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Raro

José Ángel Araguz
Linfield College

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RARO

by José Angel Araguz

Me dejaste con el corazón en la mano!

I hadn't heard my mother's voice in half a year. I wanted to say I forgot or lost track of something but that would have been too honest. I said instead that I had been busy, been good, been behaved, all of it in my best Spanish, which was in so many ways not saying much. With heart in hand, she began to tell me about my brothers, her graying hair, the silence her man needed in a small house.



Photo credit

¿No te levanta la mano, verdad? I asked, knowing that I would never trust the answer. *Cuidado con el descansito*, she said instead, then went on about how I am late with giving her grandchildren.

¿Que haces? I told her I write poetry, my pages are my children. *Ni nada*. She then told me how a co-worker told her that I could write a book which could become a movie. Then I'll have money.

¿Que piensas? This was my favorite question. I remember it from long drives at night, how she would say it as if she herself was tired of thinking. At that moment I had been thinking about how there were too many men in our family who take money, but how I knew I would end up asking for some anyway.

Instead, I told her I'm the only Mexican writer in the workshop.

¿El único mexicano? I told her that I'm rare.

¿Raro? Raro tu nariz! And I laughed, and she laughed.

It went on that way, question and answer and advice, question and answer and silence, and it would go on that way, no matter how many sounds I threw out looking for the right one, we would always be like birds making as much of a home as we could out of broken things.



About José Angel Araguz

José Angel Araguz is a CantoMundo fellow and winner of *RHINO Poetry's* 2015 Editor's Prize. He has had poems recently in *Prairie Schooner*, *Borderlands*, and *The Laurel Review*. He is pursuing a PhD in Creative Writing and Literature at the University of Cincinnati. Author of *Reasons (not) to Dance*, a chapbook of microcuento style short prose, he runs the poetry blog [The Friday Influence](#).