

## **Anxiety Is My Lover**

I never write about my anxiety because my anxiety is private  
It is mine and only mine  
At night we lay together and he tells me all the things I should be scared of  
He makes little things into big things and then I can't stop thinking  
I think so much my head hurts  
And now I can't breathe  
He's choking me  
Anxiety became my lover when I was 15  
I don't know how we met but he's never left me  
He's faithful  
I tried to get rid of him once  
My doctor gave me pills  
Slowly he left me but then his friend showed up  
Depression was worse than Anxiety  
Anxiety would lay with me  
Depression wouldn't let me get out of bed  
Anxiety would make little things into big things  
Depression made everything into nothing  
I wanted neither  
But if I had to choose I wanted Anxiety  
I stopped taking the pills  
He was mad I tried to leave him  
He was showing up all the time now  
He wouldn't let me see my friends  
I couldn't go to my classes  
He didn't want me talking to anyone  
I'm sure of one thing  
He will never leave me  
And he hasn't

## Oakland

“No, but where are you from originally”  
I don’t mind if you ask “Where are you from?”  
But I’m offended when you follow it up  
Because my answer is always Oakland  
And that should be enough

I don’t have a country  
I have a city  
Oakland  
Smokin’  
You feel me?

I’m not lost  
I’m not confused  
I know what you mean  
And I know your view

I’m too brown to to be “American”  
My hair is curly, can’t be “American”  
Hablo Español, can’t be “American”  
My last name is not “American”  
Born in the USA but I’m not American

They make us hyphen it up  
I’m not talking about the hyphy movement  
Like my last name  
But that’s done out of pride

But Teddy hated when they did it  
He said there was no room for them  
And yet they still make us do it  
Because they want us to know

I know what you mean  
And I know your view  
I’m not American  
But neither are you

## **Me Too**

When people say

Why didn't they say anything when it happened?

I think

What a privilege it must be

To know

You will be heard, understood, and believed

## My Seat

On New Years Eve we had family over for dinner  
We had pupusas, tamales, and panes relleños  
When it was time to eat all the men were at the table  
The women were in the kitchen

I make myself a plate and hover around the table  
My “woke” cousin said he felt bad that all the men were at the table  
He felt bad I didn’t have a seat  
Yet he didn’t get up

No one got up  
And I didn’t say anything  
And I realized this happens every year  
All the women allow it

Machismo is passed down not just by men  
Women pass it down and teach girls to put up with it  
I’m done with that  
Next year I’m taking my fucking seat

## Those Are My Names

Chula

Hermosa

Preciosa

Beautiful

For 6 months

I was used

To you calling me

These things

Now

You don't call me at all

And I wonder

Who are you saying these thing to?