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The Jaguar Moon Has Risen

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# The Jaguar Moon Has Risen

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José Hernández Díaz

**These Native Scars**

*mañana doesn't come  
for he who waits  
—Alurista; When Raza?*

I hope that  
When I walk  
The Arizona  
Streets

They see my  
Native face  
And think  
That I'm  
Illegal

Because I  
Would consider  
It an insult  
If they said  
I looked  
American

I am not a corporate dream  
I am not a movie screen

I hope they  
Ask me for  
My green card

And force me  
To the wall

I hope they  
Mock my  
Silent tears

And spit on  
My worn feet

I will show them native scars  
I will claim the sky as pain

I am not an alien  
I know all my history:

It is now.

**I Have Never Left**

Every time  
I walk  
Upon this  
*Tierra*  
I see my  
Mother's  
Footprints  
From when  
She walked  
Barefoot  
To the well  
To get  
Water for  
Her  
Brothers  
And sisters

Every time  
I walk  
Upon this  
*Tierra*  
I feel my  
Father's  
Heavy  
Hands  
Working  
*En el campo*  
Sweating  
Profusely  
And cursing  
The  
Overbearing  
Sun

Every time  
I walk  
Upon this  
*Tierra*  
I hear my  
*Abuela's*  
Flowers  
Singing to

Her and  
Laughing at  
Her  
Affectionate  
Playful  
*Chistes*

Every time  
I walk  
Upon this  
*Tierra*  
I smell my  
*Abuelo's*  
*Burro*  
Lost  
Without him  
Thirsty  
Without his  
Gentle  
Guidance  
To the  
Refreshing  
Calm  
*Arroyo*

Every time  
I walk  
Upon this  
*Tierra*  
I find myself  
Broken into  
Sharp  
Pieces of  
Aztec  
Obsidian  
Haunted by  
Centuries of  
Spanish  
Colonialism

Every time  
I walk  
Upon this  
*Tierra*

I soar  
And float  
On wide wings  
Of *memoria*  
And vow  
That  
I will

Always  
*Siempre*

Return  
*Volver;*

I have never left.

*Nunca.*

**self-portrait of a city**

Riding the  
Metro  
Up  
Whittier  
Boulevard,

To the  
East LA  
Library,

I peer  
Out of the  
Graffiti-laced  
Windows

And see  
A *piñata*  
Dangling

From the  
Tall  
Branches

Of a  
Willow  
Tree;

I know  
I am  
East

Of the  
Artificial  
River—

It is  
Written  
In invisible ink

On the dusty  
Shop windows



Where crucifixes  
And *Virgencitas*  
Hang

Like ornaments  
On concrete  
Trees;

I know  
I am  
East—

It can  
Be tasted  
Inside the  
*Marketa*

Where the  
*Aroma del*  
*Bolillo fresco*

Meshes

With the  
*Chisme*  
And chatter

Of the  
*Spanglish*  
Day.

I know  
I am  
East

Of the  
American  
River—

It is written  
In my  
Juxtaposed  
Eyes,

As I shift  
Perspective  
From  
Outside  
The window,

To the forefront:

Where I find  
Myself

Immersed

In the  
Naked city.

**The Jaguar Moon Has Risen**

The ocean echo  
Of the *Azteca* drum  
Pulsates the  
Concrete streets  
Of the Mission District  
In the intersection  
Of 24th St. and Folsom,

Tonight;

The slender rain  
Rhythmically falls  
From the turquoise lakes  
Of *Tenochtitlán*—

They are tears  
Of *Quetzalcoatl*;

They are tears  
Of *La Malinche*.

The jaguar moon  
Has risen;

The reflection  
Illuminates the  
Bare feet of the  
Serpent dancers:

Allowing them to soar;

They are eagles in the wind.

The ancient incense  
Slowly burns  
In the middle of  
The circle of  
The serpent dancers.

We inhale the ancient smoke;

Mountains quake

Inside our minds;

As we exhale  
It ascends and  
Pierces the flesh  
Of the nostalgic clouds:

We are eagles in the wind.

In the intersection of  
24th St. and Folsom,  
The *Azteca* drum  
Pulsates the  
Concrete streets  
Of the Mission District:

The *barrio*  
Has risen;

The jaguar moon  
Has risen.

**Aztlán, at last**

*what for the rush and bloody pain  
we'll surely die, but then...  
—Alurista, Pa' Cesar Y Corky.*

At last,  
    I've found  
A ground  
    To walk  
And proudly  
    Call my home—

*Las huellas de  
    La tierra  
Firmes,  
    Bronceadas,  
    Like my own.*

The movement came  
    From protest  
    And it  
Reigns in  
    Reverie—

There's action  
    *En las calles:*  
*Huelgas,*  
    Murals,  
    Poetry.

We know the  
Strength of  
Eagle warriors,

And float  
On wings  
Of ash—

*Somos libres  
De Europa  
Y también de  
Uncle Sam.*

The force  
Of what  
Was written

Now resides  
In what  
We know.

The mind  
                  is but  
An ancient  
  dahlia  
  *b l o o m i n g*  
In  
  the  
  wind.

*At last,*  
          I've found  
A sky  
  To claim  
And proudly  
  Call my home—

We grasp  
The name from  
Sacred sunlight:

*Somos de  
  Aztlán.*

**Áiac xictli in tlatícpac (nadie es ombligo de la tierra)**

I am not of  
Hispanic

D  
E  
S  
C  
E  
N  
T

I am of  
AZTEC ascension/

I am what  
My ancestors

Have written  
On the walls  
Of *Teotihuacán*:

**Áiac xictli in tlatícpac-**  
*Nadie es ombligo de la tierra-*

(No one is the navel of the earth).

\* \* \*

They have used  
Red paint

To relay  
Black messages

From the lips  
Of the fifth sun:

**In tllili in tlapall-**  
*En negro, en Rojo-*

(In Black, In Red).

\* \* \*

We are seeds  
Of the rain

We retain  
What has

F  
A  
L  
L  
E  
N

**In toyollo-**  
*En nuestros corazones-*

(In our hearts).



**House of the Eagles (Templo Mayor)**

*in brown america  
life keeps going and going and going  
and the grapes keep growing and growing  
and the anglos keep owning.  
—Andrés Montoya; in brown america.*

I don't write  
For white  
Fame,

I write for  
The brown  
Pride

Discernible  
In the  
Street:

*I write for me.*

I'm not a false  
Individual,

Sometimes  
I do  
Feel the  
Rain

Collide  
Inside  
My mind,

And I can't  
Count the  
Leaves

That scatter  
Poems

Beside  
The window  
Of the moon—

Then  
And  
Now:

*It's all the same.*

Now  
And  
Then:

*I feel the pain.*

I don't write  
For white  
Ears,

I write for  
The brown  
Palms

Perspiring  
In their  
Fields:

*I write for change.*