

Analyzation of *The Tertraity* By Raquel Rivera

In the extended poem *The Tertraity* By Raquel Rivera there is a focus on the issues of the Debt crisis in Puerto Rico, Personal Identity, and, what home and safety really are. In the poem Rivera clearly describes the Puerto Rican Debt Crisis. Rivera describes how because of abuse from the United States, the several wars that Puerto Rico has been involved in, and a lack of major representation because of its position as an American territory, Puerto Rico has become the center of a wormhole of ever increasing debt. Rivera specifically shares the feeling of being born into debt and what that has done to their self worth, and the self worth of millions of people in Puerto Rico. They elaborate on these ideas by sharing their experience being a queer person in Puerto Rico and they both experience duality of feeling both fear and love from their country. They describe coming to the US and how they miss Puerto Rico despite what it represents in as a place that can be at conflict with their queerness.

It is on this backdrop that Rivera does stylistic and writerly acrobatics. Throughout the first two sections of the poem Rivera heads the majority of the pages with a quote that sets the tone for their writing in the segment of the poem. I attempted the same thing by quoting activist and artist Barrington DeVaughn Hendricks at the head of my poem. I did this to, like Rivera, set a tone for myself in terms of the topic that I chose to write about but also to make my tone feel purposeful. The quote felt important to painting a full scene in my poem. Rivera uses this technique to sometimes provide an opposing voice/ argument. I did not exactly do this but I did something very similar in the way that I created contrast by using a quote with a much more aggressive tone than my poem takes on. Rivera strikes a really interesting duality by writing about a huge systemic issue in a deeply personal and small scale way. I tried to choose a topic, abuse of animosity in regards to free speech, that also is an issue that is massive and systemic but affects people on a personal level. I chose the length of my poem to reflect about the average length of one segment of *The Tertraity*. While Rivera is very clearly talented at writing long form on a singular topic all of the pages of *The Tertraity* felt mostly self contained or they could

have been stand alone. I chose my spacing and singling out of words for very similar stylistic reasons.

Rivera's style of modern and almost associational poetry is a style that comes very naturally to me as well. It feels like the most real way to communicate my actual thoughts without having to accommodate fragile academic structures. Through reading this piece I felt like Rivera was really communicating the real thoughts that they were having as they move through life, it feels uncomfortable it feels like being udersomeoneelses skin. And that is truly what I aspire to as an artist and a poet.