

CUERPO

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Manos

I see the white soft hands
of the girls that get to go home
after school.

My large brown hands show
marks of work and sun and scars.

My nails are short and uneven,
My fingers bent and wrinkly.

What boy will hold this rough hand
in his?

Hair

I let my long, dark, thick hair down.

I love my hair.

I love that I do not have to tease it
or pump it—it is full all alone.

But that hair is everywhere, yo.

My 'stache, my pits, my brows.

Are girls supposed to have a happy trail?

The time I spend plucking and bleaching
and shaving and for what?

I hear that white girl in algebra tell me:

“Your hair is so thick, I wish I had your hair.”

Yeah...

Hips

Why can't I find my size?

Don't they know my nalgas need to get in there too?

I close my eyes and I grab those pants,

I put them on one leg at a time

hoping that if I pull hard enough

I won't rip them and they will

glide over my thighs and then

button in the front without making

me pass out when I try to sit down.

But that boy told me I looked like

Selena in my jeans, and ya know that

it is anything for Selenas, right?

So I grab that bigger size, I wiggle it all in.

I button and I see the curves hit those spots,

I know.

Oh I know how Monday is gonna go.

Bidi bidi bom bom!

Labios

I watch your mouth so I can learn your words
I cannot understand if I do not see your lips moving.
You ask me to learn your ways,
Telling me how the ch and sh sound are different,
And that the v and b are different.
Yet, when I learn that sound and I use that v to vote
Or that b to tell you to back off
You are clear to shhhhhhh me.
My lips give me my power,
I do not have to use them
to ask for your permission to exist.

Hoops

My silver hoops dangle
and shine.

Their size and shape,
the round, round circle
makes you wonder.

You wonder is she a hoodrat,
a chola, someone's hyna?

These halos frame my face and
pull open my ears so I can hear
your judgments.

I wear them with pride 'cause I know
when I smack my chicle and flip my hoops,
I regulate.

