

You Bring Out the Mexican in Me

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You bring out the Mexican in me.
 The hunkered thick dark spiral.
 The core of a heart howl.
 The bitter bile.
 The tequila *lágrimas* on Saturday all
 through next weekend Sunday.
 You are the one I'd let go the other loves for,
 surrender my one-woman house.
 Allow you red wine in bed,
 even with my vintage lace linens.
 Maybe. Maybe.

For you.

You bring out the Dolores del Río in me.
 The Mexican spitfire in me.
 The raw *nauajías*, glint and passion in me.
 The raise Cain and dance with the rooster-footed devil in me.
 The spangled sequin in me.
 The eagle and serpent in me.
 The *mariachi* trumpets of the blood in me.
 The Aztec love of war in me.
 The fierce obsidian of the tongue in me.
 The *berrinchuda, bien-cabróna* in me.
 The Pandora's curiosity in me.
 The pre-Columbian death and destruction in me.
 The rainforest disaster, nuclear threat in me.

The fear of fascists in me.
 Yes, you do. Yes, you do.
 You bring out the colonizer in me.
 The holocaust of desire in me.
 The Mexico City '85 earthquake in me.
 The Popocatepetl/Ixtaccihuatl in me.
 The tidal wave of recession in me.
 The Agustín Lara hopeless romantic in me.
 The *barbacoa taquitos* on Sunday in me.
 The cover the mirrors with cloth in me.

Sweet twin. My wicked other,
 I am the memory that circles your bed nights,
 that tugs you taut as moon tugs ocean.
 I claim you all mine,
 arrogant as Manifest Destiny.

I want to rattle and rent you in two.
 I want to defile you and raise hell.
 I want to pull out the kitchen knives,
 dull and sharp, and whisk the air with crosses.
Me sacas lo mexicana en mí,
 like it or not, honey.

You bring out the Uled-Nayl in me.
 The stand-back-white-bitch in me.
 The switchblade in the boot in me.

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Sandra Cisneros

Loose Woman

from

The Acapulco cliff diver in me.
 The *Flecha Roja* mountain disaster in me.
 The *dengue* fever in me.
 The *¡Alarma!* murderess in me.
 I could kill in the name of you and think
 it worth it. Brandish a fork and terrorize rivals,
 female and male, who loiter and look at you,
 languid in your light. Oh,
 I am evil. I am the filth goddess Tlazolteotl.
 I am the swallower of sins.
 The lust goddess without guilt.
 The delicious debauchery. You bring out
 the primordial exquisiteness in me.
 The nasty obsession in me.
 The corporal and venial sin in me.
 The original transgression in me.

Red ochre. Yellow ochre. Indigo. Cochineal.
Piñón. Copal. Sweetgrass. Myrrh.
 All you saints, blessed and terrible,
Virgen de Guadalupe, diosa Coatlicue,
 I invoke you.

Quiero ser tuya. Only yours. Only you.
Quiero amarte. Alarte. Amarrarte.
 Love the way a Mexican woman loves. Let
 me show you. Love the only way I know how.

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Sandra Cisneros was born in Chicago in 1954.
 Internationally acclaimed for her poetry and fiction,
 and the recipient of numerous awards, Cisneros is also
 the author of *The House on Mango Street*, *Woman Hollering
 Creek* and *Other Stories*, and *My Wicked Wicked Ways*. She
 lives in San Antonio, Texas, and is currently at work on