

We Would Like You to Know

By Ana Castillo

We would like you to know
we are not all
docile
nor revolutionaries
but we are all survivors.
We do not all carry
zip guns, hot pistols,
steal cars.
We do know how
to defend ourselves.

We do not all have slicked-back hair
distasteful apparel
unpolished shoes
although the economy
doesn't allow everyone
a Macy's charge card.

We do not all pick
lettuce, run
assembly lines, clean
restaurant tables, even
if someone has to do it.

We do not all sneak
under barbed wire or
wade the Rio Grande.

These are the facts.

We would like you to know
we are not all brown.
Genetic history has made
some of us blue-eyed as any
German immigrant
and as black as a descendant
of an African slave.
We never claimed to be
a homogeneous race.

We are not all victims,
all loyal to one cause,
all perfect; it is a
psychological dilemma
no one has resolved.

We would like to give
a thousand excuses
as to why we all find ourselves in a predicament
residents of a controversial
power
how we were all caught with our pants down
and how petroleum was going
to change all that but
you've heard it all before and
with a wink and a snicker
left us babbling amongst ourselves.

We would like you to know
guilt or apologetic gestures
won't revive the dead
redistribute the land
or natural resources.

We are left with one final resolution
In our own predestined way,
we are going forward.
There is no going back.