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I choose Poet Javier Zamora because his background reminds me of mine, and the poem I chose to do my erasure poem “How I Learned to Walk” say some things that I also used to do as a kid. The Poetry Foundations mentions “Poet Javier Zamora was born in the small El Salvadoran coastal fishing town of La Herradura and immigrated to the United States at the age of nine (www.poetryfoundation.org). Just like Poet Zamora, I was born in a small town called Olinala in Guerrero State, Mexico, and I also immigrated to the United States when I was 9 years old. Poet Zamora wrote in his How I learned to Walk poem “I fling rocks/at bats hanging midway up almond trees” (Zamora, line 6-7). When I read this sentence my mind traveled to when I was growing up. I used to fling rocks at lizards. It was fun to do it. Now as an adult person, I think about it, and I regret having done it.

Poet Zamora’s Poem “How I Learn to Walk” is about his lonely life and things that reminded him of his father. In the poem Poet Zamora mentions: “When I clutch pillows, I think of him” (Zamora, line 13). Poet Zamora is referring to the fact that he grew up without the presence of his father. Poet Zamora was born in 1990, He was 1 year old when “his father left El Salvador in 1991, fleeing Civil war” (www.nytimes.com). Poet Zamora also mentions “I wanted to wear a plastic bag,/to smell of gasoline, to shave my hair, to feel/something like his hands on my head”

(Zamora, lines 10-12). The smell of gasoline reminded him of his father. When his father used to come back home from fishing “smelling of fish, gasoline, and seaweed” (Zamora, line 17). And Poet Zamora “used to run to him” (Zamora, line 16).

“How I learn to walk” poem is written in form of a free verse. According to the Poetry Foundation, a free verse poem is “Nonmetrical, nonrhyming lines that closely follow the natural rhythms of speech” (www.poetryfoundation.org). The poem is composed of one long stanza, and it contains 25 lines. Since the poem is a free verse poem is lacking meters. The Poetry Foundation defines a meter as “The rhythmical pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a verse” (www.poetryfoundation.org); It also defines a stanza as “A group of lines separated from others in a poem” (www.poetryfoundation.org). There were also no rhymes observed in the poem.

Poet Zamora uses some words in Spanish. One of these words is the word “Callate” (Zamora, line 1), which means shut up or be quiet. This word is being used twice in the poem and what I think is trying to say it that Poet Zamora’s parents wanted to keep secret the date, time and the fact that Poet Zamora’s father was going to immigrate to the US. I can also infer that this word is expressing how he felt emotionally. Probably he could not tell anybody that he was feeling lonely, and that he longed to be with his parents.

In Poet Zamora’s poem called “Immigration Headline”, is also about missing the maternal figure in his life. In his poem he says “¿Do I have a/mother?” (Zamora, lines 1-2). Poet Zamora’s mother immigrated to the US in 1995. Poet Zamora talks about how much he misses his mother and he wonders how his life would be if his mother was with him. Poet Zamora wrote in his poem “I’ll never see her again./But then, I did” (Zamora, lines 20-21). Poet Zamora reunited with his

parents in 1999 when he immigrated to the US. The poem is a free verse poem This is a single stanza poem. The poem has 24 lines, and lack from rhymes and meters.

In both poem “How I learn to Walk” and “Immigration Headline” Poet Zamora talks about his father and his mother. In “How I learn to Walk” poem he talks about his father “His hair still/smelling of fish, gasoline, and seaweed” (Zamora, lines 16-17). He remembers the smell of his father when he was coming from work, the smell of gasoline, seaweed, and fish. In “Immigration Headline”, poet Zamora talks about his mother. In this poem he remembers what his mother told him “Her warm breasts on my belly/as she knelt to tell me todo va a estar bien” (Zamora, lines 8-9). The word “todo va a estar bien” means “everything is going to be ok”.

Most of poet Zamora’s poems are written in free verse form. I think they are written in this form because is easier to portray the events that marked his life. I think poet Zamora is letting people who leave their family to find a better future know what their kids left behind may be going through. Also poet Zamora’s poems are about his personal life, about what he went through as a child and his immigration journey from El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and the United States.

In conclusion, I feel connected to Poet Zamora’s poems in a personal level. I was fortunate to have my parents with me as a child. Similarly to poet Zamora, as a kid, I used to do things like going to the woods and fling rocks to lizards. I also have a mother who used to dry clothes by hanging them from a rope. I also immigrated to the United States when I was 19 years old, and I also crossed the border just like poet Zamora did.

Works Cited

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