

## **a well dressed man**

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*a well dressed man from mexico once told me in broken english:*

*ja ja ja!!!! translation: jjiha ha ha!!!*

*thank you... i dreamed that i had finished the book and there was a movie about the book but me and someone else were the only two persons that were watching the movie and the movie screen was a waterfall or a tidal wave then i tried to see who was the other person and when i saw who was, it was me and, and the person who i thought was me did have eyes and then i turn my head down to see my hands, and they were made of cardboard and all my body; at the end i was just a piece of cardboard with my face sketched and next to me was my body tied at the floor with four candles on each corner.*

--- Original Message ---

this the well dressed man from mexico revealed to me, after dark skin and accent,  
*why is my english broken? i never did mean to ruin such delicate constructions with my bare hands let alone my tongue*

*i speak to you only as a means to reconstruct the meaning of foreign  
and move beyond borders before they become gated in an act of shutting out  
or perhaps closing in*

the well dressed man from mexico was really a boy, just a young boy of no more than 5 years,  
he wears a school uniform, socks should be at knees, but young boy unfed-legs cannot  
accommodate

he takes the plates from your table and

“*your social security money*”

is that why you despise him?

“for each square-inch of his skin there is one less job for an american”

he is a well dressed man-boy and he’s waiting patiently on a street corner with a cigar in his clamped teeth and a mustache overhead and a look of regret, as the cold air falls from between his teeth with the smoke and he envisions the sun of a more red earth pulling him in directions that cannot be seen by the naked gringo

no, nor the tastes of stale bread from bleached flours and the prospect of a better, more integrated existence, where one becomes robotic in nature—becomes,  
the object for which he sells his body to replace the sweetness of living and breathing—

while he sits on a crate elegantly posed for the next filthy truck

though he—well dressed man-boy

you were able to walk barefoot  
you were able to wear life  
and not have life wear *you*

so you relieve yourself of stale bread,  
cold air and 15 hours of work  
and drink a warm beer  
hiss at young girls

the reflection of white man makes you sick,  
but it is now this sickness that drives you forward,  
it becomes you, you lose the roll in your r—the tan in your tan skin

the well dressed mexican man-boy talks to me and sometimes  
i get lost in the cracks between the words and cannot follow  
what he is saying, though when all is said and done i am under  
the full influence of comprehension

sometimes he looks at me and does not quite understand,  
we draw pictures and make elaborate motions with our hands;  
we draw inspiration from each other's—he takes your dirty plates and leaves you with a—

“i don't know they all look the same”

when you turn to me i will look exactly like you  
*this is strange, you are gringa*  
and yet that cardboard person you thought was you

“he's just a dirty mexican”

who stands well dressed  
and  
forfeits broken tongue  
for english  
to become part of the ma-*chine*

we are the machine  
working together point  
and counterpoint  
rolling off of each other like cogs do  
fitting neatly together

you are the character in a dream  
you tell me great things  
in a manner of which i could not have understood them  
if i myself had said them