

1ST PLACE WINNER
9TH ANNUAL STATEWIDE BILINGUAL CORRIDO CONTEST
FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sponsored by the University of Arizona Poetry Center
Judged by Ernesto Portillo, Jr.

EL ANGEL ILEGAL
POR GAMALIEL RABAGO

Voy a empezar a cantar
Y vale más que no se rían
Porque los voy a contar
Algo que ni yo creía

En el desierto de Arizona al norte
De la línea fronteriza
Un pobre inmigrante encontró
Lo que nunca pensaría

Manuel de Jesús su nombre
De humilde casa venía
Pero no porque fuera pobre
Piensen que se rajaría

Ya casi al anochecer
De esa tan triste noche
Muy cansado y sin comer
Y a nadie le hacía un reproche

Su cuerpo entero temblaba
Por el frío de aquella noche
Pero en el fondo del barranco
Parecía ver un coche

No se detuvo a pensarlo
Para esto hay que ser valiente
Él sólo quería saber
Si había un sobreviviente

Atrapada entre los fierros
Una madre se encontraba
Mientras desesperadamente
Su pobre niño lloraba

Dios pone todas las cosas
Eso no hay porque dudarlo
Manuel de Jesús fue el ángel
Que al niño mando cuidarlo

Manuel de Jesús Cordova venía a buscar trabajo

Pero esto fue más importante
Debía cuidar este niño
Aunque él fuera un inmigrante

Hoy mucha gente nos odia
Sólo por buscar trabajo
Yo no sé que pensarían
Si ellos fueran los de abajo

Yo respeto a todo el mundo
No me importa la apariencia
Lo que pasó aquella noche
Que les sirva de experiencia.

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THE ILLEGAL ANGEL
BY GAMALIEL RABAGO

I'm going to begin my song
And, friends, don't dare to laugh
Because I'm going to tell you something
Even I can barely believe

In the Arizona desert, to the north
Of the border line
A poor immigrant found
A terrible surprise

His name was Manuel de Jesús
From a humble home he came
But just because he was poor
Don't think he wasn't brave

It was almost nightfall
On this saddest of nights
He was very tired and hungry
But he never once complained

His entire body trembled
From the cold of that night
But in the bottom of the ravine
He seemed to see a car

He did not stop to think
He had to be brave
He only wanted to know
If anyone had survived

Trapped within the metal
A mother was found
While desperately
Her poor child cried

God puts all things in place
Of this there is no doubt
Manuel de Jesús was the angel
That God sent to care for the child

Manuel de Jesús Cordova came to look for work

But this was more important
He had to take care of this child
Although he was an immigrant

Today many people hate us
Just because we come looking for work
I do not know what they would think
If they were the ones far below

I respect everyone
Appearances don't mean a thing
What happened that night
Is a lesson to us all.

Translated into English by Jackie Devitt and Wendy Burk