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A quasi-prose, quasi-spoken word about the mullings of a first gen girl

Diana Delgado
Loyola Marymount University

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Her blood is the five-hundred-year-old strain of two conquerors, of the steel-helmeted pale horsemen with weapons that spouted fire and thunder, and of the sons of the sun who claimed divine rule over their mother, Pachamama the earth. Certainly she had not descended from a line of peaceful explorers.

And yet her family was meeker than a conquered people when prodding this new earth with a tentative foot the moment they stepped off the plane. There is no glory to pioneers unless history pardons their audacity.

Some part of her five-year-old heart realized this, and began to thirst.

She did not understand her mother's claustrophobia of their one-bedroom apartment, did not understand her father's insistence to dry clean his best suit to wear to apply for a job frying chicken tenders at Jack-in-the-Box. What did it matter? These were humble beginnings. This is how storybooks start. Her bed on the top-bunk was Rapunzel's tower, facing the window with spiderweb curtains and a view of a road paved with moons, those white spherical lamps responsible for more insect death than the local market's bug spray. She was the one who was going to bring them to the altar of history and immortalize their stories. Temporary, they all echoed each other. She did not conquer the kingdom of the lingua franca for nothing.

There was no question she was going to go to a university. And become rich beyond anyone's wildest dreams. And become the next greatest leader of her time, the next budding symbol of triumph for dreamers of cumulative cleavages and minorities. And above all else, she was to make her family proud, and never forget where she had come from— and what it had cost.

That is the point of an education.

Because this is the only way.

This is how you make brown beautiful.

This is how you redeem your people.

Or is it how you apologize for them?

They are not "a drain on taxpayer money". They are pioneers, tired of seeking forgiveness on the altars of history.