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## POETIC JUSTICE: AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTÍN ESPADA

*Martín Espada is a celebrated poet. His first two volumes — "The Immigrant Iceboy's Bolero" and "Trumpets from the Islands of their Eviction" established him as a rising star among Latino poets. His most recent collection, "Rebellion is the Circle of a Lover's Hands/ Rebelión es el giro de manos del amante" (Curbstone Press) received the first PEN/Revson Foundation Fellowship for Poetry. The judges' citation praised his writing saying, "This is political poetry at its best. . . The greatneses of Espada's art, like all great art, is that it gives dignity to the insulted and the injured of the earth."<sup>1</sup> In addition to his success as a poet, Mr. Espada is also an attorney. A graduate of Northeastern University Law School, Mr. Espada serves as a supervisor with the Su Clínica Legal Program of Suffolk University Law School in Boston. In that capacity, he practices tenant law, representing low-income, mostly Spanish-speaking tenants in Chelsea, Massachusetts.*

*Mr. Espada writes mostly about poor and working class Latinos living in the face of racist attitudes. While much has been made of the intuitive conflict between expression as poet and practice as lawyer, Mr. Espada sees no contradiction. Indeed, he characterizes his poetry as "a poetry of advocacy."<sup>2</sup>*

ESPADA: Most advocates, whether they are in the arts or in the law, as I happen to be, are faced with a dilemma. The dilemma is the contrast between themselves and the people they represent. As you know, most people who go to law school come out of a middle or upper class background. And then the education they get serves as a further buffer between themselves and what we call the "client class." I grew up working-class in Brooklyn, New York in what evolved into a predominantly African-American community. I've had social workers, in fact I've had more than one at a time. I've had case numbers. I've been on food stamps and collected general relief. I've been unemployed for stretches of time. I've developed an identity with the most marginalized, disenfranchised people of our society, because I was among them. So this gives me a different perspective from: a) most artists who do political work, whose art is political and b) from most lawyers who represent low-income people. The differential is class. That is not to say that I'm unique. I think increasingly, in terms of poverty law, you find more and more people of color, more and more women, more and more working-class and lower-class people coming into the profession and going back to their roots, going back to their community either

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen J. Bartlett, *Law and Language Are His Weapons: Martin Espada, Lawyer and Poet, Sees All His Work As A Way of Fighting Injustice*, BOSTON GLOBE, August 8, 1990, at 41.

<sup>2</sup> Steven Ratiner, *Martin Espada: Poetry and The Burden of History*, The Christian Science Monitor, March 6, 1991, at 16.

literally or metaphorically in order to meet a commitment and to pay back the people and the places they've come from.

PILJ: What made you decide to pursue a career in law?

ESPADA: Well, some of it, to be perfectly frank, was the idea of my mentors, including my father, including Herbert Hill, who is the former National Labor Director of the NAACP, and one of the most important teachers I ever had. But also, I perceived the law as one of the most profound instruments of social change that this society has at its disposal. Certainly it's one of the sharpest tools we've got. Obviously, as anyone knows who has worked in the area of poverty law, it's far from ideal. But the fact remains that if you examine the history of the civil rights movement, you will see that it was law that had a lot to do with the progress that was eventually made. Of course, the law was pushed along by a popular movement and it should never be forgotten that without the popular movement there would have been no civil rights. But the fact is that the law reinforced what the popular movement began. Since I grew up in a household where my father was a leader in the civil rights and welfare rights movements, I was acutely aware of the potential for law as an agent of change.

In my first job in the "real world" I worked as a clerk for the Wisconsin State Bureau of Mental Health. I wound up serving as the patient rights advocate and represented committed mental patients under the so-called "Patient Bill of Rights" of the State of Wisconsin, in grievance hearings at mental institutions across the state, essentially paralegal work. From there I took on a string of paralegal jobs, including work at the Dane County Welfare Rights Alliance in Madison, Wisconsin, where I was able to see first-hand that my intervention, my advocacy, made some difference in the lives of the people I represented. So basically my understanding of the history of the civil rights movement, my family background, what you might call my class as well as cultural identity, my mentorship and my personal experience with legal work, all pointed me in the direction of law school. This also, I might add, was before I achieved any kind of recognition as a poet. I was still at the stage where I wrote things and hid them, or if I didn't like them, I flushed them down the toilet or did something else spectacular with them. So there was nothing competing with my interest in law — I had a B.A. in history but I did not want to become a graduate student in history. I felt this would be a useless enterprise. So there was no other kind of professional identity there to conflict with the law at the time.

