

Four for the Fourth of July

1. YOU CALL IT

Freedom— You wear
red, white, and blue. Grill
red meat and gather
with your family. Drink
dark liquor, beer, or wine.
Around the white table, hands tied
together and pray before
the feast. You thank God
for the meal and family.
When the sky starts to flush,
you grab the matches,
and light fireworks on the side-
walk to celebrate the land.
Meanwhile there are people in cages
stained blue, unfed, unsanitary,
and tortured.

2. Neighborhood ,

Firestone & Long Beach Blvd,
slow traffic and empty
sidewalks. I stare at every
vehicle for identification,
civilian or federal. Abandoned
cars are stranded on the lots.
Torta on the floor, lunch bag
untouched, and cargo bed open.
Vicious fear roams the air.
Unlawful seizures of
gente de color. I peek out
the window for signs of
resistance. Across the street
there's a dealership,
American & Mexican flags
hung limply.

3. Hey Zocorro,

Have you seen social media?
It's true, estan aqui. The way you see it.
They're not just on screen—
agarraron el florero, the one I bought flowers
from para mi abuela. I saw the bucket half empty
and deserted on the sidewalk. They hit the carwash,
enfrente de la Iglesia. Raul told me the story,
he heard screaming and turned his head
to see La Migra, atacando a los trabajadores,
loading them up in a white van.
Some ran and got in random
cars and drove away.
Mi ama saw them yesterday too,
she went to buy some camote
tomate y aguacate from the bodega
down the street. She saw a man running
y un oficial corrientándolo.
Y mi ma, se pelo!

4. Guadalupe

She stands facing me, on the right
wall, behind a slate gray that washes
her tan skin. She has been standing
there for years, almost invisible.
Never moved or touched, dust
gathering in her curves. Her head
angled virtuously, empathizing
with ache. Her dress heavy,
weighing her down with the
prayers of those battling
en la calle. Her hands tremble
with duress of injustices.