

POEMS



5 Faces–Sunk Way into Reality (Gustavo Segade).

TUTU SOL Juan Felipe Herrera (Poet Laureate)

Lissen:

Ok, ok – okaaaay - so

I'll tell you all about me, ok. Then you can do whatever you want to do, I mean do not stick around just cuz you think we are friends all of a sudden. I am out to save the world. And I am gonna start with one person - My father.

Ok? Anyway – as you can see by gazing at me. Stop right there. I am into the word “gazing.” Not “looking.” “Looking” for is dummies, ok? “Looking” is like sayin’ “kindergarten” or “kinnygarten” which is what people usually say. So why on



Earth do people think they gotta say “Kinder”? Is that totally dumb? Where was I? Uh. Where was I? Uh, oh yeah. Ok. Okey. Uh. Oh yeah. Uh, look if you want to know me can you please just open your glorious watery eyes and tell me what you see? It’s not hard to know me. What am I wearing? Ok? Got it? Ok. Yeah – check me out. Cropped top, the color of what? And don’t say “yelloow.” Everybody on this planet says “yelloow.” And what else are you gazing at? It is not “red” on my hair either. It is pomegranate with cerulean blue. That’s better. And my feelings? Oh yeah. “Feelings” huh? Well. I do not believe in those little wiggly things you label as “feelings.” I am all about colors. What colors are my pants? Come on! Don’t just stand there. There’s people behind you waiting to order their Macchiatos too. Thalo green-bean! Speak up. Jeez. What are you? Are you a fishing pier? Like the Muni Pier at the end of Van Ness and Bay Street? Are you getting a sense of my “Inner self” now? Yeah. Sure. Just gaze and you got me. Ok? And my hands. These are not tattoos. That is totally too committed for me. Ok. Got that? It’s Henna. You you know that but you just do not notice anything. That is a mega-ballistic problema. By the way I speak Spanglish. How about my face or are you scared to gaze at my 15 year old face! 15! Is that old is that young? Wrong! It is gruesome, crazy and tough as bat-crap. What about my face? Glasses, correct. Don’t wanna hear about my acne, my face, my skin. Super dark brown. Hold it right there. “Dark” is totally out. “Dark” is political. Say *solar brown*. Cuz I am part sun-star. Stop right there. Look. My father, Silva, is from the central mountains of Mexico. Indian. Stop! And that’s the wrong word too – he is First People who believes when we die we become Sun Crystals. That’s it. I do not believe in explaining myself. Ok? Got it. Jeez. My strength is what you see – 4’9” inches of Sun Brown Power! Most of all – I am original. Not a cardboard girl. Not a weeper. Not a funny-bunny girlfriend. And – I don’t whimper when I talk. You get it. I am sure. Sure. You just make your little life and I’ll make mine. Uh-Oh. The line is getting shorter. There are so many people here at the Underground Café you can drown in people’s sweat, hipster sweat. Just to let you know, ok? You are not going to see me dressing like a Hipster or whatever they call themselves. Los Ricos. That’s what I say. Fashion and tight \$300 pants are not my thing or the 300 hundred flavors of shampoo like the girls love and fight about at District 24 High. My friends, well. Well. My friends are - I just got one friend. That’s all you need. Her name is Aliss. Lives in a group home. Plays guitar like me too. We write songs and whisper them to each other. Leo Villa, that’s another thing. She’s a girl in case you got your gender’s all upside down like most people do – well, she is my arch-archest-enemy – might as well spit it out. She says she knows where she is headed. Oh, yeah. And she says she has a *plan* for her life. Sure. And she says she’s better than me, smarter than me and that I better not get close to Parker Sanchez, the dude of her world. Or she will crack my skull on the curb of the Dolores Bus stop and scrub my face on the fence. Sure. She’s a total weak creature with two frog-legs. If she just lifts one hand above her waist headed my way in the halls, she is mine! Are you getting the picture? Where was I? Uh? Ok? Us. Jeez. Uh. Ahh. Oh yeah. My favorite thing. Check out my satchel - what a dumb word. “Satchel.” Said it so you can relate. Ohhhh yeah. Hehehe. You know what’s in it. No. Not an apple, duffus! My writing journals and my sketchbooks!



