**La Migra**

**By Pat Mora**

I

Let’s play *La Migra*

I’ll be the Border Patrol.

You be the Mexican maid.

I get the badge and sunglasses.

You can hide and run,

but you can’t get away

becauseI have a jeep.

I can take you wherever

I want, but don’t ask

questions because

I don’t speak Spanish.

I can touch you wherever

I want but don’t complain

too much because I’ve got

boots and kick – if I have to,

and I have handcuffs

Oh, and a gun.

Get ready, get set, run.

II

Let’s play *La Migra*

You be the Border Patrol.

I’ll be the Mexican woman.

Your jeep has a flat,

and you have been spotted

by the sun.

All you have is heavy: hat,

glasses, badge, shoes, gun.

I know this desert,

where to rest,

where to drink.

Oh, I am not alone.

You hear us singing

and laughing with the wind,

*Agua dulce brota aqui,*

*aqui, aqui,* but since you

can’t speak Spanish,

you do not understand.

Get ready.

**Two Worlds**

**By Pat Mora**

Bi-lingual, Bi-cultural

Able to slip from “How’s life”

to “M’estan volviendo loca,”

able to sit in a paneled office

drafting memos in smooth English,

able to order in fluent Spanish

at a Mexican restaurant,

American but hyphenated,

viewed by anglos as perhaps exotic,

perhaps inferior, definitely different,

viewed by Mexicans as alien

(their eyes say, “You may speak

 Spanish but you’re not like me”)

an American to Mexicans

a Mexican to Americans

a handy token

sliding back and forth

between the fringes of both worlds

by smiling

by masking the discomfort

of being pre-judged

Bi-laterally.

**Two Worlds**

**by Stephanie D. Colquitt**

Bi-lingual, Bi-cultural

able to be open, charismatic, and loud

while having to use my inside voice

as I respect others’ personal space

able to kiss, hug, intimately greet

as well as nod when

they saw “How’s it goin”

as they walk away,

able to sing my heart out in Spanish

surrounded by friends and strangers alike,

Dominican-Haitian-American

one of three intricate parts,

some days one of the thirds overpower

the two others

quickly reminded that one can’t stand on its own

perceived by *estadounidenses* as one that \*an American

slowly but surely is climbing the ladder of success,

assimilation,

viewed by Latinos as a *morena* \*black/brown girl

that’s losing her flavor

between the chasm that

joins and splits my two domains

by resisting to conform

as I debunk preconceived notions,

discover, grow, and explore

embracing all parts with

*dignidad, certeza y orgullo* \*dignity, certainty, and pride

Afro-Latina that spreads and evolves

in one world, two worlds, all depending on the context.

**Let America Be America Again**

**By Langston Hughes (1935)**

Let America be America again.

Let it be the dream it used to be.

Let it be the pioneer on the plain

Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed—

Let it be that great strong land of love

Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme

That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty

Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,

But opportunity is real, and life is free,

Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,

Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.")

*Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?*

*And who are you that draws your veil across the stars?*

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,

I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.

I am the red man driven from the land,

I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—

And finding only the same old stupid plan

Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,

Tangled in that ancient endless chain

Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!

Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfying

need!

Of work the men! Of take the pay!

Of owning everything for one's own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.

I am the worker sold to the machine.

I am the Negro, servant to you all.

I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—

Hungry yet today despite the dream.

Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!

I am the man who never got ahead,

The poorest worker bartered through the years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream

In the Old World while still a serf of kings,

Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,

That even yet its mighty daring sings

In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned

That's made America the land it has become.

O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas

In search of what I meant to be my home—

For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,

And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,

And torn from Black Africa's strand I came

To build a "homeland of the free."

The free?

Who said the free?  Not me?

Surely not me?  The millions on relief today?

The millions shot down when we strike?

The millions who have nothing for our pay?

For all the dreams we've dreamed

And all the songs we've sung

And all the hopes we've held

And all the flags we've hung,

The millions who have nothing for our pay—

Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again—

The land that never has been yet—

And yet must be—the land where *every* man is free.

The land that's mine—the poor man's, Indian's,

Negro's, ME—

Who made America,

Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,

Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the rain,

Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—

The steel of freedom does not stain.

