

# hijo-puta

i believe it was a celebración!  
tienes razón  
yay for gay  
and i don't have another rhyme  
for my AABA esquema  
hijo-puta  
\*i'm sort of in a strange place right now

i am sam. i am sam.  
Thank you for shopping at Bruno's.  
i am sam.  
Not Samuel or Samantha.  
soy sam pendejos.

Todos en mi vida me decían,  
"Make sure you stay between the lines.  
When you're coloring."  
Now everybody tells me,  
"No te comprendes, pato." Trato de explain  
them, but dicen que my explanations aumentan my patería.

So this hijo walked into Bruno's the other night  
To buy some rags para su puta.  
Rags with wings. Not meant to fly.  
Just to escaparse del mar.

So this puta walked into Bruno's the other night  
Para comprar unos condones para su hijo.  
Condomes para que se guarde  
From the waterfall.

So this hijo walked into Bruno's the other night  
To buy some condones.  
So this puta walked into Bruno's the other night  
To buy some rags.  
Explicación unnecessary.

So this hijo-puta walked into Bruno's the other night  
Y me sonrió.  
No me acuerdo lo que compró.

Thank you for shopping at Bruno's.

**Forrest Blackbourn, M.A.**  
*The University of Alabama*

### **Critical commentary**

Although the introductory stanza makes for a slightly brusque start, this poem soon after comes together, telling a rather amusing story, while utilizing a mixture of Spanish and English to emphasize certain themes. The author captures the idea that society as a whole prefers to classify situations as either black or white, that gray or fuzzy areas which cannot be clearly defined are not easily accepted. These very same situations however can provide for some humorous, as well as baffling, suppositions.

The code-mixing that is employed within this poem is an interesting aspect for linguistic analysis. In many cases, the author develops some sort of code switch in instances that involve proscribed topics, sending the subtle message that these issues are still evident, albeit unpretentiously, in the day-to-day of societal on-goings. By maintaining English as the base language, the exploitation of Spanish for taboo words such as "pendejos" and "puta" softens their vigor and establishes a more secure environment for the narration.

This author's excellent use of two languages to communicate the complex world of which we inhabit provides the reader not only with a witty account in any local drugstore but also with an effortless display of bilingual technique.

**Tasha M. Campbell**  
*The University of Arizona*