

It is I, the Immigrant

By Elizabeth Jiménez Montelongo

It is I, the immigrant
Arrived on this side of the continent
Thirteen thousand years ago,
Returned over three decades ago,
One cell, smuggled in my mother's ovary,
As she crossed the border.

It is I, the immigrant
Who took your spot at that school,
Paid with the taxes
Taken from my parents' paychecks,
Paid with the property taxes
Charged quietly in the rent bills.

It is I, the immigrant
Who took your spot at that university,
Who swiped the degrees,
Who took off with the debt of education
For the opportunity
To snatch up the better underpaid jobs.

It is I, the immigrant
Who took your languages,
Added them to her own,
Who took back her native language
Because words are more powerful
Than spilled blood.

It is I, the immigrant,
Unrepentant breeder of seven sons
Who commit the crimes of demanding justice,
Murdering indifference,
Trafficking awareness.

It is I, the immigrant
Returning home.