PILJ: How do you see the role of "lawyer as advocate" contrasting with the role of "artist as advocate?"

ESPADA: There are two different kinds of advocacy. I think if you look at it holistically, there's nothing about being a poet and a lawyer which necessarily conflicts. Being a poet and being a lawyer arise from the same purpose and have the same goals — and that has to do with advocacy. How are they different? People, I believe, need poetry to inspire them, to provide them with some confidence, some sense of identity, all of the elements in essence which enable them to stand up and fight for themselves. Law is the instrument that people

use to fight, either each other or in concert with a lawyer. I think all too often the law fails to be empowering. Poetry can empower people by creating a new identity, creating a new set of possibilities in the mind of the listener or reader, to use that old term — it can inspire people. And I think you have to motivate people in some way to throw off that which has been holding them down. You have to find that intangible element, which if you are an activist you're always looking for.

PILJ: Does this viewpoint derive from your Latin background?

ESPADA: To a certain extent it does. It's not uncommon for a lawyer to be a poet in Puerto Rico. In fact, it's funny. In 1986, I received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. There was a headline in the *BOSTON TAB* that said something that sounded rather mercenary. "Money for the Muse" it was called. And the headline beneath that said "Boston's poet-lawyer, Martin Espada." Well that's all well and good, but not only was I not the only poet-lawyer in town, I was not the only Puerto Rican poet-lawyer in town. At the time there were three of us. And not dabblers — these other folks had actually published books, and won awards, and all that stuff. So it's not that unusual for such a combination to exist in Puerto Rico or in the rest of Latin America. Certainly in terms of the way I see my life, holistically, that is a cultural trait which is more Puerto Rican than it is North American. So I think there probably is some relationship.

PILJ: Do you see your receipt of the PEN/Revson Fellowship award as any type of a breakthrough for the Latin community or any type of symbolic achievement for Puerto Rican writers?

ESPADA: That's a difficult question, because the answer's not up to me. I hope it is, let me put it that way. Will it be? I think it will take something more — the PEN/Revson award is only one small piece of a great puzzle. It may be an important piece, but only time will tell. I think the same question has been asked to Oscar Hijuelos since he won the Pulitzer Prize for "The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love." It's almost impossible for us to tell what the ramifications of these things are going to be. I do know this: my gut feeling is that conditions for Puerto Ricans will improve by other means than by having their artists get awards. I think that conditions for Puerto Rican artists will improve when the conditions of the community improve as a whole. We are linked to that quite inextricably. So it's very complex, it's related to factors much greater than we are.

PILJ: You said in the *BOSTON GLOBE* interview that a poet is not merely a poet, but must also serve a role of historian and social organizer and a number of other roles. Would you say that this is a reflection of the paradigm that you just expressed about the artist and the lawyer?

ESPADA: I think the reason I believe this is because I'm acutely aware of the need in the community for historians, sociologists, teachers, organizers, all the things poets can be. If it were not for the need, then perhaps poets in our community wouldn't have to perform that function. Maybe we could be something else — I don't know, maybe we could write iambic pentameter in praise of the king. I kind of doubt it, but the need is so vast that you find yourself put

