

me
or that I have deceive to live
as the ghosts run

and i undulate my hips, because
i love this woman butch
and eating hard on me, where my sorrow
runs out
where my tears die
where

 i am alone
where i finally gasp she is there
and when i die
it is the only thing i take with me
so
nothing else matters
nothing else

Infection

Josi Mata

nervous under the harsh probe light
and
When the doctor
told me to take my
panties off
I knew I was in trouble

it took Mom, Vinito
and three nurses to
hold me down

frightened
at the penetration of cold steel instruments
and white faces
grimacing
contorting
because I screamed so
loud, so loud *gritaba*,
Ama tried not to cry Vinito let his hair cover his shame

no one ever told me
no one ever knew
how the infection
kept coming back
your hands from dinner to
my vagina
your hands from
the arm rest
to my butthole
from the cigarette
to my undeveloped breasts

The nurse hurriedly explained that these Mexicans needed

to learn how to
bathe
the doctor thought he showed my
mother how to wash me
I scrubbed in
the middle of
stall-less showers
leaning against gray walls
where Japanese Americans had
learned without hope, I'm sure,
except now it's a migrant camp
and still without hope

by the middle of summer
it had cleared up
because you weren't anywhere near
me
and when we finally went home after
two days of travelling in the truck
of baloney sandwiches with cornchips
I knew the carved niche was there
the fall back into place with nightmares
the constant burning
and feeling to urinate

my size
growth in age
lost its importance
pride sunk
somewhere below my
feet
underneath where
my underwear lay

mom has a million other
things to do
rather than to look after my peehole

or the sores on my butt
I spend all my time in the bathroom
the white teacher complained

the end of this doesn't stop
with an uncle's hand, or that he's dead
it follows me into relationships
where and how I live

and
fades into
some horizon
like a snake's tail
some abandoned
road
someplace way off
where earth meets
sky
someplace I don't
care to look at
anymore

I still see a doctor
occasionally
but she doesn't
try to tell me how
to bathe