Dame tu hermana; Mocosa

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Dame tu hermana

Tenemaktia ueltiutli
Sonrisas de mazorca cuando bromean los peones
Contigo, con tus hermanas en la tienda de mi abuelo
¿A quién se le ocurre pedir así a una mujer?

Entre chismes de quien se peleó esta vez que visitaste al viejo ranchito
Se te ocurren sueños, Mamá, y un cuento del campo—la bruja
Que se quita las patas de noche y se vuelve zopilote—le da
De comer sangre a su hija con su pico
A veces veo el zopilote circulando Los Ángeles
Ese pájaro de fierro nos observa
Con su pico quita la vida, no la da

Viste con tus ojos que el río que se secó
Se juntó con el arroyo y en una tempestad
Se llevó la casa de patitas a la calle
Ya no sabes dónde empieza el terreno de tu tío y
Dónde acaba el monte

Los inditos también se los llevó la lluvia
Aunque todavía quedan hombres trabajando en tiendas
Caminan ocho kilómetros en chanclas Chinas
Para vender veladoras blancas, manteles bordados
Con flores color chillante
Diez pesos por un recogedor
Un día de trabajo se cobra a treinta
A veces, la escoba deja de limpiar
El agua y la luz se apagan mientras te bañas

¿Que nos queda de las tierras y de ser medias güeras?
Solo chistes entre hermanas, que una vez tuvieron un
Poquito de dinero, ahora nos falta a todas
A mí también, pero no se nos quita lo peladas
Es decir, bromea la tía con ojos negros
No es lo mismo rosa celeste, que “rosase el ete”
Frotando partes privadas imaginarias
Sus manos calientes de planchar, burlas ocultan
la milpa y el barril de pulque, y todo lo que se pudre
Mamá, te da miedo la noche quieta
Para dormir bien, matas luciérnagas, demasiado esplendorosas
Muertas nomás son polvo, dejan de alumbrar
Un camino conocido al que no llega nadie más/ solo queda
Un airecito nocturno
Vigilando el azul añil de tu dormir
Mocosa

I’m getting the hell out
of that shack, my family’s
every move stacked too close, rotting
tortillas in a plastic bag.

After school, I walk home on Gage, pass dying
palm trees and no walk of fame. My hoochie
shorts a fine kerchief, show firm nalga, dancing
bus driver imaginations. Covering fist-sized
hickies on my neck with wavy long hair, a midriff
shirt frames a trim belly with no child inside. I left Eloisa
asleep in her twin bed, weary from getting me off. Faked it five times
just so she would keep her mouth shut and on my tits. They’re bruised
from over-sucking, but why stop? They always
go away.

Open the screen door and baby brother plays with chewed plastic
soldiers and my raggedy brunnette Barbies. I smack him on the head
for touching my things. Mami doesn’t notice
my neck. She’s patting gorditas hard, sweat beading
on her forehead. According to her, everything I
do is a shame. ¿Dónde andabas?
¿No te da vergüenza? I toss my hair back
so she can see what I’ve been up to. Tries to smack
me, but I am fast.
I know how to lock doors.

At seven, the calculus problem set is a wrap. Out the front
door to find Homero, his blue van, mix tapes, his open mouth.
By ten, my face hurts from kissing him sideways. Arms
tired from making sure he didn’t get a lengthy feel. The cops catch
us tangled, a back seat in the parking lot behind his house. Just making
sure you’re not getting raped, they say. Half my friends pinned
down by boyfriends, stepfathers, party
goers—where were the greedy-eyed cops then?

Eleven thirty, home again. I kick dad’s
shoes, saunter past him asleep on the couch, his new bed
since I told mom about his puta. That’s what she is.
And that’s what he gets. And fuck his bastard kid’s crooked nose,
her Tijuana holey shoes. He showed me a picture
of her in his wallet. Heavy purple eye shadow
and pregnant. She looks nothing like me.
At midnight, in the lower bunk, Morrissey loud on dollar headphones, lying across a small ravine from mom on her bed. I wish for a future full of fucking, no cheating drunk husbands, only drunk friends who go home eventually, leave my bed crumpled, enriched with sound.

I will not be like them. My parents on time for everything. Arrive early to work? My boss is lucky to have me there at all, what with all this education and hot ass. I will never stay with a man who threatens to rape me again. I will learn how to speak better Spanish than them. I will wear dry-clean only clothes, sail in boats with white girls, steal their boyfriends with my crisp English. I will leave jobs because they bore me to tears. Leave lovers because they bore me to tears. I will not spend my life cornered, cooking myself into varicose veins, into piles of *miseria*, living for ungrateful *mocosos* like me.