

THE BODY/MY BODY

Norma E. Cantú

“You can never be thin enough,” they said,

but I knew better,
taunted and teased.

Esqueleto rumbero, the kids would tease,
and hot tears would roll down my cheeks;
palillo and *pinche flaquinche*—they’d hurl the words.
Flaca, a boyfriend’s term of endearment.

But TV cartoons had Olive Oyl,
and Mexican cinema had *La Vitrola*.

Then Twiggy was in, I was okay,
I had it no easier than Gorda, or Tonina Jackson, or Toro—
all my friends who plump and happy would beat up on boys
and girls who called them names,
and then cry inside,
for sticks and stones may hurt
but words wound deep and leave scars on the soul.

And now they diet,
and they die on the surgeon’s table:
liposuction, a tip and tuck,
some wear girdles like the ones our mothers wore.
We are never satisfied.