in that position over and over again, and the best thing to do is embrace those multiple purposes rather than trying to live the ivory tower existence of an intellectual who withdraws from the masses. I'll give you an example of what I'm talking about. I went to Brooklyn this past December to visit a community center called EL PUENTE (The Bridge). The community center is located in one of the most desperate communities in this country — South Brooklyn, Williamsburg, in New York City. The area is heavily populated by Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. I did a reading for about 75 people, most of whom were young men and women, 16 and 17 years old. Under most circumstances that audience would have terrified the average academic, mainstream poet, because it is a "non-academic, non-traditional literary audience." However, for me it's the most traditional of all audiences, because it harks back to the poet as the keeper of the history, the keeper of the knowledge of the community. And so I walked into that situation with a very acute sense of what I was going to do. Rather than stand up there and stammer because I was dealing with kids who had never been to a poetry reading, who had never read a poem before, who would likely sneer at the idea, I decided to approach this as an opportunity to teach. I asked them at the beginning of the reading if they'd ever heard of a man named Clemente Soto Vélez. Clemente is for Puerto Ricans the essence of Longfellow and Thomas Paine rolled into one. He is one of our leading poets of this century, and a leading figure in the independence movement of Puerto Rico. Well, they had not heard of him. He's recently returned to the island, but nevertheless these kids should have known who he was. The fact is that their identity, their sense of self, their sense of history had been utterly destroyed by the so-called public education system in New York, which is, as I know, having come through that system, a disgrace, a sham, a mockery. How do you rehabilitate that? Well, you don't do it in one reading, but you can start somewhere. And I did. I described to them who Clemente Soto Vélez is, because he is one of them. And then I read a poem concerning Clemente which you're probably familiar with, because it's in the book. "*Clemente's Bullets*": it tells a story, particularly the story of his imprisonment for "seditious conspiracy." These kids ate it up. At the end of that reading I got a standing ovation. I don't say that out of any sense of self-aggrandizement, but out of a sense that this was one of those rare moments when the poet, the audience, and the subject all merge into one. There is no higher calling in the literary realm than that. This is a roundabout way of addressing your question, but the point remains. I was there as a teacher, I was there as a historian, I was there as a sociologist, I was there as an organizer, all in the cloak of being a poet.

PILJ: Do you feel that poetry or art is in some ways an easier or a less confrontational way to effect change than law?

ESPADA: The law is not necessarily confrontational. As you know, anyone who's involved in a District Court practice is fully aware that a lot of what goes on has nothing to do with classic confrontation in open court, but rather the old saying: instead of the Halls of Justice, it's justice in the halls. Deals are struck; bargains are made. And the incentive in the system is to do just

that. The docket is too heavy and is too chaotic to permit any other incentive. As far as poetry, I think it's actually more confrontational than you might imagine. There are plenty of times when I go before an audience which is not that audience of Puerto Rican and Dominican kids in South Brooklyn, but which is instead a "literary audience." These are folks who not only do not represent my constituency, but they're downright hostile to what I do, aesthetically and politically. They are not interested in hearing poems which implicate them in the destruction of others. So there's a certain amount of resistance. Then there are other folks who are somewhat patronizingly willing to overlook the content of my work in favor of praising the language. And so they will say things along the lines of, "Well, I really like your work despite the fact that it's political." There are people who actually abhor the politics and praise the poetry anyway. These are all confrontations of a kind. There are people who don't want to accept what I have to say, pure and simple. So the confrontation takes place at that level, at a reading. It also takes place in ways that I never get to witness first-hand. It takes place in meetings where "they" decide not to give me a grant, or where "they" decide not to review my book. It should be pointed out—there is an awful lot of *de facto* censorship of Puerto Rican literature. To give you one startling statistic: in the entire history of publishing in this country, only one Puerto Rican poet, Victor Hernández Cruz, has ever had a book published by a major commercial press. That is the almost total exclusion of an entire community of writers. Of course we can avail ourselves, as most poets do, of small presses, or a university press. But that one statistic is very telling. We are a colonized and conquered people, and our literary expression is devalued accordingly. We're simply not taken as seriously as others. Sometimes we are even overtly repressed, as with Clemente Soto Veléz, who went to prison for what he said and wrote about independence.

PILJ: Do you feel that the headline of your August 8th, 1990 interview with the BOSTON GLOBE entitled "*Law and Language Are His Weapons: Martin Espada, Lawyer and Poet, Sees All His Work As A Way Of Fighting Injustice*," is an accurate portrayal of your work?

ESPADA: My own sense is that I am not a white knight. I am not as effective as I want to be. And so I perceive myself differently than I am perceived in the media. That's a contradiction which is sometimes very difficult to work with. The rest of the world thinks one thing of me and I think another. What we do in Chelsea is tough. We don't do everything that we want to do. We don't win everything that we want to win by any stretch of the imagination.

PILJ: Why did you choose to teach in a clinical program?

