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Over the Rio Grande Line

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After Glenis Redmond

Lin Flores

It is curious how the stories
migrate along the family trail
with night-sight eyes in daylight.
How Mexican myth melted its Duvalín
chocolate in our jort pockets across the heat,
smeared and sticky it is all there was to eat for days.
I carry the guilt. One dulce especially,
how dad hid and one patrol officer found him
separated from the rest, dad ran through the oaks
the way “beaners” do—looking for the wall.
Concealed for two nights. That is how I got here—
born of bravery and vision and refuge.

The first time he crossed though, only river
lay to land. Dad had a trash bag of things, a best friend,
and a dream. Made it to America. Made America. Until
the liquor was stronger than he was
with so-called “wetback” wasted warped tongue
to phone my sister in slurs: *fucking cry baby*.
Father warned: *better not date a black guy*.
Was father trekking toward villainy or
lost in entitlement? We were borders
apart. Never heard “I didn’t mean it.”
Or “I was wrong.” I carry the crusty candy
shame of what my father said when drunk.