

MONIQUE MOJICA

An Invocation/Incantation to the Women Word-Warriors for Custom-Made Shoes

[Written for hosting *Fem-Cab*, the Five-Minute Feminist Cabaret, March 1989]

International Women's Day 1989

No, I didn't go to the march
feelings of ambivalence,
rage
time to free up some fury
unstick some spit and piss and vinegar
place them in a sacred manner
around me

unearth unshrouded
Because even our rage must be given its due respect.

It's International Women's Day.

A Black voice echoes:
Ain't I a women?

... unanswered.

time to roll up the chunks of hurt
resentment/rejection
like so much mucus
congested accumulated
Over the decades of trying to fit into feminist shoes.

O.K., I'm trying on the shoes; but they're not the same
as the shoes in the display case. The shoes I'm trying
on must be rafted to fit these wide, square brown
feet. I must be able to feel the earth through their
soles.

So, it's International Women's Day, and here I am among
the women of the theatre community — my community.
Now, I'd like you to take a good look — I don't want to
be mistaken for a crowd of Native women. I am one. And
I do not represent all Native women. I am one.

And since it can get kinda lonely up here, I've brought
some friends, sisters, guerillas — the women word-
warriors, to help fill up the space.

I've brought *Chrystos* to tell you that :

I am not your princess ...
I am only willing to tell you how to make frybread
1 cup flour, spoon of salt, spoon of baking powder
Stir Add milk or water or beer until it holds
together
Slap piece into rounds Let rest
Fry in hot grease until golden.

I've brought *Cherrie* to let you know that:
... the concept of betraying one's race through
sex and sexual politics is as common as corn.

I've asked *Gloria* to come to say:
*What I want is an accounting with all three
cultures, — white, Mexican, Indian. I want the freedom
to carve and chisel my own face, to
staunch the bleeding with ashes, to fashion my own
gods out of my entrails. And if going home is
denied me, then I will have to stand and claim my
space, making a new culture — una cultura mestiza
— with my own, lumber, my own bricks and mortar and
my own feminist architecture.*

I've brought *Diane* to describe that to hold a brown-
skinned lover means:
*We embrace and rub
the wounds together.*

She also says:
This ain't no stoic look.
This is my face.

There is a Cheyenne saying that:
*A Nation is not conquered
Until the hearts
of its women
are on the ground.*

I dedicate my presence here tonight to my two sons; to
Bear who is here on the earth with me and to
Yocallwarawara who has passed over to the other side.
I thank them for the gifts and the teachings they have
brought me. It is for them, and for the unborn
generations that I am here wearing shoes that have not
yet molded to my feet and asking *Lillian* to set a place
for me at her tea party.

*A Nation is not conquered
Until the hearts
of its women
are on the ground.*

Nya weh —
Nuati