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Laredo Riviera; [no toronjas]

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Emmy Pérez
Chicana

Laredo Riviera

I could love you all day
in the eye of a Laredo

swimming pool
sky, ears under water.

Clouds can't hear
border patrol's canines

before they're detained
beside the river, our view

in that dusky almost stadium
light. Two cities facing each

other. What is it to love
within viewing distance of night

vision glasses and guns, mud
and the Republic of the Río Grande

museum? Tourists and churches,
credit cards and elotes, we try

to forget our maquiladora conveniences,
toast compañero@s and watch

Tejan@s dance, slide on sticky floors. We
imagine who lives with each other, who only

for the night. Euphoria
more ancient than any vow. Earth

is earth. And kryptonite,
kryptonite. You and me, me and you.
[no toronjas]

No toronjas
this drought.
Creamy flower
blossoms arrive
late, no fruit.
White like the pith
we once tore
with plump sections
from the peel.
Nepantla where it is bittersweetish.

Nepantla
without
toronjas
Like a season
missed. You

in a city
somewhere digging
car out of frozen
snow. Bed

at nightfall. I withhold
watering toronjas like I withhold
my tongue, here

where it is sweetbitter-
sweet. I would
water them

with
the slush
of your winter

thaw if you
too would only
speak.