ESPADA: I believe that the best expression of a law school's commitment to the community, the best expression of its imagination and creativity, can be found in its clinical programs. Were it not for clinical programs, I think an even greater percentage of students would go into business and corporate law. I think an even greater percentage of students would leave school without any sense of what they can or should contribute to this society, to people of color, to women, to low income people. The clinical experience, quite aside from

what it offers in terms of attaining practical skills, is a way of teaching law students about how to become lawyers that contradict the popular image of what a lawyer is. When you say you're a lawyer, the first assumption people make is that you're rich, and that you're rich because you steal, legally of course. But there are many lawyers who are not like that. Among those are the lawyers who are involved in the various forms of poverty law, many of whom, in essence, take a vow of poverty themselves, relatively speaking. So the clinical program is that place and time in a law school setting where an enormous difference can be made in terms of what these future lawyers decide to do with their lives, whether in essence they will be a constructive or destructive force in this society.

PILJ: In your opinion, what should be the role of the lawyer in society, specifically in North American society?

ESPADA: Well, I think I can begin to answer that question better by saying what a lawyer should not be. A lawyer should not be someone who basically exists to make money for him or herself and the client. As we know, a majority of lawyers fall into that category. They exist to make money for themselves, to make money for the client. That is a soulless existence. I have a lot of friends out of law school — granted I did go to that hotbed of radicalism, Northeastern — who hate themselves and hate their profession. They can't find a way out, because their income, as high as it is, only begins to match their debt. They're stuck — it's a form of professional purgatory. I urge people, whenever I have the opportunity, not to do what so many lawyers do, to devote their lives to making money and making money for others. There's a line from the film "Citizen Kane" that always sticks in my mind. There's a character who refers to Walter Thatcher, whom, I believe, is meant to represent J.P. Morgan in the film. He says, "Thatcher was a damn fool." And somebody else says, "but he made an awful lot of money." And the first character replies, "anyone can make a lot of money, if all you want to do is make a lot of money." That is not only, I think, a waste of one's life — I think it is ultimately very destructive in a society where the primary ethic is greed, the primary motivating force in the lives of so many people is greed. Our political leaders and our government promote the concept of greed as being the way that people should direct their lives. Greater Boston Legal Services estimates in a recent report that 85% of the civil legal needs of low income people are unmet — 85%! That means that for all of the millions of dollars that the federal government, however reluctantly, invests through the Legal Services Corporation into poverty law, we are only beginning to deal with the crisis. We are developing into a society which is not only an apartheid society racially, it's also becoming an apartheid society in terms of class. We have developed to the point where there is a tremendous gulf between the rich and the poor. Lawyers are in a unique position in this society, because lawyers can, through the courts, through legislation, directly address this fundamental crisis we have in our culture today: the polarization, the pulling apart of society on the basis of race and class. We owe it to not only ourselves but to our communities and to this country as a whole, to do whatever we can. We are in a

unique position, I reiterate. It doesn't mean everybody has to go into poverty law — I'm not trying to be dogmatic about this. It doesn't mean everybody has to represent welfare recipients or tenants at the point of being evicted. But the fact of the matter is that we as a profession do precious little, even in terms of *pro bono* work, to give back to the society what we've taken out. That's my sense of what the lawyer should be. Somebody once said that the purpose of a journalist is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. A lawyer can do exactly the same thing.

PILJ: How can law students and lawyers be encouraged to enter the field of poverty law?

ESPADA: I think it can be accomplished in a couple of different ways. We've already talked about one way, which is the clinical program. Students are transformed, very often, by participation in the clinical program. Their eyes are quite literally opened. They discover that poor people are not necessarily responsible for their poverty, are not necessarily dirty, lazy, stupid, as they're commonly understood to be. They find a certain exhilaration in being able to represent people and make a real difference in the lives of those people. How many law students do we know who do a clerkship, or who go out in some fashion into the world and are marginalized? They work in an office and are given nothing to do but look something up for a lawyer who always wondered what you would find if you researched that question. They're certainly not allowed to make a difference, they're certainly not allowed to go to court outside of that clinical setting. The same student comes to a clinical program and finds that he or she is suddenly empowered with the possibility of saving another human being from devastation. That is for many law students a breakthrough, because not only are they doing some good, but they're discovering something about themselves, discovering the potential within themselves to do the right thing. And that feels good. So when I talk about what lawyers and law students can contribute to this society, let's not forget what this clinical experience contributes to the law student. Let's not forget what representing poor people contributes to the lawyer. It does something for one's heart. So getting back to your question, I think clinical programs are the major driving force bringing people into poverty law.

