

## Three Poems by Mike Faran

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### Drive-bys and a Lesson, Perhaps

Carlito had the fuzzy dice,  
the plastic Jesus, the Mexican flag  
draped over the back-seat...  
everything -

*except* that his ride was a '69 Ford  
Galaxy.  
*A Ford!*

*Nobody* drove a Ford low-rider -  
it went against Kar-Club scripture,  
tamales, the American-Latino Dream  
& the Mother of God.

Only a Chevy would do.  
Only a Chevy *must* do!

But Carlito cruised the Ford, a true  
rebel boy -  
the laughing-stock of Pico Rivera.

However, when a drive-by went down,  
when the streets were  
alive with the wailing of sirens,  
when Saturday-night specials pierced the  
air -  
when Eagle Rock Boulevard flowed with  
bright blood,

Carlito's Ford Galaxy was never, ever  
pulled-over

& Carlito gave thanks to his plastic Jesus.

**you tell me**

all he wanted was a few lousy bucks  
maybe to get a buzz

maybe a big mac like he said,  
but something inside of milo snapped  
& he beat the poor sonofabitch to a pulp

who knows what triggers these human  
explosions?  
with milo it could have been anything -  
perhaps a woman  
perhaps just a valve-job that he just  
shelled out for

or was it *something innate* -  
the way that he was wired (the "hot-blooded  
latino" syndrome)?

milo walked off leaving me with the poor  
crumpled bum -  
funny but when i got him upright, dusted him  
off &  
gave him the lousy few bucks for a pint or a  
big mac,

i had the craziest urge to whip out my knife &  
stab him in the throat

& here i am, a caucasian bastard with  
scandinavian blood with a peace sign tattooed  
on my ass -  
a saab in the garage,  
& having never touched a tamale;

you tell *me*, mister

## **Motorcycles and Motorcycle Riders**

Motorcycles that crackle like weapons  
at 2:30 a.m.  
at low-altitude  
on cold, empty boulevards -

motorcycles that explode  
full-throttle at the speed of sound just  
inches from your door-handle  
on Highway 101.

Face of the rider hidden -  
just a rag of dirty blonde hair whipping  
from a tattooed neck.

And sometimes you want to meet him

to ask questions about freedom,  
liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

But you don't need to know about these  
things  
tonight.

**Mike Faran** lives in Ventura, Ca., just south of Santa Barbara. He is the author of *We Go To A Fire* and *Lady Mexico* (both from Curved Milk Press). Also, his work has appeared in *Abbey*, *CQ*, *Ship of Fools*, *Atlanta Review*, *Chiron*, *Pearl*, *Off the Coast*, and many other poetry journals.