

## Gangbanger

One cold night  
I will steal you from the city  
And take you to Aztlan.

There, I will shave the tuft of hair  
From the top of your head  
And yank the metal rings from your ear.

I will tear baggy clothes  
From your body  
And burn them in front of you.

Then I will ball my fists  
And shock the mirthless grin  
From your face.

I will sink my teeth into your tattoos  
And pass flesh back to you  
In bloody full kisses.

And when you are naked and bleeding  
Shivering in the cold,  
I will bathe and bandage you.

Then we will look at the stars.  
The Olmec astronomers will rise in our bones  
And whisper what we once were.

I will give you clear water to drink  
And play for you the Toltec flute.  
And you will dance.

When you finish,  
I will cleave your chest with obsidian  
And pull out your Aztec heart.

I will show it to you, beating  
And we will sing your death  
Freeing the warrior within you.



Charlotte, View #2  
Hydrostone Sculpture  
By Laura Ann Chiodini