

**Scene: From The Movie Giant**  
**by Tino Villanueva**

*Review by Paul Steven Stone*

**I**t's not very often that a cultural experience tears open the veneer one has unknowingly grown over one's vulnerabilities and cultural wounds, but *Scene From The Movie Giant* tells the tale of one such upheaval wrought upon the life and self-examination of a boy almost grown into manhood. Tino Villanueva was 14 years old when he sat in the darkness of a Texas movie theater watching the movie *Giant*. What he experienced was far more than a movie; call it a cultural earthquake, as he witnessed anti-Mexican racism supposedly offered to highlight and counter its racist cruelties, but still a painful dose of medicine for a boy struggling to understand his own identity in a bicultural community. *Scene from the Movie Giant* is Villanueva's exquisite portrayal of the havoc that viewing experience wrought in his life and growing understanding of the world around him. As he says in his artful poetry, "By now the day was fading into twilight/and I beginning/not to cast a shadow where I had always been/when I saw/suddenly a boy alone/who had to tear to prove he was.../Something from the movie screen had/dropped into his life, his small shield of faith/no longer with him." Words that cut deep into the human condition. A gem worth reading more than once.

