



Michael Zapata’s “White Twilight” marks the first in a series of broadsheets leading into celebration of THE2NDHAND’s 10th year. It’s the first work of new fiction in a book commemorating the anniversary we’re asking readers to help fund via a [Kickstarter.com](#) campaign to raise \$2,000+ to cover printing costs. Gifts for donors are multi-tiered according to donation level, starting at \$14, the cover price of the book itself, and running on up to \$100 levels. We hope you’ll pick up a copy. Zapata, a Chicago-based writer and educator (also one of the founding editors for *Make*; he has produced and written for Second City’s Donny’s Skybox, the Viaduct, The Trap Door Theater, and the Apollo Theater Chicago), will be featured in our [So You Think You Have Nerves of Steel?](#) monthly event in December. Keep tuned to THE2NDHAND.com for Nerves of Steel info (every first Tuesday of the month at Hungry Brain on Belmont in Chicago).

****BACK ISSUES** are available as pdf downloads at [THE2NDHAND.com](#) or for \$2 (or three stamps) per issue to editor/publisher Todd Dills at the Nashville address below. If you like surprises, a sampler package of 5 issues is available for \$4, and lifetime subscriptions for donations of \$30 or more. We shall survive either fire, flood or earthquake, be assured (in the event of nuclear holocaust, all bets are off). Consider it (paypal [todd@the2ndhand.com](#) or send check by mail; info: [THE2NDHAND.com](#)).

RSS: [the2ndhand.com/rss/the2ndhand.xml](#). ****WRITERS:** send prose submissions (2,500 words or less Web, 5,000 print) to THE2NDHAND, c/o Todd Dills, 1430 Roberts Ave., Nashville, TN 37206 ([todd@the2ndhand.com](#)) or C.T. Ballentine (email only: [ctballentine@gmail.com](#)). THE2NDHAND is **editors’** Todd Dills, C.T. Ballentine, Jacob Knabb, **FAQ editor** Mickey Hess, and **janitor** R. Beady, when Harold Ray’s on another of his benders.



WHITES: THE NEW MINORITY
NOW, ME, THIS KID WITH Puerto Rican/Ecuadorean DNA strands and strange *sangre*-memory (though you could argue they are the same damn thing), why am I in this dark and wizened containment camp, forced to write “Accounts and Reflections as They Occurred During the Chicago Riot of June 04, 2040” by a handful of flash-faced, white-lightning lawyers? (Due process at work, right *socios*!) All I know is that the 2040 census was uploaded and everybody lost their shit. And let me just say before I get any further that it’s fucked-up that there are still hundreds of us locked up here, separated by woven steel cell doors and gray, sound-proof walls (dog cages, really)...* And this is where we’re supposed to piece together some sort of story of the Chicago Riot. From a suffocating, dislocated place...

I could probably say that I was at the boat house in Humboldt Park or somewhere near there, but I don’t remember. Maybe I was at the Grill on Division. The place doesn’t matter so much as the day. I do know for sure I was watching cranes sweep over the Llosa and Quaism Tower in the Far South Loop, since it was just half-built then and rising like a split drill bit into the deep blue of the sky. I was thinking that the Tower was going to be some mad tall gig and everything else in the Far South Loop would climb up it like jungle vines or siege around it like all those watchtowers you see in those 17th century Age of Exploration revival films. Anyway, I was thinking of getting down there by night to watch the crews load glass windows on the cranes, but obviously I never got to that.

To start, my Moms called to remind me of something, maybe a job interview, but I don’t remember where or even for what. Thinking about it now, I doubt I even had a job interview and I might have dropped a lie the last time I talked to her. But really she called because she knew I was in the city. She knew I was somewhere in Humboldt Park if not the park itself, and she

***WHEN WE ARE NOT TOLD** to write or eat or sleep, I am mostly thinking of the apartment on Kedzie I came up at, the trees in the park out front during winter, ivory branches (like tusks) woven into the deep-crystalline fabric of the sky... my fathers’s *cuatro* which filled the apartment with Puerto Rican spirits... my mother’s voice, revolutionary and sweet. This was when they were together and the more I miss these things, the more my anger swells at the dam of my throat.