From those who live like leeches on the people's

lives,

We must take back our land again,

America!

O, yes,

I say it plain,

America never was America to me,

And yet I swear this oath—

America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,

The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,

We, the people, must redeem

The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.

The mountains and the endless plain—

All, all the stretch of these great green states—

And make America again!

**Simile**

**N. Scott Momaday (1974)**

What did we say to each other

that now we are as the deer

who walk in single file

with heads high

with ears forward

with eyes watchful

with hooves always places on firm ground

in whose limbs there is latent flight

**Metaphors**

**Sylvia Plath (1960)**

I’m a riddle in nine syllables,

An elephant, a ponderous house,

A melon strolling on two tendrils.

O red fruit, ivory, fine timbers!

This loaf’s big with its yeasty rising.

Money’s new-minted in this fat purse.

I’m a means, a stage, a cow in calf.

I’ve eaten a bag of green apples,

Boarded the train there’s no getting off.

**Metaphor**

**Eve Merriam**

Morning is

a new sheet of paper

for you to write on.

Whatever you want to say,

all day,

until night

folds it up

and files it away.

The bright words and the dark words

are gone

until dawn

and a new day to write on.

**Sunset**

**Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali**

The sun spun like

a tossed coin.

It whirled on the azure sky,

it clattered into the horizon,

it clicked in the spot,

and neon-lights popped

and blinked “Time expired,”

as on a parking meter.

**Size and Sheer Will**

**Sharon Olds**

The fine, green pajama cotton,

washed so often it is paper-thin and

iridescent, has split like a sheath

and the glossy white naked bulbs of

my son’s toes thrust forth like crocus

this early Spring. The boy is growing

as fast as he can, elongated

wrists dangling, lean meat

showing between the shirt and the belt.

If there were a rack to stretch himself, he would

strap his slight body to it.

If there were a machine to enter,

skip the next ten years and be

sixteen immediately, this boy would

do it. All day long he cranes his

neck, like a plant in the dark with a single

light above it, or a sailor under

tons of green water, longing

for the surface, for his rightful life.

**Marks**

**Linda Pastan (1978)**

My husband gives me an A

for last night’s supper,

and incomplete for my ironing,

a B plus in bed.

My son says I am average,

an average mother, but if

I put my mind to it

I could improve.

My daughter believes

in Pass/Fail and tells me

I pass. Wait ‘til they learn

I’m dropping out.

**Night Clouds**

**Amy Lowell**

The white mares of the moon rush along the sky

Beating their golden hooves upon the glass Heavens;

The white mares of the moon are all standing on their hind legs

Pawing at the green porcelain doors of the remote Heavens.

Fly, Mares!

Strain your utmost.

Scatter the milky dust of stars,

Or the tiger sun will leap upon you and destroy you

With one lick of his vermilion tongue.

**Chicago**

**Carl Sandburg (1916)**

HOG Butcher for the World,

Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,

Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;

Stormy, husky, brawling,

City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas

lamps luring the farm boys.

And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to

kill again.

And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the

marks of wanton hunger.

And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the

sneer and say to them:

Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and

cunning.

Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against

the little soft cities;

Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness,

Bareheaded,

Shoveling,

Wrecking,

Planning,

Building, breaking, rebuilding,

Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,

Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,

Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,

Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart of the people,

Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog

Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

**If We Must Die**

**By Claude McKay**

If we must die, let is not be like hogs

Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,

While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,

Making their mock at our accurséd lot.

If we must die, O let us nobly die,

So that our precious blood may not be shed

In vain; then even the monsters we defy

Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!

O kinsmen! we must meet the common foe!

Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,

And for their thousand blows deal one deathblow!

What though before us lies the open grave?

Like men we’ll face the murderous, cowardly pack,

Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

**The Sonnet-Ballad**

**By Gwendolyn Brooks**

Oh mother, mother, where is happiness?  
They took my lover's tallness off to war,  
Left me lamenting. Now I cannot guess  
What I can use an empty heart-cup for.  
He won't be coming back here any more.  
Some day the war will end, but, oh, I knew  
When he went walking grandly out that door  
That my sweet love would have to be untrue.  
Would have to be untrue. Would have to court  
Coquettish death, whose impudent and strange  
Possessive arms and beauty (of a sort)  
Can make a hard man hesitate—and change.  
And he will be the one to stammer, “Yes.”  
Oh mother, mother, where is happiness?