What else is there in the whole universe? Buying trinkets on the internet? Oh yeah, sure. Not me. I write. I draw. I am involved in the evolution of the planet because I am part solar star. Got it? Jeez. I am exhausted.

Don't think I am just bumming around ok –trying to get your attention! Got serious things on my mind. Just last week things were totally different. Was at the movies. The Galactic on Van Ness off of Market. Grabbing Lemon Meringue from a white box while watching Despicable 3 with my papa. Does not get better. Will never forget. It's gonna be my bestest memory. Last week ICE nabbed him when he went to register. No papers. Mama, no papers. Me? Papers. Don't pretend you know what that means. You don't! Just like the words "looking" - you see nothing. Absolutely nada! You just skip around thinking this big ol' world is a wavy pink-striped lollipop. Guess what? It isn't. It's a nuclear detention death trap set to go off at any second. Now what am I gonna do without my papa? Who is gonna tell me all about the Tutu - the messenger humming bird? Like my name. You know what I am going to do? Listen as hard as you can ok? I am going to bust him out of that stupid, bozo, detention center! How am I gonna do it? Dunno? Gonna have to drop out, probably. My mother is going to miss me so much. She's gonna burn a hundred candles and chant to her Catholic and Aztec stone statues. Poor little mama Alvina. And I am going to miss her so much it's gonna hurt my toe. Now it's gonna get really bad. And if I blow it – gonna be in a big gray cube for girls locked up forever. What shall I do? If only I knew how to live, I mean really, really, truly live. Without half of me always on the verge of fading. And the other half on the verge of exploding. That's all I want – to really, really live. Uh. Where was I? Hold on a second. Before I order my last Venti Passion on Ice, let me repeat something in case you are day-dreaming like everyone here. You want to know how I am feeling?

Gaze at me for a second.

Come on! 92 million miles away Tauyepá, our Sun Crystal Whirler, is sending me at this very moment ten thousand personal buckets of bronze-solar blood. And right now it is splashing over me and coming down my eyes.

Juan Francisco HERRERA
8/2/20





Gears (Gustavo Segade).

HIKUS Alurista¹

I

a whisper
at the end of my thoughts
old pain
new birth
ancient ashes
spark new flame
Zapatismo en Amerindia
“everything for everyone
nothing for us”

¹ Alurista’s *Hikus* will appear soon in a volume entitled *ZAZ* (FlowerSong Press, McAllen, TX, 2020). *RCEI* is indebted to editor in charge, Eduardo Vidaurre, for his generous help with this material.

VIII

did I tell u
jesus saves
moises invests
ketzalcoatl xinga

XI

my toesie other
self incarnate
lubricating
con pinceles
xicanos la desnudez
xicana vereda hums
a nuestros pies

XXVII

sudote bonito
tinta roja
d la media noxe
metafora pinta
tu rostro lexuza
luna creciente
d la media noxe
purpuramarillo
d la media noxe
tus sonrientes labios
d la media noxe
sandia rojiverde
d la media noxe
bonito t sudo

LXIII

amer indian
whistle blow
cemanahua pueblo
xisme, rumor
has it zat
nazizona



alberganaciones
con plumas kkke
con rabos con
cascos policia
Cos

L

ke vivan los muertos
ke mueran los ke se
creen muy vivos
a pus ke
la jodienda taca
bajo ke no?
aki en tlaltipac
nomas! se alzan
los tuertos piratas





Super Doodle (Gustavo Segade).

POEMS
Gustavo Segade

“Coronavirus”

It will kill you, Gus, Gustavo
It will kill you, Irene, Irina
It will kill you, Alexandro, Alex
It will kill you, Mateo, Matt
It will kill all your family and friends
You can't touch anyone

You get to die miserably alone
A masked nurse or doctor
who can't come to close
or she or he will be infected
will be the last thing your wretched
body will see
The world's economy has gone to hell



