

# I, Chicano

Devin Encinias

I, Chicano, fruit of thy womb, deep roots...  
corn crops, brown face, and a painful scar.  
The only home I've ever known.  
Its wind, from which my breath is cut, the soil in my bones.  
Nations, kingdoms, world wonders to behold;  
Graces, praises sang to a great spirit, and four grandfathers, in four hundred tongues.

I, El Indio, twenty two generations of weight,  
Broken promises, empty words,  
Void of fear and shame,  
Different plagues with similar symptoms:  
"Kill the father, rape the mother, take the child".  
Sacred chains of kinship, broken by greed.  
The greed of rugged individuals, working toward a common goal.  
My home, the home of my father, and his before him... open for sale and settlement by my own image in the  
mirror that I still cannot recognize.

Porque I, Mestizo, am a blend,  
of stories and ages that move the breath in my lungs and blood in my veins;  
Old Mexico, Modern America, New Spain.  
Witness the rise and fall of kings and priests alike, so many, all the same.  
Fences, walls, carving the skin of my mother, rods of iron and fire, wicked deer with no antlers and skin of  
steel.

I Mejicano, throw a dance in my walk  
Practice cumbia in my step, write corridos when I talk.  
Smell cebolla on my breath and post up on the calle, next to that outline of chalk.  
Hear my Chevy turning over, oldies bumping,  
Bien planchado, con cuidado, ready to get into something.  
Say my prayers, throw on layers, hit the spot and give saludos.

In the morning laugh it off, limoncito in my  
menudo.

I, Latino, mixed blood, bronze skin and Spanglish  
tongue.

Having heard songs of spirits, only to forget every  
lyric... but that ancient drum pace once set,  
still remains.

My long, braided hair, sheared off... yet, slicked back  
with a suavevito shine vato.

Golden eagle with light eyes, unable to swallow a  
whole pinche serpent of pride;

Despite... being made to march a long way to  
nowhere

Only to be buried,

Never hoped to be seen again.

Pero sobre todo;

I, Chicano...

Am a seed.

Made to grow, against the grain.