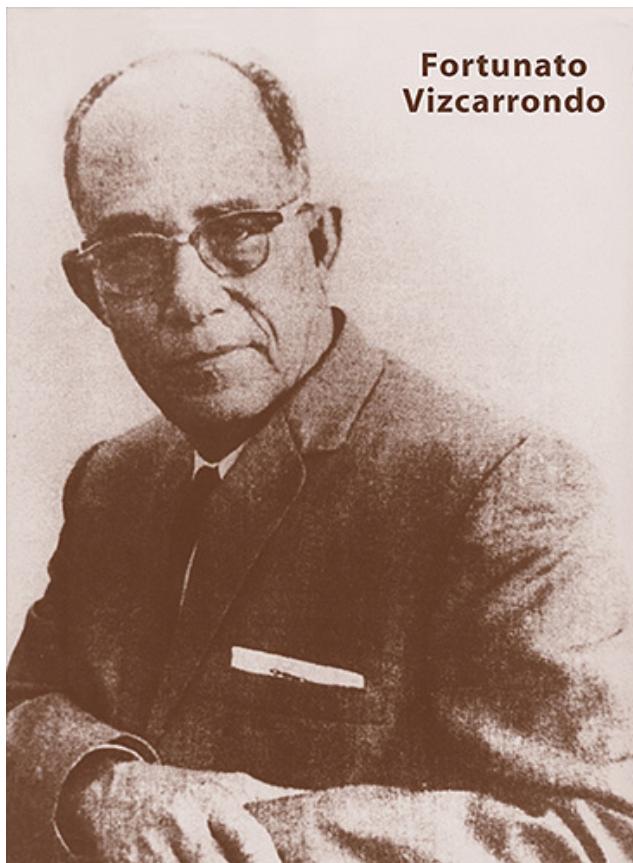


# Embracing Black Puerto-Rican Heritage

Vizcarrondo was a musician and poet born in Carolina, Puerto Rico. He worked as public school teacher. To earn better wages, he left his teaching job and become a mail carrier.

As a poet, he produced two works, "Springtime and Autumnals" (1917) and "Dinga y Mandinga" (1942). The second was controversial because of its positive view on African heritage. "Dinga y Mandinga" focuses on the African-Puerto Rican experience. According to Los Afro-Latinos on Facebook, "The message from Fernando is to be proud of one's African heritage. To deny it is to live with the mind-set of an enslaved [person]." His most famous poem, "¿Y Tu Agüela, Aonde Ejtá?" mocks Puerto Ricans who choose to reject their African heritage.



**Fortunato  
Vizcarrondo**

## Listen to the Poem!

**In this youtube video**, Eduardo Cortés recites "¿Y Tu Agüela, Aonde Ejtá?"  
[<tinyurl.com/ytuabuela>](http://tinyurl.com/ytuabuela).

**Find the text** of the poem in both Black-Spanish and English on the next two pages.

**For more background** on Puerto Rican heritage, read the story by Lessette Manners on p. 4 of the Hair issue.



# ¿Y Tu Agüela, Aonde Ejtá?

Fernando Fortunato Vizcarrondo

Ayé me dijite negro  
Y hoy te boy a contejtá:  
Mi mai se sienta en la sala.  
¿Y tu agüela, aonde ejtá?

Yo tengo el pelo'e caíyo:  
El tuyo ej seda namá;  
Tu pai lo tiene bien lasio,  
¿Y tu agüela, aonde ejtá?

Tu coló te salió blanco  
Y la mejiya rosá;  
Loj lábioj loj tiénej finoj . . .  
¿Y tu agüela, aonde ejtá?

¿Disej que mi bemba ej grande  
Y mi pasa colorá?  
Pero dijme, por la binge,  
¿Y tu agüela, aonde ejtá?

Como tu nena ej blanquita  
La sacaj mucho a pasiá . . .  
Y yo con ganae gritate  
¿Y tu agüela, aonde ejtá?

A ti te gujta el fojtrote,  
Y a mi brujca maniguá.  
Tú te laj tiraj de blanco  
¿Y tu agüela, aonde ejtá?

Erej blanquito enchapao  
Que dentraj en sosiedá,  
Temiendo que se conojca  
La mamá de tu mamá.

Aquí el que no tiene dinga  
Tiene mandinga . . ja, ja!  
Por eso yo te pregunto  
¿Y tu agüela, aonde ejtá?

Ayé me dijite negro  
Queriéndome abochoná.  
Mi agüela sale a la sala,  
Y la tuya oculta ajtá.

La pobre se ejtá muriendo  
Al belse tan maltratá.  
Que hajta tu perro le ladra  
Si acaso a la sala bá.

¡Y bien que yo la conojo!  
Se ñama siña Tatá . . .  
Tu la ejconde en la cosina,  
Po'que ej prieta de a beldá.

**Source:** [www.elboricua.com/Poem\\_Y%20tu%20abuela.html](http://www.elboricua.com/Poem_Y%20tu%20abuela.html)

# “And Yo Granma, Where She At?”

*Translated by Roberto Márquez*

Yesterday you called me black\*  
 Today, I’m answerin’ back:  
 my mother sit in the parlor.  
 And yo granma, where she at?

My hair ain’t nuttin’ but knots:  
 yo locks fall down smooth as silk;  
 yo popa’s hair lank and straight,  
 and yo granma, where she at?

Color yo skin is white;  
 yo cheeks is rosy red;  
 the lips you got just so fine,  
 and yo granma, where she at?

You say my bubbalips big,  
 that my kinks high yellla red,  
 for lord sakes, why ‘ont you tell me  
 ‘bout yo granma, where she at?

Yo little gal’s so lily white  
 you always be takin’ her out . . .  
 and me ‘bout bustin’ to shout:  
 And yo granma, where she at?

You like dancin’ to de foxtrot.  
 I likes my wild music’s woods;  
 forever be braggin’ you white:  
 And yo granma, where she at?

Yo whiteness ain’t but veneer  
 for passin’ ‘mong high-tone folk,  
 hopin’ none knows to invoke  
 who’s yo momma’s momma dear.

Dem here with no toucha Dinga,  
 descend from Mandinga direct . . .  
 das why I ask, due respect,  
 and yo granma, where she at?

Yesterday you called me black,\*  
 Tryin’ a make me feel ashame.  
 My granma ain’t ban from the parlor;  
 yours you be hidin’ out back.

Po’ lady’s ‘bout fit to die,  
 see herself treated so.  
 Even the dog barkin’ at ‘er  
 dare she to the parlor go.

I know ‘er real well, you see!  
 Her name’s Missus Tata . . .  
 And you hide ‘er in the kitchen,  
 ‘cause she black as black can be.

\* original translation used the “n” word;  
 here changed to “black”

**Source:** [www.facebook.com/losafrolatinos/  
 posts/839794399433941](http://www.facebook.com/losafrolatinos/posts/839794399433941)