We are in a depression
Irina and I get fed through our neighbors
and our son, Mateo and his partner, David
The future
What is coming
no one knows
In 1964 I began to write masters thesis
about the Spanish dance of death in the Middle Ages
La danza general de la muerte:
*Yo so la muerte cierta a todas criaturas
que son y serán en el mundo durante.*
*I am death certain to all creatures
who are and will be in the world forever*
A *memento mori* from the fourteenth century
The Black Death / La Peste Negra
inspired this poem, a dialogue between
a personified skeleton and all kinds of people
kings, popes, politicians, teachers, laborers
and only a village priest got to go to Heaven
Who is going to heaven in the coronavirus plague?
Certainly not the President of the USA
who thinks all those people of color
and laborers of meat packing plants
and senior citizens
and the prisoners
are to be wiped out
Open the country
Business is business
after all
It's a hoax, he said
I have got it under control
Lying
Lying
Lying
An old friend published a note
on Facebook
reminding us that her son works
at grocery store
and he is putting his life on the line
to feed us
The farmworkers are keeping us alive
The medical professionals
are our saints,
are our heroes
Rachel Maddow



is keeping us alive
Her insistence on the meat packing plants
on the senior citizen homes
on the people doing time in the prison
on the veteran's administration hospitals
are keeping us informed
about what is really going on
in this disaster
I have been drawing a lot
That is what I have decided to do
since I had a stroke 18 years ago
I lost my speech, so I decided to
paint my way out into life
18 years of painting is a lot of painting
If I live beyond this moment

Gustavo V. SEGADE
May 10/2020 (Mothers' Day)

My Two Boys²
"Alexandro"

Alexandro was born on April Fool's Day, 1973,
when the Chicano Movement
was in its cultural nationalist vs. marxist stage
when the Feminist Movement started to really happen
computers were things of the future
the internet hadn't appeared
there were no iPhones
LGBT was not even in the cards
Viet Nam was a killing ground

Alex cried for 18 months
Irene and I saw The Exorcist
We were horrified when Alex cried in the night
He had a Dracula's widow's peak
We got scared of our sleepy boy
Irene and I had met a year before
We got married after 5 weeks of courtship,
now we had this screaming kid

² These two poems will appear in Gibran Güido & Adelaida Del Castillo, *Fathers, Fathering and Fatherhood: Queer Chicano Desire and Belonging* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).



and my Movement was almost ending
I was kinda nuts.

At age 2, Alex was a real person.
By age 4 he was showing real smarts.
By age 6 he could read and almost write.
By now he knew about the ancient Greeks,
the ancient Mexicans and other Native Americans
and the tales of their gods and heroes
which made for many hours of Dungeons and Dragons
into teen age with other nerds
I had a judge friend who cautioned against this game
This game became our whole lives
We went to San Francisco on vacation,
When Alex and Mateo heard the music and saw the sights
in that glorious way-out Kaleidoscopic town
our kids, Alex and Mateo,
decided they were going to be artists
The four of us have been, since then,
consciously dedicated to the humanities and culture
and of course
to the arts

Alex could dance like his muse
the goddess, Terpsichore
I took him to ballet classes on Saturdays
I didn't know for sure that Alex was gay
until he graduated from high school
I was at that moment
recovering from a heart attack
I never was against guys I knew were gay
but I didn't want anything to with gay life
Irene told me, *Your son Alex is gay*
At that time AIDS meant horrible meaningless death
My colleagues at SDSC were dying
I went to see a Kaiser shrink,
she let me cry my eyes out
I recovered and life went on

Alex has had to work his way
bus boy, library clerk, yahoo computer guy
hounded by two Chinese room mates
who thought he would rape them
in their sleep
He got a B.A. in English at UCLA



where he met, at 18, the love of his life
His husband, Malik Gaines:
African American father and White German mother
Charles Gaines, now married to Roxanna
Barbara Rosato, now married to Joe,
famous artist and art teacher
All these people form
along with Mateo and David,
our family.

Alex and Malik had to do a lot of college work
At USC Alex attempted to get an MA
He failed, and the damned program failed
It was too Hollywood oriented to please Alex
And me, too. I have never trusted that institution
The failed MA cost about \$40,000 in student loans
Back at UCLA Alex worked on an MFA
in Performing Arts under Mary Kelly
Malik worked on a Ph.D. in drama history

Then they went to New York
Malik as assistant professor at Hunter College
Alex as part time at Parsons School of Design
They lived in a second story tenement in Brooklyn
Alex got another part timer at Bard College
Two new teachers, teaching art, in New York City

