

Chicana, Para El Norte

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Chicana, Para El Norte

Kacie E. Figueroa

I'm a CHICANA.

CHICANA: an American woman or girl of Mexican origin or descent.

CHi'känä/.

Mis padres migraron *para el norte* para la buena vida. Como dicen los gabachos el "American Dream." Built a family on Miwok land (Riverbank), where you can find the common, BUT NOT native, almond tree in the town's backyard. 1.5 million acres... 80% of the world's almond production is right in the heart of California's Central Valley, where this Chicana grew up.

Riverbank population 25,303. After high school graduation, ALMOST EVERYONE stayed in RBK. Why? Why stay? I said...

"FUCK IT! Voy *para el norte* – para Humboldt."

No one I know has ever been there; most people I know, have never gone so far up. The furthest they go is Santa Rosa or La Bahía. Most of my homeboys and hynas have never left RBK. I refuse to be that person and go to college at Stan State...NO. Riverbank, the Central Valley cannot own me. There isn't enough air to breathe here. Pollen and pollution has a chokehold on the Central Valley, with the highest allergy rate from late January to early November. All these almond orchards and still no fresh air. Some days it feels like la mierda de las vacas por la casa overrun my thoughts (it doesn't help that the train is around the corner). Yup, vamos pal norte (plus I heard it ACTUALLY RAINS).