**ode to the first white girl i ever loved**

it was kindergarten

& i did not know English

so i could not talk

without being ridiculed

& the teacher did not want me in her class

she was white, too

she said i do not know

how to teach someone

who only speaks spanish

& the kids did not want me in their class

they were white, too

& black

they said we do not know

how to be friends with someone

who only speaks spanish

& i was the only Mexican

& i only spoke spanish

i watched a lot of tv

& everyone was rich & white

my family was poor & Mexican

my family only spoke spanish

& in school i felt so lonely

my loneliness would walk home with me

my loneliness held my hand as i crossed streets

my loneliness spoke Spanish like my family

& this is how i learned to equate

my family with loneliness

how i learned to hate my family

how i learned to hate being Mexican

& i watched a lot of tv

& everyone was rich & white

& what i wanted was to grow up

& be rich & white & speak english

on shows like Seinfeld or Friends

on shows with laughtracks, big hair, & cardigans

& what i wanted was friends

to walk home from school with me

& what i wanted was a teacher

to give me gold stars like the other kids

& what i wanted was to stop eating welfare nachos

with government cheese

& it was kindergarten

& i loved all the white girls in my class

Robin & Crystal & Jen & all of the white girls

whose names i’ve forgotten

i wanted to kiss them

i thought kisses were magic

& i hoped i could learn English through a kiss

that i could run my hands through their hair

& find a proper accent

i loved white girls

as much as i hated

being lonely & Mexican

lord, i am a 25 year old man

& sometimes still a 5 year old boy

& i love black women & latina women

& i tell them in spanish

how beautiful they are

& they are more beautiful & lovely

than all the white women in the world

i tell them in spanish

how lonely it is to live in english

& they answer with a remix of my name

yo se, yo se, yo se