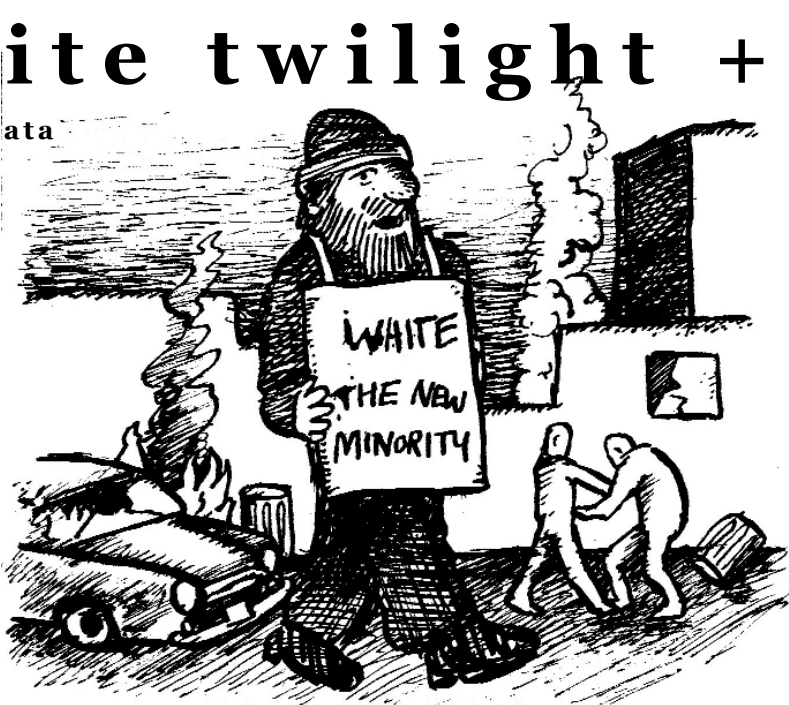
PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY ELLEN MARK, ACROBATS REFINANCING THEIR ACT AT GREAT GOLDEN CIRCUS, ANNOUNCING, 1999

white twilight + + +

by Michael Zapata

Go number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.
—King David to Joab

THE CENSUS WAS FIRST uploaded by a soft-skinned, sharp-tie-wearing Web and Media Clerk from the U.S. Census Bureau sometime between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m on June 4, 2040. If you were awake, you would have been one of the first to decipher the Statistical Abstract and make sense out of the color coded Population and Housing Units Percentages, Economics Charts, and Genetic Make-up Graphs, the ones with the deep violet for Blacks, burnt ochre for Hispanics, orange for Whites, cold sea blue for Asians, apple green for Middle Easterners, brick brown for Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders, and simple gray for those with two or more races with genetics, like mine, that defused borders. (And if you were like my Moms you would have said to your child, *Hijo, they have all that information on us for a reason. It’s called containment, hijo, just like the Old Days, and your child might have said, as I often did, Moms, I am not like you and the Old Days are not my memories.*) But I don’t blame the soft-skinned, gray tie wearing Web and Media Clerk from the U.S. Census Bureau. He couldn’t have known that to some citizens the census would be unacceptable, that it would strip them of their favorite colors, their ivory and pink hues, or that it would confront their deep and ploughed Euro ancestry. He also couldn’t have known that a few wretched citizens would bust down on those who were black, sienna and fawn, starting with a Columbian, maybe Dominican family outside of D.C. Anyway, those with the more ancient haplogroups. He couldn’t have known that the reason for the D.C. beating and the copy-cat beatings and the subsequent retaliation riots would spin on the lips of pundits, brazen the voices of politicians, and course through the web like hot lava until (and pay attention if you’re the type of person to spy on your neighbors) you could see the most-important-piece-of-data-as-far-as-the-media-and-you-and-everyone-you-knew was concerned, when it erupted first as a great wave of sulfuric dioxide, and then when it fell as grainy volcanic ash on our small towns and suburbs and cities:



il by Andrew Davis, creator of the long-running Hideous Bounty series at [THE2NDHAND.com](#)—see back page for deets on his contribution to our 10th-anniversary book, upcoming Spring 2011

wanted to see if I was going to see my Dads, even though she hated it when I did.

I might have said no or not today or later. Or I didn’t want get into it.

