

Gracias

ALMA VILLANUEVA

“Alma Luz, with a name like
that, go,” he laughs,
waving me through
final border, Juárez, to the Sun,

I crossed into the rainbow-

Sold washer/dryer, gave my
favorite black leather couch
to Goodwill, the Guatemalan
has a large family, “Take it,”

I crossed into the rainbow-

The Canadian Indian says he
crossed, “As long as the water
flows, you know that unbroken treaty,”
he laughs, likes the CD player, “Take it.”

I crossed into the rainbow-

I give my treasured books to my
son, Marco, takes the tin orange
ladle I made pancakes with 35 years

Alma Villanueva is a novelist and a poet.

ago, "An heirloom," he laughs,
I crossed into the rainbow-

In El Paso, lost, trying to
find the crossing, a one-legged
man pushes his wheel chair up a
curb, no one helps him in USA,

I crossed into the rainbow-

Wide stretches of desert, so
dry even bugs no longer splatter
my windshield, an old man kissed
white by sand laughs into the Sun-

I crossed into the rainbow-

Small towns, celebrations of
people, water, food, children
leap in play, a man in a wheel
chair takes a toll at his tope-

I crossed into the rainbow-

Mexican men eye me, pocha,
loca, más gringa, sí,
señora-some flirt, some sweet,
some hate what I've become,

I crossed into the rainbow-

Mexican women size me
up, am I someone's mother,
just another pocha, gringa, puta trying
their men on like shoes, some smile hola,

I crossed into the rainbow-

High winds, small tornadoes
whip the desert, lifting my car
slightly, **I'm so alive**, it
hisses, we travel side by side, so alive,

I crossed into the rainbow-

I arrived in the time of
blossoming purple trees,
from my roof top they
laugh on the hillsides,

I crossed into the rainbow-

I arrived in the time of
high April winds, the
roof door slamming shut,
brick breaking glass open,

I crossed into the rainbow-

Violet twilight: gliding white egrets,
cranes, flocks of birds in long,
trailing formations, wing to
their nightly nests at the lake,

I crossed into the rainbow-

On the street below my roof
teens, families, women in groups, walk
close to the houses, these narrow cobble stone streets, to
the plaza, fire eaters, drummers, mimes, food, drink from carts,

I crossed into the rainbow-

The young crescent moon finds
its place in the sky, tomorrow
the rising, real Sun, children
will walk to the milk truck with buckets,

I crossed into the rainbow-

The crescent moon digs her prongs into
my dreaming head, somewhere
teens will light fireworks all
night and the young cop will smile,

I crossed into the rainbow-

San Miguel is deep into these wild
mountains like my old home in the
Sierras, where love always found
me, here the eyes are untamed, wild,

I crossed into the rainbow-

Here, old women in rainbow
rebozos are my grandmother,
Jesús, I buy calla lilies from some, roses
from a man who call them his queens,

I crossed into the rainbow-

Last night, at twilight as the
church bells struck seven
times, my neighbors sang a
song of lament, joy, gratitude,

I crossed into the rainbow-

Tomorrow my neighbor's rooster,
 the Mexican Sun, will snatch me
 from dreams, now a soft, teasing night
 wind coaxes the southern stars to shimmer,

I cross into the rainbow-

Mamacita, do you finally feel
 at home, your children, your
 people, your language, my first
 language, your dreams so alive,

we crossed into the rainbow-

I gaze at the southern stars, below
 the Tropic of Cancer, I've
 never seen these constellations so
 clearly, your constellations, Mamacita,

We crossed into the rainbow-

Someone drives by playing U-2
 I begin to smile, every star
 belongs in the Sun/Moon Sky,
 and I'm at home, so alive, in this world, now-

and I've crossed, oh I've
 crossed, into the rainbow,
 Mamacita, a pure white dove visits
 at twilight, I know you're free in the

wind, kissed by the
 desert, twirled by tornadoes,
 I hear you singing in Yaqui, Spanish as
 church bells ring, my neighbor's song,

something so beautiful, lament
and joy at once, yes gratitude,
the crescent moon will follow me all
night as you sing in the heart of the

pure white dove. In the morning a
man will pass my door playing music to
dance to and I will give him ten pesos,
my door flung open,

I will live in the rainbow, this world-

and I know my youngest son is not dying in
the current insanity (though other sons, daughters
are), the sad color code of my country; I will see
the sacred seventh generation in my granddaughter's child,

lament and joy, joy and lament,
I sing so softly, my doors
flung open to the murmur of
Spanish uncensored son, laughter,

life unedited,
spectrum, this
living rainbow, this
living world, singing, **gracias.**