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Solita: A Self-Portrait

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Solita: A Self-Portrait

Alyssa Fernandez

I imagine myself wearing an all denim outfit, barefoot. When I style myself, I always have this outfit in mind. I imagine a flower wall behind me with butterflies glued all around it. Or blue monarch butterflies released every time a shot taken. I'm outside, with beautiful green blades of grass, modeling myself when the sky is bluest. I do not mind the clouds, I just love the blue sky. Positioning myself sitting on the floor, my legs bent so my knees are aiming towards the sky, and my heels are tucked in. My right arm rested on my left leg and the left behind me supporting my weight. My eyes, looking seductive. That's when my lashes look best. The rest of my face will be relaxed, pointed downward, emphasizing my natural beauty at that downward angle. The image of my portrait came fairly easy to me because I think about it often.

But I then came to the realization, my self-portrait was heavily influenced by "white culture." Through movies and television shows, we are bombarded with the image of white families in the exact same attire that I envisioned, and I associate being barefoot as sort of a white people thing. I came to the realization that I am Mexicana. I want and I need to embrace it. I'm taking this moment of realization to reinvent myself.

I re-envision myself on my Tia Nacha's rancho, my first memory of Mexico. Wearing a traditional "Huipil," beautifully embroidered shirts, and a skirt to complete the outfit. In this self-portrait, I will be holding a donkey and a basket of fruit resting on my hip. Behind me, a mixture of beautifully designed tiles and wooden details carved within the wall. My hair, in big beautiful luscious waves, with natural makeup on. My pose, standing straight with my forehead pointing to the sky. I won't be smiling, but I will be radiating a look of power on my face.

I am proud to be Chicana, and every day I am prouder and prouder.