

LA DIABLA

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In memory of Albert Soto

Devilish grin captured in black-and-white photograph
1950s boyhood, All American family, children pose on pristine lawn
Roy Rogers hat dims Tucson glare from your picaresque eyes
Enhances your distinctive smile

Fashionista travels to New York to pursue first love
Crosses the velvet rope at Studio 54
Shakin' tha' ass on rainbow-lit dance floor
Vogues with Willie Ninja while Paris is Burning
A witty dervish, you lure suitors at Escandalo, while
In the throws of passion mute men scream your name

Made a run through Baltimore where Pink Flamingos roam
Probably shared a toke of weed with Divine
Warhol and Basquiat asked you to come over to the Factory
Your love of art collecting began amid cocaine dreams and rock 'n' roll riffs

Comfortable in any setting—the cumbia dance halls in South Tucson, or posh
house clubs The Shelter & Your Mama's House—all lay out the baby powder
ready for your entrance
We relive those evenings of eternal bliss at Hotel Congress and IBT's
Where every bartender knows to serve up Absolut & Soda strong
With a twist of flirt and smile

Dance the night away
 Bass line kicks in
 Red shoes fly in the smallest watering holes

Walked fiercely in four-inch tacones, teaching models to glide on the runway
 Long before Ru Paul exclaimed You Better Work!
 Eres nuestra *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*
 Recognizing *fabulousness* in all manifestations
 Exquisite tastes brought you to the finest boutiques in Rome, Milan, Paris,
 Even Canal Street and Santee Alley
 Creating outfits that Gautier envied

One Easter's eve, you became Puck
 Conjured spirits on full moon
 Spreading fairy dust on our pillows
 Laughing and playing in my dreams
 We plucked *love-in-idleness* for our friends
 As La Diabla you came into your skin
 Enthralled all who saw you in La Pastorela
 Willingly we joined Lucifer's clan

After your sojourn back east, Tucson welcomed its prodigal son
 A changed man, you gathered the tribes to envision a world yet to be
 Believed social justice can reveal itself in the smallest act of kindness
 Zen in your art of mediation opened doors for the have-nots

Scribes now write mythic soliloquies

REINA ALEJANDRA PRADO

Adding to the grandiosity of your persona
Taught us not to settle for anything less than our worth
Mourners testify to your generous love
Monsignor declares you a saint
Saint Albert, the II, The Great
La Santa de Tucson, ultimate divadom befitting de nuestra musa
Our Diabla es un angel, some would consider it a living paradox

Healing hands gather around you
Bless you with amber oil and
Angels emanate from your crown
Guiding you to your next life journey
Ave Maria, the final serenade,
Song and prayer lull you to eternal sleep
As we eulogize our Diabla in the house of God