In 1994 they began the group My Barbarian:
Jade Gordon, Malik Gaines, Alexandro Segado
Jade can act, leading-lady act
She sings, she makes masks
and like Malik and Alex,
she has, they all have: creativity
The future was on them

They performed from raunchy bar nights at 2:00 a.m.
to The REDCAT Theater
in the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex in LA
They have performed in Spain, Italy, France, Germany,
Egypt, Israel, Canada, and Mexico from Tijuana to Mexico City

Greek tragedies were somber plays
Women were allowed to see Medea kill her children
Greek comedies were raunchy, and women were prohibited
The actors often used large penises as props



My Barbarian offered a play in which
Alex and Malik had penises three feet long
Jade had six breasts all dangling out
Irene's aunt and uncle left when they saw those schlogs
Saying it was too noisy for their ears
Irene's brother, Ira, was heard to have said
If your going to have penises, make them long long penises
My Barbarian had all those years of Greek mythology
and years of Dungeons and Dragons
My Brabarian made mythic future
out of the classical past

Now Alex has seven year contract at Hunter College
Now he is Co-chair of the MA summer program at Bard College
My Barbarian has received accolades, including
being included in the Whitney Biennial in 2014,
which makes My Barbarian real artists in New York
The Mother and Other Plays starring
Barbara Gaines, Victoria Gordon and Irene Segade
featuring performances by Eleanor Austin and Mary Kelly
Irene, Barbara, Joe and I went to NY to see the whole thing
It was great
My mother Luisa/Louise always wanted me to be an artist
The fates turned against me on that one
My son is an artist in New York City, New York
That's more than enough for me

Alex is constantly working on his drawing.
He is creating a comic novel that has a lot of style
Alex creates style
He is learning Spanish
He recently commented on my biography
written in Spanish, which shows he can read Spanish

He knows and opposes
what the current US president
is doing to destroy our nation:
malevolent idiot incompetent nazi crazy person
whom we have to stop, before he stops us

Alex and Mateo get along now
In LA they worked together on a play, *Future St.*
Alex wrote, directed and was the lead actor
Mateo did the music
Mateo is a leading disc jockey



all over the country
The cast of *Future St.* were students of Alex
all the way from NY
The play was published in *Theater*,
Yale School of Drama, Volume 48. Number 1

This writing is about
our family's history and myths
It's not about our tragic flaws
It's about our successes and achievements
It's about our lives
Life doesn't end with a big bang
It doesn't end with a whimper
It ends period

Alexandro Abraham Segade
is trying to be a good man
good to his spouse, his parents, his brother
his friends and his society

“Mateo”

Mateo was born on April 22, 1975
Vietnam was still killing people
At first we thought that Mateo couldn't hear
He was so silent compared to screaming Alex
Alex had two years of relating to himself
Mateo has always had a brother
to be compared to and against

Matt is constantly on stage
Sometimes he's Madonna
Sometimes he's Tori Amos
Sometimes he's Melanie
Mateo is the surreal element in our family
He is always out there, not in space
but certainly way out of your mind
He learned that if people laughed
they couldn't hurt you
that was his *l'chaim*
Mateo was the kid with his underwear
on his head that made you laugh
and laughing often brings you to tears
tragic and comic masks, but they are only masks
what's behind them...



Mateo could act
He and Alex took parts in Junior Theater at Balboa Park
At 7 Mateo interviewed and got the part of Rumpelstiltskin
He was a great Rumpelstiltskin
In high school Mateo and Alex acted as brothers in a play

When Alex came out, Irina and I celebrated
We had one gay son and one straight son
Boy, did we get that wrong
Irene and I knew nothing about gay life
Irene has had to research and study LGBT life
Now she is co-chair of education on gay life
in San Diego County
She and Dennis Nicely give workshops for GLSN
She uses this the sentence
We had one gay son and one straight son
to introduce herself to the teachers and students
when she begins to educate them about LGBT life

Mateo has had so many jobs:
He made money drawing pogs
He wrote articles for now extinct magazines
starred in incidents on San Diego bus lines
He worked in funeral parlor
he attended the School of Performing Arts
where they tried to drown his creativity

Irene and I knew there was
something bothering Mateo
His babysitter, a fine anglo woman
and her upright macho spouse
decided that Mateo should be naked
among at least four kids under her care
when Mateo did something wrong sexually
in their home
Mateo suffered mentally from that incident
No one mentioned this to Irene and me
To this day, I don't know what Mateo did
We didn't know zilch