Basta. Let me explain. My Moms is half Indian and speaks Quechua and that was some deep and sad shit to come up on as a child, cuz as you know in ’19 the Pichincha volcano split Quito in two and a lot of Indians became refugees, most not as lucky as my Moms. So, as a survivor, my Moms was one of the old-skool señoritas who helped network The Recoil (that failed revolution) against the Ecuadorean government and got holed up for the first half of the 20s, with the *historia* of her completely wiped off the web, so I can’t even give you the media here to look that craziness up. (Check this, U.N. lawyers: If you’re looking for another case, something international to make you *famosos*, look no further.) All of her life was tough like that and after getting released she sought asylum in Chicago and met my Dads and had me, which convinced her to keep her bloodline was out of trouble. But, as you know, the tragedies of *familia* run in circles.

I remember that when my Moms called she warned me. She said, *Stay out of Wicker Park, hijo, the census is out today.*

¡Ay dito! I should have listened to her.

AFTER TALKING TO MY MOMS I must’ve started west down Division and by the time I got to my Dads’ it was probably 7 or 7:30, around then, and everything east of Chitown had been fucked-up for an hour already. D.C. and Boston and New York City at that hour were like a preview of the apocalypse, a simmering or festering apocalypse. But I didn’t know any of that yet. Everything in Chicago was still fine, or mostly fine. The starchy ass of the sun was just rising behind the Loop and people were just getting out of bed.

My Dads is like the last Puerto Rican in Humboldt Park, and he has a nametag right above the buzzer to his third-floor apartment on Division

that says THE LAST PUERTO RICAN IN HUMBOLDT PARK. I even think Channel 11 did some story on him a few years back. They called him something like *A Living Relic* or *The Last Jibaro*. Anyway, he lives there alone, technologically kaput and isolated, surrounded by the musky smell of sawdust and oak bookshelves, which, filled with bent and blemished books, tarnished bongos and chipped *palitos*, collapse inward toward the hollow of the living room like old rotten teeth. (*¡Ay dito!* allow me this moment. I miss that place most of all.) He even plays the *cuatro*. My Dads, a Puerto Rican zombie, a ghost of a *jibaro*, surrounded by books, playing lush Spanish ballads and forgotten Hispaniola melodies...

So, even though I visited my Dads all the time, my Moms didn’t want me anywhere near him. But if you ask me my Moms didn’t want me anywhere near Dads because he was still in love with a woman who had died a long time ago (before my Moms), a girl named Karina, a serious beauty who had left a deep stain on my Dads’ *corazon*. When we all lived together on Kedzie, I even once overheard my Moms scream at my dad, *Papi, you can keep your fuckin’ stain and solitude to yourself.* I wasn’t sure what my Moms exactly meant, though. My Dads *was* heartbroken and ruined, sure, but he rarely let on. Not even a whisper or the specter of a whisper. He rarely even left the house.

I used to bug his ass anyway, fill his apartment on Division with my loud and messy presence, maybe to check up on him or maybe to remind him that his bloodline was skill kickin’ around the city. I’d show up in the fat of a night with a small group of friends or a girl, especially a girl, cuz Black, Latina, White, or some *loca* mix like myself, they all had the same sad and beautiful smile when Dads played the *cuatro*. He’d play a few songs and pour us a glass of whiskey on ice and then retreat to his bedroom with a book. I sometimes wondered if any of the girls reminded him of Karina. But here’s the thing. Even though it messed me up as kid, I don’t begrudge Dads for the divorce. I don’t blame him for still being in love with Karina, for being stuck in some permanent lovesick state. After all, a woman’s smile, or the memory of it, is like a wedge in your ribcage, a wedge that leaves just enough space for a slender fawn hand to slip through, just enough space so it can reach in and squeeze your heart.

I rang my Dads’ buzzer and a concerned looking family passed by the door, Haitians, or maybe some

