
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Richard Vargas: Three Poems

Richard Vargas · Wednesday, September 12th, 2018

how a civilization begins

could you run fast enough
the first time you heard
the pop pop pop
so unlike the noise of deer
walking on dried leaves
or the splash a fish makes
leaping into night air
for the low flying
mosquito

did you hide behind tree
or big rock all day until
hunger or cold or both
gave you courage to
go back to the cave
where you found it scattered
all over the floor

did you pick it up
smell it
lick it
put it in
your mouth
light as snow
puffy as daffodil
crunchy like
a cricket

did you want to know
the secret
the trick
the magic

did you want

to make more?

*

Tito's carnitas

he was the only guy i ever knew who could survive the aftermath of WWII with only a paper clip and a pair of shoestrings. he would have made any son a great dad but it was his fate to have 5 daughters who all liked to eat... a lot.

my favorite story is 2nd hand, i wasn't there but have no doubt in my mind that it's true. after a weekend of hunting with his half-ass warrior friends which usually meant plenty of booze, good weed, and a piss poor attempt to bring home some serious game, he was driving down a dirt road in his beat up r.v. with his compadres in the back farting and sleeping, when out of the corner of his eye he saw a wild pig running parallel to the road so he told someone in back to hand him his rifle and while pacing the pig and at the same time making sure he didn't drive into a ditch or a tree he points his rifle out the window knowing he only has one shot. he squeezes the trigger, the pig flies head over heels, lands on its back dead in its tracks. he hit the brakes and jumped out with hunting knife in hand, started butchering it right there on the spot when the 3 guys chasing it down came upon Tito carving up their prize and one started talking shit until the doors to the r.v. swung open and out came 6 or 7 smelly hung-over hombres, each carrying a rifle locked and loaded. Tito gave the whiners a hunk of the carcass and told them to get lost. years later, after being out of touch, i ran into someone at a party who knew Tito with the 5 daughters. i asked how he was doing. the guy made the universal motion of doom, as if sticking a needle into his arm. i proceeded to numb myself with whatever was at the bar.

Tito's copper pot
cooks meat crisp, juicy inside
tacos from heaven

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a note to the young artists living in these dark days

go paint a picture in the rain
and watch the colors run or
write a poem while getting drunk
and listen to the random noise
of empty bottles breaking in the street
pick up a drum and beat it mad
as you dance naked in the backyard
under a suburban moon or drive
to the beach and sing jazz
to the stars hanging in a black
ink sky while wearing discarded
rags found in the trash bins
of local thrift stores or get

arrested for carving your visions
into the walls of public restrooms

know that the difference
between a dollar bill and
a sheet of toilet paper
is the green ink

close your eyes and
jump off the cliff
art will catch you

it always does

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