At one time in grammar school
Mateo took some Barbie dolls to class
The bilingual, Mexican-American christian teachers
were trying to put Mateo and Alex
into social concentration camps



because Irene and I were raising queers
We had to get them out of that school
The teachers and we knew nothing
If that happened today
Irina would have those teachers' ass

Mateo tried not to be gay
In high school Mateo became friends
with Alex's worst enemy
Soon Alex was Mateo's worst enemy

Music became Mateo's life.
Mateo studied the songwriters, and their histories
He corresponded with super star music groups
Mateo became a night club dancer
he was only 17, but somehow he danced on stage
where he tore a Bible up in a frenzied song and dance
Drum-Drum-Drum-Drum-Drum

Mateo got hired by a music company that did not
count your hours on the job
They wanted your whole life
all your hours
And if you needed a bit of stimulation
there were chemicals that could perk you up
all the way to hell
Mateo went to heroin hell.
Mateo took Irina and me and smeared us
into the drug culture
Mateo went to fix up in Tijuana
Buy at a certain *farmacia*
go into the alley
and shoot up
almost caught by a border guard
with a needle on the floor of the car
Irene would stalk Mateo at work
to get a glimpse of him
He was forever in a bad mood
He and Alex stopped talking
This went on for years

In 2002 I hade a stroke
It left me unable to talk
I had to learn English,
my Spanish pronunciation was gone



Mateo came to visit me one time in rehab
He couldn't handle my being sick

Mateo met David
things began to change
David was not out yet
His father who was over 80 did not
know that David was gay
David owns a business
His employees did not know they had a queer boss
Mateo started taking methadone
At least that's a legal drug
Mateo had been to rehab at Stepping Stone
He clashed with them
They didn't approve of methadone
David finally came out to his father and to his friends
I sense that David's life has improved
since he met Mateo
I sense that Mateo's life has improved
since he met David
That's called love

Mateo and David are the people
Irina and I count upon to get our electronics fixed
We go to lunch and holiday dinners
Mateo and David, and Irene and I
went to New York at Xmas 2016
We had brunch at Alex and Malik's apartment
in Greenwich Village
We saw Stephen Colbert in person
We had a wonderful time

Mateo loves animals
Every where he goes he meets a cat
They become friends
One of Mateo's life long interests is
The Serial Killer
He has read all about them
He wrote to one recently, and the killer wrote back
Mateo does not want to be one of them
The fact that he loves cats belies his being a serial killer

Mateo is now an honest to god D.J.
Turn, turn turn the disc goes on turning
Mateo travels constantly



San Marcos to LA and back
San Francisco, Miami, Portland, Atlanta
The Bearracuda Heretic Cruise, out of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
Mateo works well with the drag queens
LAs Queen Kong, Gamer Night at Precinct DTLA
He works mostly for the Boulet Brothers
Who are the drag queen owners of most of the places
where Mateo performs

This writing is about
our family's history and myths
It's not about our tragic flaws
It's about our successes and achievements
It's about our lives
Life doesn't end with a big bang
It doesn't end with a whimper
It ends period

Mateo David Segade
is trying to be a good man
good to his partner, his parents, his brother
his friends and his society

Gustavo Valentín SEGADÉ
July 7/2018





Gustavo Segade.

POEMS
Thelma T. Reyna

“Broken Heart Syndrome”³

There is such a thing,
doctors say—not
the zigzag-split pointy hearts, two
pasted halves on Hallmark cards.
No, docs say, hearts really do fall apart.

Disasters shred our fibers like thieves picking
pockets in broad day. Suddenness of things gone wrong, small or big,
chip chunks of stamina and strength

³ Originally appeared in a prior version in the author’s book, *Dearest Papa: A Memoir in Poems* (Golden Foothills Press, 2020).

from hearts like Greenland's glaciers sliding into
open sea. Our chambers are invaded, locks picked,
thresholds split, so heartbreak can slip in.

Yes, doctors say, there is such a thing.

A violent spat, a gun jabbed in your face. A lover in his mistress'
embrace, caught in your bed. A husband with a
bullet in his head, or found suddenly at dawn, blankets warm but skin
cold. Startling things, ambush-grief, unplanned loss, faith shattered and
tossed. World upended, though brief, can be enough to cleave your heart.

