

MY ABUELITA

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Honorable Mention, Poetry

My abuelita comes to Juarez to sell *chicles*,
She stays here at the shelter.
Never alone, her demons and saints always follow her.
She's old but is she *loca? Quien Sabe?*
She hears voices and sees spirits.
Perhaps it is a life of deep religious beliefs,
That helps her fight her demons and love her saints.
All I know is that she is my *abuelita* and
I am her *corazon*, her *cielo*, and her *muñeca*.

The last time she was here her demons pushed her.
She fell and broke her arm.
This time it is her knee that is broken.
This means she stays at the shelter longer.
She is comfortable as the monarch of the house,
Ordering us around,
Making sure we bring her food and pain pills.
I don't mind, she is my *abuelita* and
I am her *corazon*, her *cielo*, and her *muñeca*.

Early the other morning,
She was walking in her wheelchair, yes walking.
She managed to get herself and the wheelchair to the entrance of the *baño*.
She stood herself up,
Hiked up her skirt and
Peed on the ground.
"Ayyy abuelita, porque to no usas el baño?"
"No puedo, no puedo," she responds,
As she pushes her skirt back down,
Turns and walks into the bathroom to wash her hands.
She grew up in rural Mexico, *sin baños*, it is her way.
What would I do without her? She is my *abuelita* and
I am her *corazon*, her *cielo*, and her *muñeca*.

My *abuelita* is a beautiful woman.
She has long luxurious gray hair
That she pulls into two braids.
She is tough; she doesn't fear her demons,
She yells at them and puts them in their place.
She does the same to me but,
I am wrapped around her little finger.

Mi abuelita es la razon,
She is the reason,
Para mi vida aqui in Juarez.
For my life here in Juarez.
She is my little grandmother and
I am her heart, her sky, and her doll.