

PINTADA DE ROJO

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I hung from the mesquite tree, topless. The rugged bark cut into my fingertips, under my tight squeeze around the warm tree trunk. Wind cooled the moist cave of my armpit and my nipples stood up when the clouds covered the sun.



With
each turn
of the page

the pull turned
into tickles up
my neck
and down
the back
of my
legs.

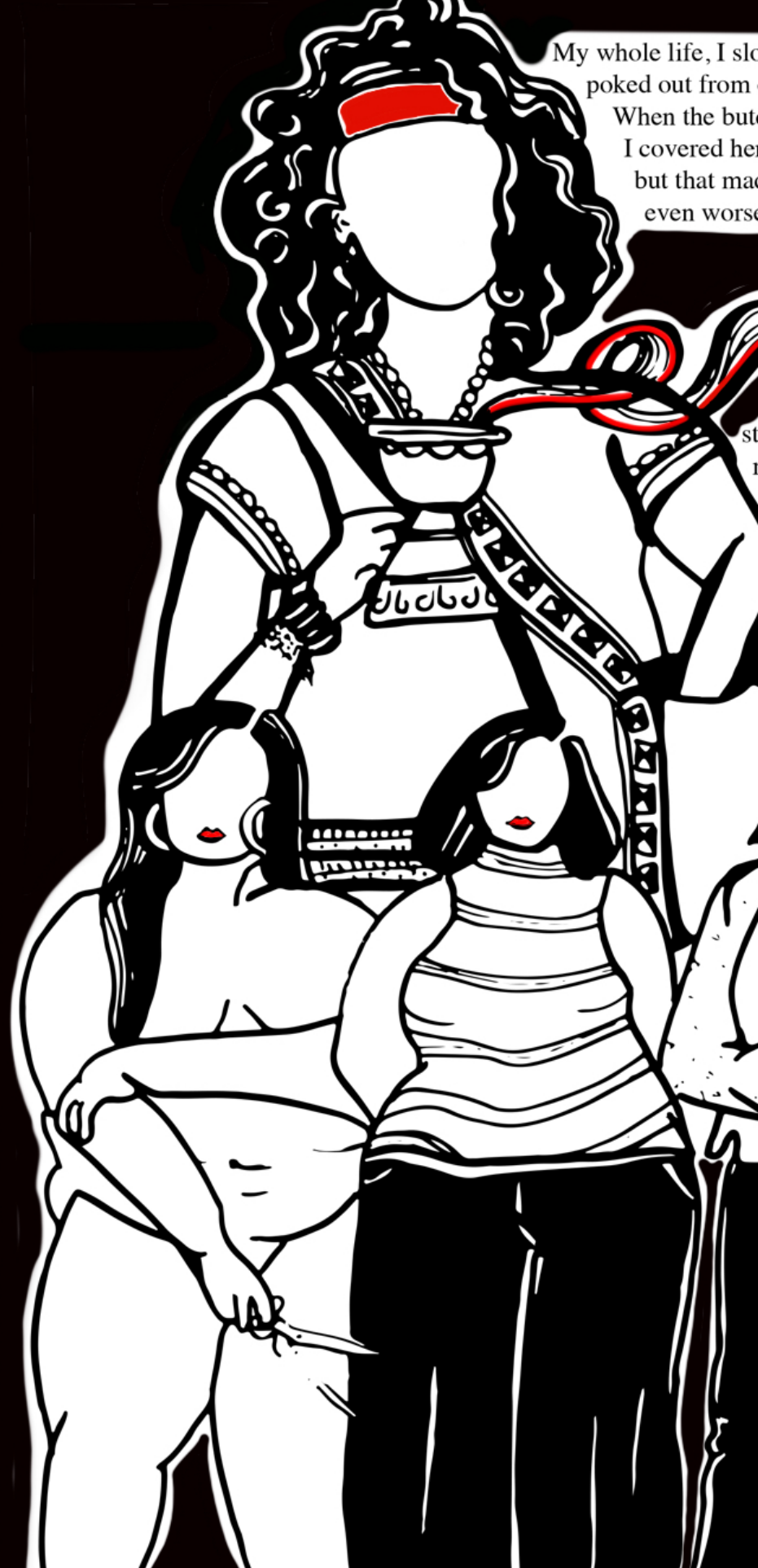
I'd search
my brother's room
for something
I didn't know I was
looking for...

...like a
women's nudie
magazine. The girls in
the pages sometimes
made the back of
my stomach
feel sore.


Something was
rebeling in my
body, growing
in my body,
like
another
me.

Who was she?
Who did she want
to be?


I prayed and cried and
dreamed.



My whole life, I slouched my shoulders and covered the bulge that poked out from over my pants. It wasn't the fat, it was the body. When the butcha wanted to come out, I covered her in lashes and makeup but that made me feel even worse.



I began to stop caring for my body, and covered up in clothes too big for me, swallowed drugs and food slowly, killing me, and attempted one too many times to erase her, to cut her, to kill her.



Then the smoke blew in, the red smoke, the smoke of my ancestors and gifted me the story of two-spirit, of nepantla, of our magic.