Yes, doctors say there is such a thing.

No wonder, then, that spouses married long and tight, depart this world
in tandem, or one soon after. No wonder, then, that when Carrie,
princess of galaxies, died sudden, her icon mother, consumed with grief,
followed close. No wonder, then, that elders in love for life die days
apace.

Yes, not all wounded depart, but they
stumble along, with fluttering hearts, weakened
pulse, leaking valves, raided chambers... pattering
onward, broken heart syndrome and all.

Yes, doctors say there is such a thing.

“Pete & Tillie”⁴

When my breasts were young and round, my husband named them
one night as we lay in afterward euphoria.

Pete.
and.
Tillie.

He tapped each one with a fingertip light as a feather's tip. Monarch
knighting heroes with the delicate touch of a sword. Pete and Tillie.

⁴ Originally appeared in a prior version in the author's book, *Dearest Papa: A Memoir in Poems* (Golden Foothills Press, 2020).



Sounded like a Texas saloon, or a rock band (country?), or a law firm, or a boutique in West LA. Two dogs in a neighbor's house? Could've been all these, but no.

These were my skin, my veins, my capillaries, small outcroppings on the landscape of my flesh filling with blood, flushing, when his fingers alighted.

Women's boobs, docs say, are almost always asymmetric. *Pete's the bigger one*, my husband murmured as his fingers gently traced my right breast. *And Tillie's more feminine, slightly smaller*, he said in scientific tones.

His lips brushed each one gently, back and forth that night, wanting neither boob to feel ignored. *Now you, Pete. Now you, Tillie.* Back and forth, back and forth, his eyes closed, his lips smiling when he rolled onto his back and said again, *Pete and Tillie*, and sighed for his job well done.

"Hunger"⁵

I can take the grumbles, the groans that gurgle in my stomach morning, night, and throughout long hours at my desk.
I can take my belly sticking to itself inside.
I can take this.

As a child in little Texas towns, field to field, I learned that food is not a given, work doesn't magically bring food, and some of us aren't meant to eat as others do.

I can take this.

My father's back was black from sun, my mother's hands like broken stone. My own were criss-crossed red from cotton bolls, sharp leaves, and thorns.

Your hands weren't meant for pencils, mama said, *or for kissing*, papa muttered as he sat on dirt at noon. But he pressed my fingers to his lips, and smiled, and took a bite of bread.

I could take it, eating like birds, working like horses, pushing tired bones.

We piled on quilts spread on the floor at night and hummed

⁵ Originally appeared in a prior version in the author's book, *Rising, Falling, All of Us* (Golden Foothills Press, 2014).



grandmother's songs to stave our hunger.
We all took it, stripped of hearts but beating on.

But my children are a different test.

They look out dusty glass on windows high above the street, Chicago
lights just twinkling on in shops and sidewalks far below, the long
night just unwinding.

My boy and girl have drunk their cup of milk, and eaten the
sandwich they split.

I gave them crackers in cellophane I picked up at the deli kiosk at my job.

They lie like urchins in my bed, two stowaways with legs entwined
like twigs, and cold, bellies grumbling under the blanket that used to be mine.

When our room is black and still, neons blinking half a block away,
with alley drunks passed out below, I wonder at the world.

I wonder at this world, at how it takes and takes and takes, at how
our bones can break in toil, and our hearts collapse, and our spirits
desiccate, without a murmur of protest.

I wonder at this world, at how children lie in cribs, or sit at desks, or
lean on stoops with bellies vacant and souls the same, and how the
world goes on.

I can take it, for myself.

I can take it.

But children...children...oh, children.





Gustavo Segade.