I also think that there is certainly an awful lot that can be done by professors who are not afraid to challenge the standard curriculum. Everybody's familiar with the Critical Legal Studies Movement. Some of the best professors I've had in law school, such as Karl Klare, came out of the Movement. But even if you're not a part of CLS, you can still do something to challenge the traditional curriculum. I like to see a law professor teaching students: a) to have a world-view and b) to think critically. Too often law students are taught to take both sides of a question — on the one hand, on the other hand — well, life, reality, truth don't work that way. Lawyers work that way. But the rest of the world looks at lawyers very strangely as a result. I like to see professors challenge something that's in one of those fat red books — say, "I think this is wrong. What do you think?" There's a famous case, anybody in first year torts has had this case — it's called "The Tuttle Case." It involves a wealthy man,



I believe in a Minnesota town, who had a grudge against a barber and decided to get rid of this guy. So he hired a second barber for the sole purpose of driving the first barber out of business. He did everything that entails. Then when the first barber was driven out of business, the second barber closed up shop and left town, because the rich man had accomplished his agenda. Well, the first barber took the wealthy individual to court and won. When I got that case it was given to me through a particular prism. It was taught by Karl Klare. And the prism was the prism of right and wrong. It wasn't just that it was discussed as a tort case and that it set a precedent and we can therefore analogize this case to other cases or we can distinguish it from other cases. Rather, it had everything to do with right and wrong and with the role of the law in distinguishing between the two. And that's the way I think the law should be taught. The law should be taught in terms of power, who has it, who doesn't have it - and how does the law affect that? What can we do to create a more egalitarian, truly democratic society through the law? To approach it that way you have to veer away from the traditional curriculum, the Socratic method, the fat red book. By the same token, I had another professor in criminal law named John Flym, at Northeastern, who radically revised the standard curriculum of the law, so that we studied basically the social history of criminal law, alongside the procedural nuts and bolts. We studied Haymarket, Sacco and Vanzetti . . . we studied how criminal law is used to repress political dissent. Since we do not have any draconian laws of overt censorship on the books, this society has found other means to accomplish the same goals. The criminal law has been an essential element in repressing dissent when dissent became too effective through the course of our history. Even the idea of clear and present danger articulated by Justice Holmes was in essence an expression of the idea that dissent is acceptable until it becomes too effective. Then it has to be repressed, and if it can be repressed legally, so much the better. So criminal law has often served that function — the law of conspiracy, for example. And in fact it was that very same law that was used to convict Clemente Soto Vélez. So we looked at law from that perspective. It caused some grumbling, and there were some people who expected to be taught black letter law, who wanted to know more about criminal procedure. But that grumbling was in fact a way of articulating deeper unease with the critical, even radical perspective being stated by this professor. I think that law students need to be shaken up; I think the world needs to be spun around until it no longer resembles the world we came from.

PILJ: Do you think there's any risk, though, when taking a radical approach to social change, of marginalizing yourself from the mainstream and therefore from sources of power that will allow you to effect change?

ESPADA: There are two ways of thinking about how to effect change. One is to work, classically, outside the system and one is to work inside the system. I'm an example because I've done both. I have worked with community-based organizations, like the Dane County Welfare Rights Alliance. I have worked within the system, for the state government in Wisconsin. By definition a lawyer becomes part of the system — you're an officer of the court. When you

become a member of the Bar, you're implicitly saying that, "I believe the system works at least well enough for me to participate in it." I think that having an understanding of the world which is left of the center does not preclude one from either becoming a lawyer or being effective as a lawyer. When you think about it, there are any number of lawyers who espouse views which are distinctly radical — William Kunstler, for example — who are still effective lawyers. I don't see any contradiction there. I think many of us, in fact, work in a situation where we feel that things aren't changing or moving fast enough, where all that surrounds us does not match our own set of personal political values. But we persevere anyway, because we hope someday that society will reflect our personal political values in a way that it presently does not. If I only worked with people who agreed with me, or if I only worked in settings where my values were perfectly congruent with the values of the people around me, I would never get anything done. So, believe me, I'm used to being marginalized - the very definition of my existence is to be on the margin.

PILJ: How easy would you say it is for the average mainstream white, middle class law student to effect social change? Do you think there are certain social barriers?

