

# Valéria

CMarie Fuhrman



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Her mother, she told me, walked from Cantu, Mexico. Walked all the way from seventeen years old to Eastern Washington. Golden

Delicious, Macintosh, White Transparent, seconds and kindness fed her. Her mother, she said never looked back, never tossed a core. She named her daughter by peeling a Gala, each twist another curl, another letter, until V when the peel split, and the US had its newest daughter. Valéria was baptized by apple blossoms, teethed on onions and learned to walk by holding her mothers legs, the roots of fruit trees. Her fingers learned the Idaho soil where her mother taught her that "P" was for potato and INS was for taking her Uncle back to Cantu from where he has not returned. Valéria twists the Virgin Mother on her wrist and tells me that she prays for Jesús, but he is not coming back, nor is her father who made it only as far as Los Angeles. A peso a day, she tells me, is what he tries to live on. If you can imagine that, Valéria says. You can imagine the fear in her eyes, her voice when she comes to my office, asks if they will really build the wall— her bag ripe with books, her essay she hands me in perfect English, words rife with passion and promise and I am embarrassed by the green apple I offer Valéria in place of hope and the knowledge I am supposed to bear, but she takes it and walks down the narrow hallway, strong, like her name, like light through a newly planted orchard.



An Indigenous daughter of the West, CMarie Fuhrman was born in Colorado and has lived in various rural towns all along the Rocky Mountains. She has earned degrees in Exercise Physiology, English, and American Indian Studies and is currently an MFA candidate at the University of Idaho where she is Program Coordinator for IKEEP (Indigenous Knowledge for Effective Education Program) and the associate poetry editor for Fugue. CMarie's writing, both poetry and nonfiction, can be found in Broadsided Press's *NoDapl* compilation, two anthologies, and several literary journals including *Cutthroat: A Journal of the Arts*, *and Whitefish Review*, *Yellow Medicine Review* and *Sustainable Play*, among others. She is recipient of the Burns Award for poetry and multiple fellowships and scholarships including Centrum at Port Townsend and Fishtrap at Lake Wallowa. CMarie is co-editor of a forthcoming anthology of Indigenous poetry and craft published by Tupelo Press. She

divides her time between Moscow and McCall, Idaho.

