

The Aztec Dance

Bruce Springsteen

The boys, they hold their machetes high
The girls in their satin dresses, they go twirling by
From the San Juan River 'cross the desert sand
Teresa moves in the Aztec dance

From the foothills of the Sierra Madre
To the high-school gym in San Jose
She stomps her feet as her ma watches from the stands
Teresa twirls in the Aztec dance

Past the Pizza Hut, past the mall rats, she says
"Ma, they call us 'greaser', they call us 'wetback'
Here in this land that once was ours."
Teresa's mother bobby pins her hair in a crown of flowers

Her mother says, "Teresa, there were roses, fruit trees and azure skies
Tenochtitlan with great temples of stone
Indian women with your skin and your eyes
Gardens richer than those of Babylon."

"'Cross the causeway of Lake Texcoco
Montezuma met Cortez in sandals with soles of gold
One in steel, one in the plumes of the quetzal bird
They came wearing the masks of the gods they served."

"From castles that rend the waters and scarred the skies
Cortez came with the curse of fortune and faith in his eyes
They marched 'cross savannas of maize and high desert plains
Quetzalcoatl come to put the lord of our world in chains."

"With their cannon and horses 'cross the causeways, their cavalry charged
Like fields of locust feasting on a thousand brave warriors' heads
Our blood turned red, the waters of Texcoco cold
The Spanish soldiers drowned 'neath the weight of the gold they stole."

"Montezuma and Cuauhtémoc are in their graves
And our people of the valley of Mexico: well, they were enslaved
Our city gone and left in ruins, they cry bitter tears in another world
But here in this world, my daughter, they have you."

The boys, they hold their machetes high
As the girls in their satin dresses, they go twirling by