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Cubans, or maybe it was just me out there on the street, standing by the door. I don't remember. He answered to the tone of *hey señor* and led me up the three flights of stairs that led to his apartment. The living room was humid and deep with the smell of egg yolks and sugar, an island sort of smell. He put a coffeepot on and sat at the long dining room table, which was overstuffed with papers and book covers. I put my phone on the table and a few urgent headlines and clips floated across the screen: THE NEO IMMIGRANT ECONOMY; WHAT THE CENSUS DOESN'T TELL YOU; RISING INSURANCE RATES FOR WHITES; HOW WHITE ARE YOU REALLY? YOUR GENETICS AT PLAY; WHITES: THE NEW MINORITY. And then the flashing news report that most in internment believe started the copy-cat beatings and subsequent riots: HISPANIC FAMILY BEATEN OUTSIDE OF D.C. I clicked on the report, just as millions of others were doing, and my Dads and I listened as a stark and serious news anchor explained that on a highway outside of D.C. (a weathered and forgotten highway, I imagined, a Latin American ghost highway) a family consisting of a father, a mother, and two daughters had been pulled out of their car and beaten silly by ripe-skinned Southern Anglos, undercover 5-0s no less, seething with a new minority-ness. Another clip showed a few pundits arguing about where the family had come from. Were they immigrants? How Hispanic were they? How Southern Hemisphere were they? How ancient was their haplogroup? Not much was said about the cops. This was some raw *mierda* that you do not want to wake up to.

My Dads asked about my Moms, if she was somewhere safe, and I said, *I think—she's at home*. I was quiet for some time and then I added that she was pissed at me, but he didn't ask why. He just nodded and pulled aside the curtains to the front bay window. On the corner of Western and Division blockades were being set up, a mad Tetris series of concrete blocks and deep-black pad-dies. My Dads poured himself and me a cup of coffee with ice. He then handed me the cup and nodded toward the corner and said, *Whites are afraid of our numbers. And we're afraid of being counted*.*

We watched as people from the neighborhood gathered by the barricades. My cell phone flashed and my Dads and I watched as an open-collared news anchor told the nation that one of the family members from the D.C. beating, a 12-year-old girl, a beautiful girl with blue eyes and mahogany skin, had just died. He then said that there were reports coming in from all over the country of other Hispanics who had been beaten, in addition to Blacks and Arabs. In response, he said, riots were forming in the nation's cities. My stomach coiled and I imagined a desert, a catastrophic and bone-dry desert like the Sahara or like the Atacama, empty except for ruins and the occasional crater. I then imagined all the people of the Earth, the multitudes of people who would split into

other multitudes, until there was no more space, until our cities resembled something else entirely, the ghosts of other cities or incandescent meteors breaking apart in the sky. I tried to control my breathing and not look at the space near the barricades, which were filling with shouting people. I was sure that violence would erupt at any moment. Instead, I looked the other way, over the rooftops, which spread west like some mad and jagged 3D chessboard. I then looked to the sky, which was *azul* and bright and lifeless, and tried not to think of anything at all.

But I thought and thought and grew angrier and angrier.

My Dads went to his bookshelf and from between two large hardbacks he took out a pistol. *For protection hijo*, he said. I took the pistol. On the handle was the carved image of a snake swallowing its own tail. I waited for my Dads to say something else, but he didn't say anything. Instead, he just hummed sadly and plucked a string on his *cuatro*, adrift in an endless love song.

I DON'T REMEMBER IF I stayed at my Dads' and finished my coffee like I've done so many times before, not really saying much and lost in my thoughts, catastrophic thoughts that swirled like a violent and collapsing dusk, or if I took off right away down Division, a snakebite fury at my heels. By the time I reached Western and Division a mess of people had already gathered by the barricades. They were trying to get into Wicker Park. SWAT teams of privatized police were busy keeping them out. I looked at the towers in Wicker Park, which stretched even higher than those from the '20s and '30s and were built with protective steel sheets and warped cerulean glass panes in the shape of wings. It then occurred to me that the people living in those buildings were frantically trying to claim the sky.** When the first shots were fired into the crowd (make no mistake, the bullets hissing westward), a lot of us were looking, really looking, at the towers for the first time.***

*LET'S TAKE A QUICK MINUTE for some old-fashioned Humboldt Park Committee schoolin'. Although the flags in *Paseo Boricua* came down years ago and the Puerto Rican community had moved further north and to the burbs, the long blocks west from Western to Kedzie were still *in-the-mix*—third-generation Gypsy artists with frumpy haircuts, Indonesian refugees, and Dominican *mamacitas* rolled together just fine for the most part, *no beef*, as my Dads likes to say, but east of Western was the *Insanely Guarded and Holy Hood of Whiteness*. After the riots in '24, Bucktown and Wicker Park barricaded and built up. Taking their inspiration from turn-of-the-century Bogota, Shanghai and Manhattan, they perfected the modern-day gated community. The only thing missing were the WHITES ONLY signs found a century ago in the washrooms of the South and mortgage contracts of the North.

