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Rane Arroyo

LUCKY, THE LATIN LOVER OF LOMBARD, ILLINOIS

"I come into being/through my own magic"

—*The Bhagavad-Gita*

I slept with white lovers in the cul-de-sac suburbs who in the end just wanted me to say, "Caramba, Lucy" or "de plane, de plane." No zoot suit for this rico suave English major who claimed Sal Mineo's tragedy in *Rebel Without A Cause* as private property. *Home* was an island of smells: sofrito, carne asada, "Spanish" rice. We learned to love French fries, Boston baked beans, Buffalo wings. In the locker room at the pool, men praised my "full" tan but to me they were just ghosts in steam. Dressed, I was a spy among the mall people. I ironed my hair as friends permed theirs. The timing, it's about time. I had to take a foreign language class but I said I was already in honors English. I never dreamt of the wild west, or of mountain farms in Puerto Rico, but of the red city burning only miles from me. I'd take trains and disappear only to reappear in the suburbs as a messenger: *innocence isn't forever, amigos*. Our bodies were the wrong bridges of escape and so we drove up and down Main Street, like the dizzy sperm of astronauts circling the familiarized planet. One by one, I would drop off my friends at their inevitably white-colored homes. Finally, when alone, as a ritual between the road and me, I'd blast *Black Magic Woman*. Sometimes I would cruise around, wave at the transvestites hiding off the Lilac Trail. For my 25th Class Reunion I was reported as "missing." So typical—as if their reality is the only one. I wasn't missing at all or how else could you find me in your bed tonight?