



When I Heard the Literacy Expert

R. Joseph Rodriguez

after Walt Whitman and for Carla España, brave ones among us

When I heard the literacy expert on the science of reading,
When my lessons were dismissed by her as *too multicultural*,
When the volcanoes of my mind and classroom were disrupted before me,
When I was told to focus on the units of informative and narrative writing,
When I faced the notion that I knew nothing about the art of writing and reading,
When I realized the sanctuary of my mind erupting in unison *y en comunidad*,
When I nodding heard the literacy expert lecture me with condescension,
How quickly distressed I became so tired and sick, too,
Until awakening and gained my footing out in the universe,
The greatest laboratory of our world, in the heating earth,
Looked down at my feet and back at all the walking paths.