MORENA SURVIVOR ON ANDALUSIAN SAND Alejandro D. Morales

Moroccan dark reddish-brown curly hair green eyes
sharp nose full African gaze educated English French speaker
full red lips smiles dreams of a *morena's* new life

Though unwanted by Spain steps off a slow barge
a quarter-mile swim her uprooted body stands firm
a survivor on Andalusian sand

She hides behind rocks she sleeps the sun rises the beach fills
with German French Spanish families invisible nobody notices
her fear hunger her blank lost eyes she tries to walk the beach
nonchalantly like she belongs

An open bar too expensive she figures fifty euros in a plastic bag
worries thirsty she sits at a table distant alone she asks the waiter
“*una coca*” he holds two fingers high yells “¡*cocas!*” to the bar inside
the waiter curious smiles leaves

A sudden panic grips her where's the money she loosens her belt
Reaches under her pants children play laugh and scream on the beach
in the palm of her hands the damp euros and a note with an address

The waiter brings a tall *coca* and *un trozo de tortilla*
“¡Mira!” he makes a gesture toward the beach boardwalk
she sees two *Guardia Civil* officers coming her direction

“¡Ven conmigo! Come!” she follows him to the women's
SERVICIOS “Lock door. I come twenty minutes.”
The waiter returns and takes her back to her table
“No volverán. They come once no return.”

She wonders why he helps her she sips slowly eats
little bites of the generous slice of *tortilla* she places
a five-euro note on the table he pushes to her

He offers a small glass of red wine “*Toma, este tinto te calma.*”
“I speak English like you.” “Relax.” the deep red wine moistens
her mouth he wonders what it would be like to kiss her

His tall body stands by her he doesn't back away
there is an immediate comfort between them
his light complexion hand grazes hers he has brown eyes
black wavy hair his father a *mestizo mexicano* his mother
Irish Norwegian

He understands she needs help her clothes damp no shoes
she finishes the last of the wine walks away from the bar
she covers her head with a grey scarf suddenly removes it
jams it in a small cloth bag she walks

He follows feels an unexplainable attraction to her
she strolls not in any particular direction turns right
again goes right five blocks later the girl stands obviously
confused no doubt she is lost but can't admit to that fact
fearful of the *Guardia Civil* she moves faster to a bench
in a plush green park with her hands clenched on her lap stares
angrily across the grass toward the sea

The bright intense Andalusian sun pulsates on her
she reaches for a fragile wet folded missive that she
carefully opens and flattens on the bench struggles to read
what the sea has taken away tears cover her blouse as she
sits glaring at the blank white sheet

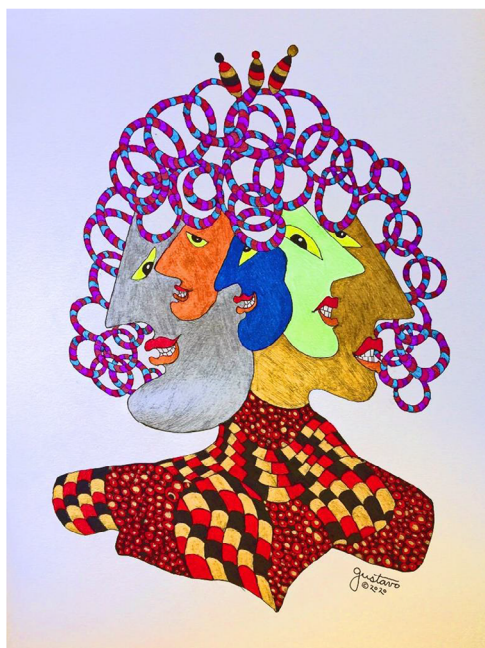


He remembers how he felt when he crossed the border
the first time separated from his mother by the coyote
pushed into another truck that drove him to the other side
alone not knowing what to do he spoke with few English
words at least he had a name address telephone and city of
an uncle written on a small white dinner napkin in his wallet

She crossed an ancient sea swam a quarter mile to shore
and the city where somebody would pick her up and take
her to a safe place he knows salt water erases information
and instruction about her contact no matter how much she tries
nothing of that history is in her memory but in the Mediterranean
under a hot golden sun in the bluest sky of the southern Spanish coast

Alejandro DENNIS MORALES
10/11/2020 CalifAztlán





Gustavo Segade.

POEMS

Luivette Resto

“Nomenclature”

Carmen is her name when I flashback to red handprints on my thighs for dropping a plate of rice and beans. It was Carmen’s hair I pulled back over toilet bowls. Carmen’s body I lay to sleep.

Mamá wiped tears off my four-year-old face when the #42 bus never showed during a blizzard, and I had to miss kindergarten for the first time.

