M.D., David Lizarraga, TELACU, Loretta S. Campos, J & L Demos and Promotions, Karen Sifuentes - marketing consultant, and all the rest.

Our readers can contribute by ordering a subscription.



\$ 5.00

Berta Sosa Jones