

## Sonrisas

I live in a doorway  
between two rooms. I hear  
quiet clicks, cups of black  
coffee, *click, click* like facts  
    budgets, tenure, curriculum,  
from careful women in crisp beige  
suits, quick beige smiles  
that seldom sneak into their eyes.

I peek  
in the other room señoras  
in faded dresses stir sweet  
milk coffee, laughter whirls  
with steam from fresh *tamales*  
    *sh, sh, mucho ruido,\**  
they scold one another,  
press their lips, trap smiles  
in their dark, Mexican eyes.

--Pat Mora  
From *Borders*, 1986.

\* lots of noise