Luis is his name when asked, “Where does your father live?” and like a press secretary I reply, “He chose to stay on the island.” His decision become confessions as we overlook the foliage of El Yunque. I see my face in his silently hoping it is the only thing we share. Papá would have followed me like a character in a Tolkien novel, but Luis chose the women and vacilón over me.

Joseph is his name when I talk about his wife and other life across the George Washington Bridge. Joseph when my children and I are shooed away because how does he explain three brown nietos to white co-workers. Dad is the step-father who



called me baby bear on Sunday morning phone calls, danced with me at my Sweet 16, gave me away at the altar.

Pseudonyms detach them from the people they are and the people I need them to be.

“A Villanelle for the Kind of Woman”

I never took you for the kind of woman
to let others sip her gin,
allowing the unacceptable to happen.

Letters address me: tough vixen
while comadres stand like sirens with songs that begin
I never took you for the kind of woman

echoing hymns born from the breath of the feminine
who never adhere to discipline.
Allowing the unacceptable to happen
underneath a transatlantic sky, widen
by a thousand moons, still like a mannequin.
I never took you for the kind of woman

who gave up searching for her own heroine,
vibrant and memorable like tattoos on the skin,
allowing the unacceptable to happen.
Catholic verses brazen
and overlapping W's on the chest, remind with chagrin
I never took you for the kind of woman
allowing the unacceptable to happen.

“Vinculum”

Noun

1. *Mathematics*. A horizontal line drawn over a group of mathematical terms.
2. A bond signifying union or unity.

She didn't need an abacus
to remember the nights she feigned sleep
gently caressing the middle of the bed
where they placed their children
the first time home from the hospital.

She didn't need to count
the bras left scattered on the nightstand
like fallen petals from red peonies,



hoping he would notice the beauty of her body again.
She didn't need to read her daughter any more fairy tales
about Prince Charmings riding on white horses,
saving princesses from dark towers or fire breathing dragons,
without crying each time she saw the words,
"and they lived happily ever after."

She didn't need.
She wanted.

To be undressed slowly
as he unyieldingly stared at her eyes
with the same curiosity
when he asked about her unspoken dream
to see her last name in the card catalog.

She didn't need.
She wanted.

To believe in colorless promises
repetitive like a merry-go-round
hurtfully circling like silent responses
when she begged for him to feel anything and
to see reciprocity in his eyes
when she said I love you.

POEMS
María Herrera-Sobek

"The Long Journey"

Your life
Hangs
By a fine thread
Like a spider
You cling to it
A long, silky
Piece of life
Swinging, wavering
To and fro
The end of a long journey
Nearing its final
Destination.



“Life Cycle”

We do not have
Much time to live
Five, ten decades
At the most.
A mere wink
In the cosmos'
Chronometer.
But I won't go
Gently into the infinite
I will soar
On angel's wings
Into the blue sky
A flight of blazing atoms
Will find a home
In the nether world
Of the universe
And comingle
With my ancestors
In an eternal
Embrace.

María HERRERA-SOBEK
Sept 13/2020



Is this my president???



Juan José Casillas-Núñez.

IS THIS MY PRESIDENT???

Juan José Casillas Núñez

Racist
Misogynistic
Homophobic
Xenophobic
Narcissistic
Sarcastic





Egomaniac
Arrogant
Ignorant
Liar
Hater
Vulgar
Divisive
Belligerent
Cruel
Insensitive
Misinformed
SpoiledBrat
AntiImmigrant
AntiMuslim
AntiSemitic
AntiEnvironment
Bully
MockedHandicap
Hatemonger
Whiner
Vile
Poisonous
Hypocrite
RealityTV
Celebrity
ChauvinisticPig
MrsUniverse
MrsPiggy
Braggadocios
Gropper
Bigly
Nasty
Unscrupulous
Cunning
Scandalous
Border
Wall
MassDeportations
FilthyRich
LockHerUp
Vindictive
Unfaithful
Bullshitter
HackHerEmails
Putin

DavidDuke
NoTaxes
MakeAmericaHate
Birther
VolatileTemperament
Incompetent
ConArtist
Scammer
TrumpUniversity
Fear
War
Manboy
Bigot
AltRight
YoureFired
PostTruths
Impeach
LoveTrumpsHate
DumpTrump
#NotMyPresident



