Moon Side

Monday, August 3, 2020 8:50 AM

MARTIN: *(To the* MOON*)*
Something's wrong.
She ain't naked.
She's been naked every night
for two months, soon as the sun goes down,
walking back and forth, back and forth,
and you could see everything.

GABRIELA: I've taken measurements.
When we first moved here
each of these cactus trees
was twenty feet away.
Then one night I heard curious sounds.
I walked out here and thought I saw
the cactus trees moving toward the house.
I ran inside and got a tape measure—
and sure enough! Fifteen feet!
"Get over here, Benito," I shouted.
And Benito came and took measurements
and told me I was crazy
and went back to sleeping
and snoring and gyrating in the bed
and dreaming of Miss Panama
and Miss El Salvador
and Miss Teen Puerto Rico!
And I sit out here
and watch the cactus trees
inching closer and closer to my house
concealing dark and hungry spirits,
secret-keepers and heartbreakers.
Yesterday I measured the trees.
Ten feet! Ten feet exactly!
What's it going to take to make
Benito believe me?
Why does he think I make it up?

MARTIN: *(Frustrated)*
Ay, when is she gonna get naked?

GABRIELA: Am I alone, Moon?
Am I the only one who feels like this?

MOON: *(To* GABRIELA*)*
The people in this desert have their
own problems, *nena*.
In the house to your right
an insomniac is looking through
old photo albums.
Her eyes trace memories back
to their original moments:
a fifteenth birthday party,
a fight in a bar, a first kiss,
a young *novio* in uniform
who wanted babies right away.
She runs sleep-deprived fingers
over black and white photos,
trying to feel the skin
of that old *novio*.
But the paper yields nothing.
There are only secrets here.
The moment before the photo was taken
and the moment just after:
these moments are exiled
to those parts of the brain
reserved for all the forgotten things.
And this poor girl
re-enacts her nightly journey
toward understanding her past—
and every night,
inexplicably powerful currents
turn her away.

GABRIELA: Poor girl.

MOON: In the house to your left
an old man watches his old wife sleeping.
She breathes slowly
and he holds a mirror to her mouth.

A little cloud assures the old man
that she is alive.
He thinks of the day they first made love,
a sweet October day thousands of miles
and seasons from here.
He had never held a body
so rich with dreams
and she had never held a body
so hot, hairy and full of feral hunger,
and that first liquid night,
a night without food or sleep—
with my wicked light
coming in through their bedroom window—
as she lay in his exhausted arms...
he reached for a mirror
and put the mirror to her mouth
and she breathed on it—
proving to this young disbeliever
that she was indeed alive
and not a dream,
a woman and not a fabulous invention.
And now the old man is afraid
of life without her
and keeps a nine millimeter in his house
and he checks his wife's dutiful breathing
and knows what to do in case it ever stops.

GABRIELA: Poor old man.

CAT: *(To the* MOON*)*
Stop telling her those morbid stories
or she'll never rest!

GABRIELA: Poor girl, poor old man:
poor people everywhere.

*(*GABRIELA *starts to sob.)*

(The MOON *puts his violin down and comes down from the sky.)*

(As the MOON *gets closer to the ground, the* COYOTE *howls in pain.)*

COYOTE: OH GOD IT HURTS!
IT HURTS MY BODY SO MUCH!

CAT: Stop that hideous noise!

COYOTE: THE MOONLIGHT!
IT HURTS SO BAD!

*(*MARTIN *covers his ears.)*

MARTIN: That noise freakin' irritates.
Drives me crazy-insane!

(The COYOTE *howls even louder as the* MOON *gets closer to the backyard.)*

COYOTE: *(Struggling, in pain)*
The lunar light—
is sharp like daggers—
cuts into my skin—
ricochets off my nerves—
it's why coyotes howl
at the full moon!

(The MOON *enters the backyard.)*

(The COYOTE *passes out.)*

(The CAT *goes to the* COYOTE.*)*

CAT: Coyote? Coyote?

(The CAT *holds the* COYOTE.*)*

(The MOON *goes to* GABRIELA.*)*

MOON: There, there, Gabby.

GABRIELA: *(To the* MOON*)*
Oh, you didn't have to
come down here to—

MOON: But I wanted to.