ESPADA: Well, there are. And yet if history is any guide, I think we are to be encouraged. Most leaders of revolutions are middle class. They have the luxury of leading rebellion, of being at the vanguard. Many of the leaders of rebellions in the century have been lawyers. The most notable in our own history is that of Pedro Albizu Campos. Pedro Albizu Campos was our greatest political leader. He led the movement for independence in Puerto Rico, basically in the 1930's, 40's and 50's, even though he spent most of that time in prison. He was a Harvard lawyer. By the same token, Fidel Castro is a lawyer. And there are other examples. I think that once a middle class person is able to develop the skill of empathy to perfection, once that person is able to make compassion the primary way of addressing the world, the rest of it follows quite easily. If you put yourself in that position, you can see what needs to be done. I talk about these things. It's sometimes very hard for me to take a step back and analyze them because it's so natural for me to do what I'm doing. I didn't have any moral dilemma in deciding what to do with my life.

PILJ: Do you have anything you want to add for today's law student?

ESPADA: Yes. Don't underestimate how damned important you will be to us — us being low income people and lawyers who work for them. We honestly need as many people as we can get, because things really are worse than they've been in many years. It's not an accident that there were more homicides in Boston in 1990 than any time in this city's history. People are furious, furious because there is a world crushing down on them. Everybody is talking about homelessness. Very few people are talking about the fact that, for a poor family, there is almost no way anymore to afford an apartment, especially if you need more than one bedroom. The places of last resort, rooming houses, have become outrageous and prohibitive to people on the edge. The squalor that people live in can only be imagined by most of us. It really is worse than you think it is. I'm not exaggerating when I talk about what people have to

live through. We had a child who had to go to the hospital to have a roach removed from her ear. That's the world that many Latinos deal with. There it is. And these are not people, despite the popular imagination, or the opinion of your University President, who are coming here to go on welfare, to serve as Latino vampires, taking the blood away from the taxpayer. These are people who are coming here looking for work, and most of them are escaping war in some form. We had a Salvadoran client who had lost fifteen members of his family on both sides of the war. He came here, and the next thing he knew he was being evicted because he was withholding his rent, since the conditions in his building were horrendous beyond belief. Typical client. We can actually do something about the most desperate of our citizens. We are a wellspring of power to make these lives, these mortal lives, not only bearable but actually liveable. And I think most law students have no idea that they are so powerful. PILJ: Do you think it's more effective to work through the legislative or the judicial process?

ESPADA: I don't have enough experience with the legislative process to say. I do know this - without tenant law in its current manifestation, which is much more progressive than it was—we would not accomplish a fraction of what we do. So I think obviously legislation is very important, and I urge people to go out and become politicians or run for office. Sure, go out and do it if you can. Am I going to do that? Hell, no. As far as what I'm going to do with my life, all I know is that I'm going to keep struggling in one form or another, that I will always be there even if I change jobs, careers, hats, whatever, that I recognize a commitment and responsibility at the core of my life.

PILJ: When you said you see yourself as a poet-lawyer and not as a lawyer-poet, does that mean you see yourself first as a poet?

ESPADA: Yes. It is what I feel I do best, and certainly if I was just a lawyer, nobody would give a damn. The BOSTON GLOBE or NPR (National Public Radio) would not call me up. Maybe "just" is the wrong word to put before "lawyer", because I do think it's very important work. But I've been recognized by the media as this bird of unusual plumage. . . which does not make me lose sight of the fact that on Thursday in District Court, I'm just another guy in a pin-striped suit.

## Julio Firmando Su Nombre\*

Julio hace trampa  
al firmar su nombre,  
copiándolo lentamente  
de su tarjeta del Seguro Social,  
la mano de un hombre  
raspando letras torcidas de niño.  
Pero la mano negra de Julio  
La escolarizaron para pisar lechuga,  
no para poner una demanda judicial.

## Julio Signing His Name

Julio cheats  
signing his name,  
copying slowly  
from his Social Security card,  
man's hand  
scratching letters child-crooked.  
But Julio's black hand  
was schooled for lettuce-picking,  
not lawsuits.

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\* POEMS BY MARTÍN ESPADA. TRANSLATED INTO SPANISH BY CAMILO PÉREZ-BUSTILLO AND THE AUTHOR. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM CURBSTONE PRESS. *From Rebellion is the Circle of a Lover's Hands (Rebelión es el giro de manos del amante)* 1990.

