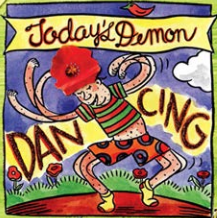


Dance

Arise





I GREW UP WITH dancing people. IN A WAY, my GRANDMA was BEHIND IT ALL. She DIDN'T dance BUT SHE LIKED A party ATMOSPHERE, EVEN FIRST THING IN THE morning.



We KEPT OUR record PLAYER IN the KITCHEN AND my UNCLE AND HIS SWINGER FRIEND with THE INCREDIBLE hair came OVER to eat AND SHOW GRANDMA VERSIONS of the TWIST.



AND THEN THERE WERE MY TEEN-AGE HULA DANCING COUSINS WHO BROUGHT THEIR HULA 45'S AND DID ENTIRE DANCES THAT TRANSFIXED ME TOTALLY. THEY TOOK CLASSES AT A PLACE UP THE HILL.



I SIGNED UP FOR A BEGINNER'S HULA CLASS. MY TEACHER WAS A MIDDLE-AGED WHITE LADY WHO WAS OBSESSED WITH HAWAII. SHE ALWAYS HAD A PLASTIC ORCHID IN HER HAIR AND SHE WAS VERY SERIOUS ABOUT TECHNIQUE.



Keeping YOUR KNEES BENT WAS ONE OF THE SECRETS OF A GRACEFUL hula. MY teacher WANTED US TO PRACTICE THIS constantly. IT TURNED OUT TO ALSO HELP ME Master A DANCE kids WERE DOING ON MY street CALLED, 'The FUNKY CHICKEN.'



There WAS A GIRL who COULD DANCE in A WAY THAT MADE US ALL STAND STILL. She MOVED in WAYS WE'D NEVER seen. I WAS CRAZY ABOUT HER AND mystified BY HER AND scared OF HER TOO. She WAS Beautiful AND MOODY. HER MOTHER WAS DEAD.



She moved to our street from a place where no one did the hula. It was as exotic to her as she was to me.



SEE, DO YOUR HANDS LIKE THIS.

WHAT FOR?
IT MEANS 'GRASS SHACK'

UH-HUH. BUT WHY DO YOU STICK YOUR BEHIND OUT LIKE A CRAZY HEIFER?

A WHAT?

I invited her to come and see girls from the advanced hula class do a show in a parking lot for a supermarket that was having a "HAWAIIAN DAYS" celebration.



SEE? INCREDIBLE, RIGHT?

DIDN'T I TELL YA?

NEXT YEAR YOU AND ME CAN BE UP THERE.

ACROSS the STREET THERE was A DANCE CONTEST at THE DRIVE-IN. We TALKED ABOUT entering. WELL, MAINLY el TALKED AND SHE JUST KEPT SAYING NO.

WHY NOT, MAN? THE WAY YOU DANCE, WE'D WIN FOR SURE!

I AIN'T WORRIED ABOUT MY DANCING.

THEN WHAT?

YOUR DANCING MAN.

WHAT ABOUT IT?

UP until THEN I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THE WAY el DANCED. el HAD NO idea I WAS CONSIDERED TO BE SOMETHING OF A spaz. THIS NEWS WAS A HEAVY BLOW.

YOU KNOW! HOW YOU JUMP AROUND ALL STUPID, WAVING YOUR ARMS LIKE YOU GOT MENTAL PROBLEMS. WITH YOUR FACE ALL LOOKING LIKE THE COVER OF MAD MAGAZINE.

I DO?

YOU KNOW YOU DO!

All of a sudden, dancing got hard. Even hula dancing felt weird to me. I still went to class but I started dancing in the back row. I noticed the music sounded less wonderful and that my teacher looked less beautiful, and more insane.

I noticed her fat arms and saggy everything and how she sang with the records!

AND DO AN AMI-AMI FOR THE BOYS IN THE BAND!

FREAKY JIGGLE
/ SCARY WIGGLE



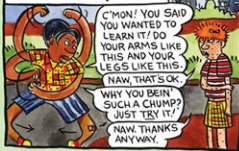
Even my dancing relatives started looking crazy to me, and I realized it was weird to have a record player in the kitchen.



The ONLY PERSON WHO still LOOKED GOOD WHEN DANCING was THE GIRL WHO TOLD me I LOOKED stupid. WELL, HER and MY BABY BROTHER.

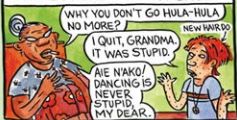


BABIES ALWAYS LOOK GOOD WHEN THEY DANCE. THEY HAVE SOME THING THAT IS VERY HARD TO GET BACK ONCE IT IS LOST AND it is always LOST.



I DON'T BLAME *that* GIRL FOR KNOCKING ME OUT OF *my* GROOVE. I WAS *about* TO START JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. *It* WAS GOING *to* HAPPEN ANYWAY. BUT IT WAS A LONG TIME BEFORE I GOT IT BACK.

I SPENT TOO LONG EITHER WISHING I COULD DANCE *in* A WAY THAT ALWAYS LOOKED COOL OR WISHING I WAS COOL ENOUGH TO NOT CARE ABOUT *what* OTHER PEOPLE THOUGHT. MAINLY I DIDN'T DANCE.



The GROOVE IS SO MYSTERIOUS.
WE'RE BORN WITH it AND WE
lose IT AND THE WORLD seems
TO SPLIT apart BEFORE OUR
eyes INTO STUPID AND COOL.
WHEN WE GET IT BACK, the
WORLD unifies AROUND US, AND
BOTH STUPID AND COOL FALL AWAY.



I AM GRATEFUL to THOSE
WHO ARE KEEPERS OF THE GROOVE.
The BABIES and THE GRANDMAS
WHO HANG ON TO IT and HELP
us REMEMBER when WE FOR-
GET that ANY KIND OF DAN-
CING is BETTER than NO
DANCING at ALL.

