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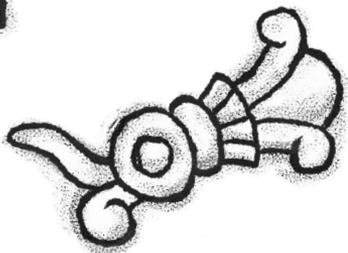
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# The Moon Within

AIDA SALAZAR



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# MY LOCKET

There is a locket in my heart  
that holds all of the questions  
that do cartwheels in my mind  
and gurgle up to the top of my brain  
like root beer fizz.

Questions that my journal  
doesn't keep so my little brother, Juju,  
or other snoops don't read them.  
Questions that Mima  
knows how to answer  
but I'm too embarrassed to ask her  
because they might  
seem stupid or gross or wrong.

Like, why have my armpits begun to smell?  
Or how big will my breasts grow?  
Or when exactly will my period come?

I flush bright red

right through my amber skin  
just thinking about it.

It was so long ago that Mima was  
eleven, maybe she wouldn't  
remember what it is like  
maybe she'll make me talk about it, a lot  
maybe wind herself into a lecture  
about the beauty of women's bodies  
that I don't want to hear from her  
sometimes cactus lips.  
Maybe she'll just think I'm  
delirious and say,  
*Celi, are you running a fever?*  
while she kisses my forehead.

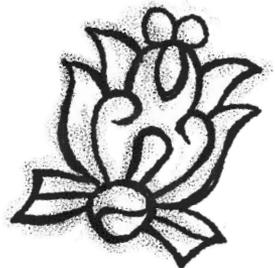
My locket also keeps secrets.

Secrets tangle in the shyness of my tongue  
even when I try to tell them  
to my best friend  
Magda.

Instead, my locket holds quiet my crush  
on Iván who is one year older  
than me and who can do a backflip  
better than the other boys in his capoeira class.

Or the wish that Aurora, my “friend”  
would just go away and  
not have a crush on him too.  
Or how often I sneak the tablet  
from my parents when  
I’m supposed to be practicing  
music or dancing.

Though I’ve never seen it  
I know my locket is there.  
It keeps my questions  
                  my secrets  
warm  
unanswered  
and safe.



# LUNA

A beam of moonlight  
squeezes through  
my window's curtain.

Luna is out tonight.

My eyes wide open like doors.

I'll be twelve in a few months, I should  
be allowed to go to sleep later  
than seven-year-old Juju, who shares a room with me  
but I'm not.

No matter that it is Saturday.  
Round-cheeked Juju passes  
out the moment his head hits the pillow.

And I stare at the May moonlight.

I watch her light up a sliver of dust  
in my room.



And when Luna is gone  
and I can't see their floating  
I know they continue to dance  
in a dream  
with Luna and me.

