

Excerpts from "I Am Joaquin" (1967)

by Rodolfo Corky Gonzales

(1) I am Joaquín, lost in a world of confusion,
caught up in the whirl of a gringo society,
confused by the rules, scorned by attitudes,
suppressed by manipulation, and destroyed by modern society...

(2) I look at myself.
I watch my brothers.
I shed tears of sorrow. I sow seeds of hate.
I withdraw to the safety within the circle of life -
MY OWN PEOPLE...

(3) I look at myself And see part of me
Who rejects my father and my mother
And dissolves into the melting pot
To disappear in shame.
I sometimes
Sell my brother out
And reclaim him
For my own when society gives me
Token leadership
In society's own name.
I am Joaquín,
Who bleeds in many ways...

(4) Here I stand
Before the court of justice,
Guilty
For all the glory of my Raza
To be sentenced to despair.
Here I stand,
Poor in money,
Arrogant with pride,
Bold with machismo,
Rich in courage
And
Wealthy in spirit and faith...

(5) I am Joaquín.
I must fight
and win this struggle
for my sons, and they
must know from me who I am...

(6) I am Joaquín.
The odds are great But my spirit is strong,
My faith unbreakable,
My blood is pure.
I am Aztec prince and Christian Christ.
I SHALL ENDURE!
I WILL ENDURE!