

Hair Growing Out of Her Tongue

by Dulce Maria Menendez

Ay Federico sit down and let me make you some *Cuban* cafe while you rest those versus you left behind when you were shot at the border or some plain in Spain. Dear Federico rest, rest my friend while I tell you about my *tia* Ela Lee.

Of course we did not call her that. We called her Macuca for some reason which escapes me. Perhaps it was a name given to her from her godmother. Did I tell you that she too was my godmother!! May she rest in peace Federico unlike you who are still creeping up in our prose. Listen closely friend while the cafe **percolates** through the Italian espresso pot. Oh you must try the *espumita* I make. I learned it from a Cuban woman sometime long ago in Miami. Sit, sit.

Si, let me get back to Tia Macuca whose hair was spicy red and her smoldering eyes would melt your heart Federico. I can just imagine her reading to you her own poetry for she did not have hair growing out of her tongue. She was not embarrassed to read her own poems to el unico Federico Garcia Lorca! No sir. *No señor mio. No.*

Ay Federico, she is gone.

She is gone from this earth but she is still living like the spirits who visited her in her little apartment in Glendale, California. She would tell me they'd come to visit with her and sit on her chair!! The nerve of the

spirits. Who did they think they were Federico? They were not you.

No. She said one of her visitors was Jose Luis Borges!
Can you imagine having Borges sitting in my tia's living room
surrounded
with the furniture my grandfather made and the portrait I painted of
her?

Have you met him Federico? But why Borges when you are the
greatest poet of all time and died so young to prove it?

I do not know.

Espera que el cafe ya esta listo. Sientate.

Did I tell you she chose not to have children of her own yet took care
of hundreds of them until one broke her and she was never the same
again.

The infant died in his sleep. I was told that she carried the child
around for
a while crying "*esta muerto, esta muerto*" until she came to her
senses and
called 911. The mother apologized to Ela for the death of her own
child!
The grandmother did not blame Ela neither. She blamed her own
daughter
for smoking during pregnancy.

Ay Federico. I am sorry. Here drink your cafe. Is it good? Do you
want to
hear some music while we reminisce?

Let's play some songs from long ago. Maybe some guitars from your
lost Spain.

Ay Federico, *tia* is gone and how will I ever be able to read your poetry again when she did not have hair growing out of her tongue?

