

CORAZON

by Misti Rainwater-Lites

My brain is nada.
It's ridiculous, all the sangre
on the white piece of paper
that proclaims
I am a college graduate.
The frantic e-mail to professors
pleading my case.
I'm non-traditional.
I'm older.
I'm on disability.
I share joint custody of my son
and I only see him
once a week.
I'm all heart, as they say.
"Bless her heart," is something they say a lot in Texas.
I don't think
they mean it.

Last night I raged against the machine
that is 2018 apple pie dystopia.
America.
Trump's America.
Roseanne's America.
Cameron Wright's America.
Jennifer Tharp's America.
Barbie's America.
Ken's America.
"It isn't a patriarchy. It's a hatriarchy," I told my ex-husband.
San Francisco remains an impossibility.
Oh that day I walked to the marina
and the wind whipped my hair as
I recorded myself reading Bullshit Rodeo

on my Android.
All those yachts.
All those smug assholes in Safeway
with their organic everything.
The charmed.
The armed.
The obscenely equipped.
San Francisco never belonged to Brautigan
so I'm savvy enough to guess
it will never belong to me.
So. San Antonio.

Aliah Hernandez, I'm a native Texan
born with white skin and a vagina
but I know you
I love you
I am you
and I have so many words to prove it.
English is my first language
and I've read a few books
but I know that feeling.
Not From Around Here.
Not One Of Us.
Burn The Witch.
Kill The Bitch.
Fuck you for having an itch to scratch.
Keep that shit to yourself.
I know. I know.
I tried out for cheerleader in seventh grade.
I go back in time often
and hug that scrawny ugly
ridiculous little girl.
She wasn't shit.
That was the consensus.
You wanted one moment.

One night.
God. Me, too.
He looks a certain way and sounds a certain way
and you know the odds are stacked against you
still a tiny voice inside whispers...maybe.
Maybe this is where love can be born
in this motel room
with his hands
and his eyes
and his tongue.
His words could bring Ophelia back from the dead.
I'm so less than I'm so not Barbie
I'm no Marcia Brady but we all need
some semblance
some pretense
of love.
We go there.
We risk it.

I spent one night in that same sad motel.
I'd been texting the guy for a week.
We met online.
I didn't like the way he looked in person.
But I was hungry.
It had been a while.
I was luckier
much luckier
than you.
"You've got white privilege and hot privilege," a Latina friend
told me in 2015 when we shared the same taste
in dollar store blue lipstick.

But another time in Stone Oak I wasn't so lucky.
Still. Luckier than you.
I only bled for two weeks.

If I could hug you now I would.
And this is nada.
This is only a river of sangre
flowing from my corazon
to yours
wherever you
may be.