**Sir Philip Sidney**

***Astrophel and Stella* (1591)**

**1**

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,

That the dear she might take some pleasure of my pain,

Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,

Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,

I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe:

Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain,

Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow

Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburned brain.

But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay;

Invention, Nature's child, fled stepdame Study's blows;

And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.

Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,

Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite:

"Fool," said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart, and write."

**71**

Who will in fairest book of Nature know

How virtue may best lodg'd in beauty be,

Let him but learn of Love to read in thee,

Stella, those fair lines which true goodness show.

There shall he find all vices' overthrow,

Not by rude force, but sweetest sovereignty

Of reason, from whose light those night-birds fly,

That inward sun in thine eyes shineth so.

And, not content to be Perfection's heir

Thyself, dost strive all minds that way to move

Who mark in thee what is in thee most fair.

So while thy beauty draws the heart to love,

As fast that virtue bends that love to good.

But ah, Desire still cries: "Give me some food!"

**William Shakespeare**

**Sonnets (1609)**

**116**

Let me not to the marriage of true minds

Admit impediments\*. Love is not love anything that hinders progress

Which alters\* when it alteration finds, changes

Or bends with the remover to remove:

O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark\*, sea- or landmark

That looks on tempests\*, and is never shaken, sea storms

It is the star to every wand’ring bark\*, boat or ship

Whose worth’s unknown, although his height be taken.

Love’s not Time’s fool\*, though rosy lips and cheeks plaything, victim

Within his bending sickle’s compass come;

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,

But bears it out even to the edge of doom\*. brink of Judgment Day

If this be error, and upon me proved,

I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

**73**

That time of year thou mayst in me behold

When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang

Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,

Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

In me thou see’st the twilight of such day

As after the sunset fadeth in the west,

Which by and by black night doth take away,

Death’s second self, that seals up all in rest.

In me thou see’st the glowing of such fire

That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,

As the death-bed whereon it must expire,

Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

This thou perceiv’st, which makes they love more strong,

To love that well which thou must leave ere\* long. before

**130**

My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun;

Coral is far more red than her lips’ red;

If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;

If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.

I have seen roses damasked\*, red and white, patterned, mixed

But no such roses see I in her cheeks;

And in some perfumes is there more delight

Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.

I love to hear her speak, yet well I know

That music hath a far more pleasing sound.

I grant\* I never saw a goddess go; acknowledge

My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.

And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare

As any she belied with false compare.

**Mary Wroth**

***Pamphilia\* to Amphilanthus\**** “All-loving” and “Lover of two”

**(1621)**

**1**

When night’s black mantle could most darkness prove,

And sleep, death’s image, did my senses hire

From knowledge of myself, then thoughts did move

Swifter than those most swiftness need require.

In sleep, a chariot drawn by winged desire

I saw, where sat bright Venus, Queen of Love,

And at her feet, her son,\* still adding fire Cupid

To burning hearts, which she did hold above.

But one heart flaming more than all the rest

The goddess held, and put it to my breast.

“Dear son, now shut,” said she: “thus must we win.”

He her obeyed, and martyred my poor heart.

I, waking, hoped as dreams it would depart:

Yet since, O me, a lover I have been.

**16**

Am I thus conquered? Have I lost the powers

That to withstand, which joys\* to ruin me? enjoys

Must I be still while it my strength devours,

And captive leads me prisoner, bound, unfree?

Love first shall leave men’s fant’sies to them free,

Desire shall quench Love’s flames, spring hate sweet showers,

Love shall loose all his darts, have sight, and see

His shame, and wishing hinder happy hours.

Why should we not Love’s purblind\* charms resist? completely blind

Must we be servile, doing what he list?\* what pleases him

No, seek some host to harbor thee: I fly

Thy babish tricks, and freedom do profess.

But O my hurt makes my lost heart confess

I love, and must: So farewell liberty.