

# Some Clarifications y otros poemas

Javier O. Huerta

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In his poem, *Toward a Portrait of the Undocumented*, Javier O. Huerta writes, "The economy is a puppeteer / manipulating my feet. / (Who's in control when you dance?) / Pregnant with illegals, the Camaro / labors up the road; soon I will be born." Sharing similar experiences with the more than 11 million undocumented people who live in United States, Javier O. Huerta struggles with his own sense of loss, caught between his life here and his past in Mexico. "Soy nadiense," he writes in another poem--*I am from nowhere*.

Fluent in English and Spanish, Huerta writes poems in both languages, and occasionally combines the two in the same poem. In this, his first full-length collection of poetry, he explores themes of dislocation, loss, love, and art. Whether mourning the tragic suffocating deaths of immigrants in a tractor trailer, lamenting the loss of a lover, or writing about childhood fears, Huerta sketches haunting pieces about a bilingual, bicultural experience. In *Coyote*, Huerta evokes a child's unvoiced fear about his father, who, his cousins tell him, is a coyote, an immigrant smuggler. "I was only six so I pictured Father on all fours with tongue out, panting, on the prowl."

Winner of the University of California, Irvine's 2005 Chicano / Latino Literary Prize, this debut collection marks the arrival of a vibrant new voice in Mexican American literature.



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