AFTER THE INITIAL BULLETS, a swarm of people rushed toward the barricades and I found myself at the corner of Western and Division, a corner veiled by the shadows of a dying era, a corner bearing a strong resemblance to a hive, a furious hive of hornets without a queen—a total lack of trajectory, all fucked. I ended up smashed against the barricades and I felt my left shoulder unhinge from its socket. I then heard more gunshots and saw a Molotov arcing across the sky. It looked like a bird on fire. The privatized police screaming, *GET DOWN NOW!* and the crowd shrieking *Fuck the 5-O!*, shrieking like their muscles were being torn from the pulpy inside out. People clawing at the space between bodies, the space which seemed to be crumpling all around us. Too many people, I thought—the ferocity of multitudes—yet, still, I saw others breaking away quickly, saving themselves, eyes fixed on some distant and gloomy point, but you know all of this, you don't need me, you've seen it again and again in the films of guerilla journalists or the old live footage of the newscopters, which flew in wild circles over the city like ravens or black beetles...and then a hand reached for my pistol, which I had somehow taken out, though I couldn't remember when, and another hand grabbed my neck and another my belt, but before I could fight them off, these hands which were like the hands of a monster with a thousand and one appendages, I felt something smash against my skull and I remember tasting blood, salty and corrosive blood that could have been anybody's, but was probably mine, and then I heard or I imagined I heard a song—*que fucking loco right?*—at first a song with a tinny and amorphous voice, but then a song with a beautiful voice, a Latin American voice sung by a Latin American heroine, although the song itself was surely a song by Ray Charles or Cole Porter, an American song, which is like saying it was an inconsolable song, a song from the depths of a forgotten history—

**HOPPED UP ON BOREDOM IN CONTAINMENT I can't help but think of sovereignty. To those people in the wing-shaped glass pillars rising all over our nation's cities, sovereignty is dead. They dropped their allegiance at the 5-4-3-2-1 of the Millennium and cashed in. They're modern-day Internationals, and they're busy staking out the horizon and hording Futures and Biotech and Credit. They have our DNA and debt in their back pockets, so they got all of us. And what about us? We are the grimy remnants of sovereignty, the old-skool cats who still believe in and cling to borders and flags and street corners. We are an invisible narrative. We are ripe for the foolin'. We are the oldest suckas in American history.

***THE LAWYERS ARE TELLING ME that time is running out. They want me to get on with it. They're less interested in my political attitude and want details of the riot. I'm supposed to finish my testimony now. But it's hazy, a murky snapshot, a half-forgotten nightmare. But that's the part the lawyers want most. right? Details of the riot, details of the *natural phenomenon of peoples of the Southern Hemisphere*. They want to categorize my grievance. They want to resurrect my habeas corpus. They want me to tell my story so it doesn't happen again. Bullshit. I didn't even do anything. But I'm boxing in and want out. ¡Ay mierda! Fine. Give them what they want, right? We're always giving them what they want.



KICKSTART ALL HANDS ON >>>>>>>

THE2NDHAND's 10th-anniversary book

IN THIS T2H'S TENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION, we're launching a fund drive beginning in November via the **Kickstarter.com** web portal for a 10th-anniversary book slated for spring publication. The funding goal is \$2,000, the equivalent of 150 preorders (at \$14) of a 300-plus-page tome, collecting previously unpublished stories by the likes of past contributors **Nadria Tucker**, **Patrick Somerville** (*The Cradle*) and **Fred Sasaki** (the force behind the long-running Chicago Printers Ball) as well as new faces like **Amanda Yskamp**, **Ben Stein** and others. Special sections over the bulk of the book are occupied in most instances by multiple shorts from our best repeat writers, from **Joe Meno**, **Tobias Carroll**, Somerville and **Al Burian** to **Heather Palmer**, **Jill Summers**, **Kate Duva** and our longtime FAQ editor **Mickey Hess** (*Big Wheel at the Cracker Factory*). A full list of all represented contributors follows, along with other specs. Stay tuned to **THE2NDHAND.com** for details about the fund drive launch—and for details about special extras for those donating at different levels (including but not limited to T2H bergamot olive oil soap from TheLeftHand.net, Featherproof books by T2H contributors, prints by Nashville wood-block printer Martin Cadieux, packets of not-exactly-apocryphal but quite historical broadsheets with wood-block-printed envelopes...). A donation of just \$14, though, will get you a copy of the book as well as copies of three special broadsheets we're publishing in the run-up to release, including this one. It'll be chimp-y, and in our world that's a grand thing indeed.

