Collective Poetry
Yo se que pasaremos toda la vida trabajando.
Through my sobs I tell her what I had witnessed.
The strum of the guitar tickled the core of my soul, I could hear my pain.
Reached down for the star shaped fruit.

Through my sobs she listens to what I had witnessed.
For some mysterious or unexplainable Reason, things happen to us.
Reached down for many other fruit.
Young women covered their faces with dirt, hiding in the cornfields.

For some mysterious or unexplainable reason, things happen to us.
Witnessed and experienced injustices, so many I’ve lost track.
Young women, sisters, mothers, and daughters battered in the cornfields.
My scars are a mere reflection of all you have sacrificed for me.

Witnessed and experienced injustices, so many I’ve lost track.
I just want to give up, but knowing me I won’t.
The scars are a reflection of all the sacrifices for us.
Vale la pena ser pobre y feliz?

I can’t just give up, I know I won’t.
As the last strum of the guitar vibrated, my pain lifted and carried away.
Vale la pena ser feliz!
Seguiremos trabajando toda la vida.
They think Latin@'s don't have pale skin and green eyes.
The girl in class says, but you're not really Mexican
But now I'm left with the "What ifs"
I had to take it into my own hands!

What is "not really Mexican?"
I have a history of many generations; warm blood in my veins.
I had to take this into my own hands!
Spanish was my first language. It is what makes me feel at home.

The history of my family's generations, runs through me like warm blood.
For some unexplainable, mysterious reason, things happen to us.
Spanish was my first language, it has taught me a lot of cultural lessons.
But I have faith in our place in the universe. We are in it, and of it.

Mysteriously, unexplainably, things happen to us.
Sometimes I Dream and I wish I wouldn't.
But I have faith in our place in the universe.
I am a cultural cloud, my life is my present reality; I am a melting fog.

I have had dreams, and I wish I hadn't.
But now I am left with the "what if's".
I am a cultural cloud, my life was a present reality, I am melting in a fog.
Latin@'s don't just have pale skin and green eyes.
[Who] am I?
I’ve experienced hundreds of injustices
Attitudes decide destinies
and he was ripped away from me

lifetimes of injustices
Young women with faces covered in dirt hide in cornfields
and they were ripped away from me
she began to cry, endless tears as if her eyes held oceans

dirt covered faces hide in cornfields
and sometimes, I dream of you
she began to cry, endless tears created oceans
please hold and tame my heart

Sometimes, I dream of you
the guitar strings seep into my skin
they hold and tame my heart
Con la música, te recuerdo

the guitar strings sing our song
our attitudes decide our destinies
Con la música, nos recuerdan
[Who] are we?
[Who] am I?
What does being a female really mean?
Beauty should not be a harm or danger for a girl.
All people should be protected regardless of their differences to one another.

It means having courage to represent our title.
But yet he still has power over me.
Injustice!
Which I have not yet confronted HIM about.

Is it love?
I began to cry endless tears as if my eyes held oceans.
Should I confront him?
I just want to run away from it.

I want to learn how to stop crossing oceans for him.
But knowing me I won’t.
Should I run away from it?
Porque solamente quiero vivir una vida segura

But knowing my luck, it won’t happen to me.
My beauty has marked my destiny for the worse
Cuándo sabré cuándo realmente estaremos libres?
[Who] am I?
Pantoum Five

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Attitudes decide destinies.
Who am I?
Con la música, lo recuerdo.
It feels like bliss.

Who am I?
I just want to give up, but knowing me, I won’t.
It feels like bliss.
Hard to raise me every other weekend.

I just want to give up, but I won’t.
Vive con la fé que siempre tendrás algo bueno en la vida.
Hard to raise me, pa salir ‘alante.
“Do you need help, Ma?”

Vive con la fé.
Quiero vivir una vida segura.
“I’ll help you Ma.”
I dream.

Quiero vivir.
In music I remember who I am.
I live my dream.
My attitude is to decide my destiny.
Vive con la fé que siempre tendrás algo bueno en tu vida.
For some mysterious or unexplainable reason, things happen to us.
Quiero vivir una vida segura sabiendo que siempre estaremos libres.
An unspoken thing that only she knows best how to grieve.

For some mysterious or unexplainable reason, things happen to us.
She sat down and began to cry, endless tears as if her eyes held oceans.
An unspoken thing that only she knows best how to grieve.
Absence fills my imagination of what could have been and what should have been.

She sat down and began to cry, endless tears as if her eyes held oceans.
I want to run away from it, but the things you live are what makes up the person you are today.
Their absence fills my imagination of what could have been and what should have been.
Con la música, te recuerdo.

I want to run away from it, but the things you live are what makes up the person you are today.
With small but curious eyes the color of dark chocolate, only to melt in the sunlight.
Con la música, te recuerdo.
I feel like I’ll keep learning from faith, it has so much to teach and I am willing to listen.
With small but curious eyes the color of dark chocolate, only to melt in the sunlight.
Quiero vivir una vida segura sabiendo que siempre estaremos libres.
I feel like I'll keep learning from faith, it has so much to teach and I am willing to listen.
Vive con la fé que siempre tendrás algo bueno en tu vida.
Do you need help, Ma?
I hear her voice.
My body tingles, my heart races.
I just want to hold on to it.

Yes, mother was very strict when it came to our education,
But I am very happy she was.
A small child,
with small but curious eyes.
The color of dark chocolate,
Only to melt in the sunlight.

I am in a Dream.
And if my life is my present reality, then it is just a dream.
She sat down and began to cry,
Endless tears,
As if her eyes held oceans.
We have to understand
that when somebody knows your bad habits, it is hard for them to disappear,
even after you’ve changed…

It was hard to raise me every other weekend.
Where do I go when I dream?
Vive con la fe,
Siempre tendrás algo bueno en tu vida.
Con la música, te recuerdo.

Amor.
It feels like bliss.
You don’t realize what you have until it is gone.
Do you need help, Ma?
A dream is only a dream after all.

You come back to me in my dreams, to remind me that I could still fly.

At times rest is not so restful,
like light never quite fading on the horizon.
Home is where you make it,
not where memories are held, but where your family is.
We followed the empty highway, white lines guiding us towards our destiny.

You come back to me in my dreams, to remind me that I could still fly.

The moving boxes were heavy,
ladden with the memories of a place we called home.
And this time we finished the journey.
Then I knew that guys and girls were separate, different, opposite, segregated, others.

You are free, and I am chained.
Shackled to life in a prison without bars.
Sadness doesn't exist and “real men don't cry.”
Someday, we will meet again.

A dream is only a dream after all.

*This poem, like the previous pantoums, draws its inspiration from the collective classroom freewrites. However, it does not adhere to the structure of the pantoum. It is, however, a beautiful found poem.