

**MICHELLE PEÑALOZA**

## **Origin**

at first it was a game  
then an annoyance  
then a threat  
and then a postmodern dilemma

“Where?”  
they want to know

Well. I am

from  
a god that spewed fire  
and pelted me with curtains of rain

from  
a land where people found  
salvation in underwater caves  
and hope in two person canoes

from  
a people who  
built churches  
with honey and egg whites

from  
a family that hunted  
golden treasure,  
baked pan de sal, prayed, and  
buried son after son after son

**KARTIKA  REVIEW**

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from  
the loins of a man  
who cradled words  
and laid them in symmetrical boxes

from  
the womb of a woman  
who laughed and slid on bridges  
at the first sight of snow

from  
the tongues  
of playboys, evangelical preachers,  
and poets

from  
the sweat of pig  
farms and rice fields

from  
the tears of twelve pairs  
of eyes, dropping once  
every year

from  
the blood  
of four continents  
mingled and mixed  
in one