ALL HANDS ON: THE2NDHAND after 10, 2000-2011, 300+ pages, perfect-bound paperback

a reader edited by Todd Dills w/ an **introduction** by T2H coeditor C.T. Ballentine

and featuring **new work** and other features by: Michael Zapata, Jamie Iredell, Patrick Somerville, Amanda Yskamp, Nadria Tucker, Fred Sasaki, Ben Stein, Patrick Somerville, Susannah Felts & Todd Dills, a mini-epic poem ("Chicago") by Doug Milam, Matt Cahan, Mike Nowacki

Cover design by Featherproof Books' (and T2H contributor) Zach Dodson (featherproof.com)

Illustrations for the lead section by: Andrew Davis (the2ndhand.com/antipurpose)

Author illustrations by Chicago artist and T2H janitor-in-residence Rob Funderburk (robfinderburk.com)

Special sections by T2Hers Marc Baez, coeditor C.T. Ballentine (including the entirety of his "Friedrich Nietzsche Waits for a Date" novella), Philip Brunetti, Al Burian (the *Burn Collector* zine and associated books), Tobias Carroll ("The Scow!" blogger), Spencer Dew (*Songs of Insurgency*), Kate Duva (cohost of our Chicago "So you think you have nerves of steel?" reading series), David Gianatasio (*Mind Games*), Mickey Hess (*Big Wheel at the Cracker Factory*), Joe Meno (*The Great Perhaps*), Jonathan Messenger (*Hiding Out*), Doug Milam (*Still the Confusion*), Anne Elizabeth Moore (*Unmarketable: Brandalism, Copyfighting, Mocketing, and the Erosion of Integrity*) with comic adaptation by Josh Bayer, Kevin O'Cuinn, Heather Palmer, Michael Peck, the Pitchfork Battalion (a collaborative group with roving membership, including many of those already listed, plus, featured in the book, Sean Carswell, Jim Murphy, Emerson Dameron, John Minichillo, Motke Dapp, and Dominique Holmes), Lauren Pretnar, Patrick Somerville (*The Cradle*), Jill Summers, Paul A. Toth (*Finale*), and Nadria Tucker.

For more, stay tuned... Visit the2ndhand.com/books.html or search "All Hands THE2NDHAND" on kickstarter.com mid-Nov. on.

Why the gods above me, who must be in the know, think so little of me they allow you to go. When you're near there's such an air of spring about it. I can hear a lark somewhere begin to sing about it. There's no love song finer but how strange the change from major to minor, Every time we say goodbye, every single time we say goodbye.

Maybe a song my Moms used to sing while my Dads played the *cuatro* from our yucca-colored couch at our old apartment on Kedzie, a song I must've heard often when my parents were still together, when we were all still together, my Mom's voice sweet, the notes from my Dad's *cuatro* hovering in the living room before escaping through the front bay windows to careen down Kedzie like lost and hungry island ghosts... I'm losing myself, aren't I? Getting off track and trying to shrug the eerie sensation that *hay gato encerrado* and that there is no proof of me anywhere in the world... *Continuamos...*

During the riot, I lost consciousness and woke up hours later in the pitch black back of a paddie, raw in the bone, messed up in the face, and handcuffed with dozens of others to a small metal bench. We drove for what seemed like hours and hours and then we were taken to our cells. And then these lawyers showed up. (In fact, they're standing here right now, watching me write, waiting impatiently for me to finish, like statues with the eyes of vultures, tired and overworked vultures.) Give them what they want, right? But what else is there, except for the boom of loneliness and anger, unwoven unevenly on the page... Maybe just one thing, echoing like a violent and sustained whisper off my cell walls. My Moms was right. The Old Days *are* my memories, following my footsteps and thoughts like some shadow FBI agent, like some ancient Santeria curse, closing in on me (*¡Ay dió!* how obvious, a snake carved into a pistol, swallowing its own tail), chasing me in circles *para siempre*, through all time.

END

