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Aquí Estoy

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Aquí Estoy

BAMBY SALCEDO
THE TRANS-LATIN@ COALITION

Aquí estoy in the middle of these intersections, en el medio donde veo, where I see, everything that is coming my way.

Aquí estoy, living these experiences, living at the intersections that I have been dealt, living in poverty and not in wealth.

Yo soy Mexicana, Latina, Trans, Inmigrante, sobreviviente de la violencia, I am a statistic, I am invisible, I am not recognized by you. By you, who chooses to be blind, by you, who choose to be cruel, by you who chooses to be unjust. But according to you, who am I?

Aquí estoy en el medio, soportando, acordando with labels that you have given me, not by my choice, because you have chosen those for me. To think that those labels are supposed to make me look better, look at me I am still me, the intersection who is walking. I am who I am, y aquí estoy, challenging you, challenging me, dealing with you and dealing with me, dealing with todas mis intersecciones that cross my mind and often times cross my heart, but it is you who crosses my life, it is you who tells me that I am no one, it is you who tell me that I am not worth it, it is you who often tell me I am not me.

Aquí estoy, en el centro, seeing these intersections, and what do I do? What can I do? Nothing but live and try to understand as I shuffle the cards that I have been dealt, with not much choice but to play your game, and do the best that I can, always with the hope that at some point I will win ... but win what?

Aquí estoy, playing your game, and seeing how you play with my life. I get discriminated because of who I am, because where I am from, because of how I look, because of how I speak, because I am trans.

Aquí estoy, con mi sombra, con mi luz, with my might, and all my bright, but who sees it? Is it you? Or you? Or you? Or maybe none of you, pero aquí estoy in the middle of everything that is going on, on me, against me, towards me, to me. Aquí estoy con mi realidad, con mi verdad, en la intersección, in the middle of nowhere, everything coming my way, and what do you see? How do you see me? Or how do you see those who look like me?

Aquí estoy, feeling the pain, the pain of seeing my sisters being killed, seeing how you think that it is ok to kill me, how you think it is ok to kill us, how you continue to be unjust, not recognizing my place, not recognizing our space, not recognizing us, you can think you can kill me, you can think you can kill us, and even if you kill me, and even if you kill us. We will always exist,

because we are part of the mother, we are part of the same world, we are part of you, and you are part of us. Even if you kill me, even if you kill us, we will always be here, because our spirits live, not just mine but the spirit of all of us!

But I tell you what ... you can kill my sisters and you can kill me, but you will not kill my strength, you will not kill my power, you will not kill my soul, you will not kill the memory of those who have been here before me, you will not kill the true essence of who I am, of who we are, because we are, and we will always be.

I am not different than you, you are no different than me, you are no different than us; why don't you want to recognize that? Why don't you want to recognize us?

Aquí estoy in this intersection. Your laughs, your ugly and untruthful claims about me, about us, even though painful, make me feel stronger and grateful, grateful that I don't have to be like you; ignorant to understand that I am who I am and not ignorant like you. I don't want to be like you, cold-hearted and mean, and even though painful, I want to continue to be grateful that I am me and that I can be me without you telling me that I am not worth it, that I am a no one, to you I may be a no one, but to me and those who love me I am someone.

Aquí estoy, viviendo, sufriendo, sobresaliendo, triunfando, luchando y a veces llorando; viviendo my dream, the dream to be free, the dream of one day just to be me. Aquí estoy dreaming that when I see myself in the middle of all of these intersections I can come to be who I truly am, just as I am without you telling me that I am not me. Aquí estoy soñando y esperando for the day that I could, simply be me.