

Published Poetry Sample - Alex Martínez

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Notable: Joy Harjo, the first Native American United States Poet Laureate, was also featured in the same issue.

Taqueria

The cha-ching of the register plays
over and over,
like the lies we tell ourselves
when we are content.

Loud norteño music plays
from the rusty speakers on the corner.
There they sit, wasted,
like flowers decorating an accountant's office.

The machine sweats vibrant colors,
agua de Jamaica, tamarindo, and horchata.
It spits them out to a cup of an excited child,
like the desert spits out immigrants.

The walls are painted in a light pink,
but there is pain hidden beneath it;
I can see, I can feel it, and I can smell it.
This taqueria was built by foreigners.

Soñadores que no se dieron por vencidos.
Dreamers that crossed an invisible border,
hoping to be free,
wishing for a new chance.

The meat is turned repeatedly
by the man in red.
La carne de asada smells transport you back
to the forgotten country where you were born.

There, in awe of possibilities,
you realized that these dreamers made it,
and so can you.