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## Distinta

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## *Distinta*

*Graciela Chipres*

My otherness is brown. It is female. It is queer. It is depression and anxiety. It is poor.

My otherness is wide hips, thick legs, and large breasts, taking up too much space making thin white girls laugh and point.

My otherness is the voices of my grade school teachers talking down to me, speaking slowly, as if speaking only Spanish made me unintelligent.

My otherness is fear of my mother finding out how I kissed my friend Valerie and how she lit a fire in me that no boy ever could.

My otherness is having people ask me where I come from and my wondering too, where it is I belong and if there is such a place.

My otherness is the worn-out shoes I loved that my mother threw away because she said they made me look like una niña abandonada and the fear of cockroaches that lurked in every crevice of my childhood home.

My otherness is the corazon de jitomate my mother says I have, one that is tender, sensitive and full of empathy, que me hace chillona y aislada de los demás.

My otherness is crying to my mother that the sorrow doesn't end and her telling me that I must endure because that is what we do and have always done.

My otherness is brown. It is female. It is queer. It is poor. It is depression and anxiety.