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Cover Page Footnote

This article is from an earlier iteration of *Diálogo* which had the subtitle "A Bilingual Journal." The publication is now titled "Diálogo: An Interdisciplinary Studies Journal."



HOW THE LITTLE FLOWER CAME TO BE

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Her mother claimed it a *florequita*. But at seven years of age Luna Jr. Luna's vagina was nothing like a little flower. No, not at all. If anything, her vagina was wild and loose. Fierce and loud. And when Luna listened and looked at herself in just the right way, she'd find between her legs the sly, slick smile of a howling coyote. One that growled when hungry. Cackled when happy. And whined if sad.

Luna Jr. Luna knew just how lucky she was to have such a special vagina. Because it was there, in the inside of herself, that Luna found the strength for her to be who she was. And she felt obliged to tell everyone about it. Not only tell, but show as well, especially since her vagina, apart from being wild, loose, fierce, and loud, was also an exhibitionist. It loved to be seen.

Oh yes, did it love to be seen! This howling vagina coyote pranced about the kitchen, jumped out of closets, climbed on top of dressers and tables. Completely naked and shameless! At the most inappropriate times, like when the neighbor brought over left over cake, or when her mean and old *tio* came to visit.

But there was retaliation against the coyote vagina. One strategically planned by Luna's own parents, for her own wellbeing, they foolishly thought, since they were both terrified of their daughter's coyote vagina. They came at Luna with sharp *do not's*, and pinching nails that dug deep into her skin, and hard slaps against her hand, and worst of all, they shackled her into pink and frilly undies that laced her plump brown vagina in the most uncomfortable of ways. Sadly the plan worked. Taming the coyote vagina into a more reserved state, one in which it no longer pranced around the house, in fear that the hands would slap her, or scream at her vagina to hide its coyote face.

The coyote not only loathed being hidden under the shackles of lace, but it also hated how itchy and puffy it made its smooth soft skin.

One day, not being able to stand the heavy tickling itch of her brand new Care-Bear underwear, Luna ran to the corner of her

room's closet and reached into her undies for the much wanted scratch. She had to work at the itch with a little more effort since she had a tendency of biting her nails. That's when her index finger slipped, and the coyote growled a soft cackle. Luna listened to it real carefully. But all she got was the sound of its heavy breathing. Like waves it felt down there. As if her non-little-non-flower had a mouth, with no teeth, only fat lips, and a tiny little tongue.

She left her finger slip again. The sensation was tingly. Nice. Real nice. But the coyote wanted more. *Touch it*. Luna heard, without really hearing it. Like a whisper inside her head. Being young enough to listen she touched it again.

The coyote's tongue had the shape of a tiny button. She found it when parting its swollen lips. Luna smiled. Never having had such a good look before, she quickly stood up in the crowded closet to throw her sweaters and coats off the hangers and onto the floor, and stepped on the mound to reach the light's cord. She let herself fall on the cushion of clothes; bent her body towards her middle, so that her chin set against her pouted belly. It looked pretty. It had the color of a sunset. She smiled when she realized it was nothing like the little flower her mother would go on and on about. The coyote smiled back.

She did what she usually did with buttons. She pushed it. It let out its loud laugh that sounded throaty and hard. Luna pushed it again and again, turned the push into a light rub, until she felt the button soften up.

She felt as if she was drowning. As if the heavy clothes underneath her had sloshed into the most turbulent of waters, waves splashing her about, but she wasn't scared. Even though the coyote was robbing her breath, drowning her in the middle of her crowded closet, Luna wasn't scared. Instead she held onto the scream her coyote wanted her to moan out, closed her eyes and saw the most wondrous color behind her lids.

Like the color of the bleeding sky when a day came to a close. The color that meant the games of jump rope and volleyball would end

and her mother would want her home soon. That red so bright. She tightened her eye lids, as her fingers rubbed faster, her hips splashing against the waves in her breath, her heart pounding against her chest, her muscles twitching underneath her skin, and that's when it came: an ocean and sun within her, blazing and storming all throughout every inch of her. It was the color that kept her going though, as her body squirmed, her flat chest rose with each one of her gasps, and her hand slipping in the coyote's own spit. And it felt...good.

That is until a shadow pulled the sun right out of her eyes. It was a small lumpy cloud at first, one that Luna intended to outshine with a speedier rub of her hand, but the cloud grew larger and darker, drowning the sky right out of Luna. She opened her eyes to look for her sun, but found instead against the blinding bulbed light of her closet, the blurish shape of a hand. It slapped the ocean out of her. With burly, square fingers. Screamed at her to stop touching herself. It grabbed at her body, bringing about other kinds of waves inside her. Hard, sharp, nauseous waves, that threw her on top of her bed. Waves of waters that cut at her throat, that made it hard to breathe, that wanted to teach her a lesson.

Her coyote told her to look for the sun, to find the colors within her, whispered against the hands' screams, that finding her red sun color would be her only way out. But she couldn't see her colors. All there was to see was the darkness underneath the hand over her face as she felt a second one stabbing the coyote with folded fingers.

Something inside the hand wanted to hurt that part of Luna that was strong and free. It ripped her into a thousands pieces, plucked and tore at her. Making the ferocious coyote whimper inconsolably. The hand laughed and moaned with pleasure. But it wanted more. It wanted Luna's silence.

It's fingers tore at the coyote's tongue as if it were pulling petals out of a closed bud. *Mi florecita, mi florecita* the hand spat in a hoarse song. And the coyote begged Luna to tell the hand that it was not his little flower. Not a little flower at all! *Tell it who I am! Who I am! Tell it I am a howling coyote!* The coyote screamed at Luna.

And Luna tried. She really did. But the hand only laughed. And it was such a huge hand. One that was tricky and could change itself into a tongue, and teeth, and a lizard's beak. That hand tried just about everything until Luna gave it what it wanted.

It's hard to say how long it took. Or how many times. Because soon enough Luna not only lost track of the nights, but forgot everything all together. The coyote was molded into a little flower. Plucked out of its rooted grounds, its stem limp, its petals withered. And eventually the coyote's howling stopped. And what's worse, so did her listening of self. The underwear stayed on too. That first night, the hand itself put them on her. Slowly pulling Luna's tiny legs into each opening, and tapping her belly with calloused fingers saying "Don't you go around taking these off. Don't you go and touch your little flower again."

EDITH BUCIO received her B.A. degree in Fiction from Columbia College. Her poetry and prose depict a world that is very similar to what she has lived as an indigenous identified brown-queer-woman. She enjoys healing through her stories and poems and engages in building community through her art. She is currently working on her first novel.

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