

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Richard Vargas: "Marilyn" & "women and guns"

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Richard Vargas is a long-time poet and the founding editor of *The Más Tequila Review*, a journal of poetry “for the rest of us.” He is a prominent member of the Albuquerque poetry scene, was once nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and has been featured on Garrison Keillor’s *The Writer’s Almanac*, twice.

Marilyn

it was The Seven Year Itch that did it
making my five year old groin turn and churn
when i saw you on t.v. it clicked on a switch
i still haven’t been able to turn off
the urge to wrap my arms around
a perfect stranger and hug for all it’s worth
was a strange and new thing
unlike any woman in my life
the thought of you rolling tortillas at dawn
and boiling a pot a beans at noon
never entered my mind
i became aware of when your movies were
scheduled to be televised and they were watched
with more interest than anything Popeye or Bugs Bunny
had to offer
and it only stands to reason that the first little girl
i cornered and kissed in the first grade was Vanessa
a pretty blonde with a great pair of gams
now, i know how Hollywood fucked with both of us
imprinted me with a fantasy of full lips, soft curves
bubble baths and silky sheets
as you were repackaged and hawked
new and improved
time and time again
but i can still remember sitting in the backseat
of the car, my mother driving and turning up the radio
when some guy on KRLA came on the air

and said that you were found dead
i looked out the window, up towards the clouds
and asked no one in particular
“who am i going to marry now?”

women and guns

I.

she says she sleeps with one under her pillow
her daddy bought it for her and they
like to spend Saturday mornings walking
in the woods and shooting at shit
i know where i'm not sleeping tonight

II.

she's new in town
carrying a chip on her shoulder the size of Brooklyn
which also happens to be where she's from
while driving around in her '93 nissan looking for a place
that's supposed to make a mean falafel
she tells me her gun is in the trunk and it's a good thing
because the way people drive in this town
if it was within reach she'd use it to blow away
the next idiot who cuts her off
i know where i'm not sleeping
ever

III.

i'm talking to my ex on the phone
about the crazy women i've been meeting lately
and she says (half joking half serious)
hell, it's good for you i didn't have one
when we were breaking up because i sure
would have used it
i hang up feeling like my luck
is about to run out

Cultural Weekly is proud to premiere these poems.

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