

5-4-2018

The Chisme on Chisme

Kathleen Donovan

California State University, Monterey Bay

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/ords>

Recommended Citation

Donovan, Kathleen (2018) "The Chisme on Chisme," *In the Ords: CSUMB Literary Arts Journal*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 2 , Article 48.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/ords/vol1/iss2/48>

This Non-Fiction is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Digital Commons @ CSUMB. It has been accepted for inclusion in *In the Ords: CSUMB Literary Arts Journal* by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CSUMB. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@csumb.edu.

The Chisme on Chisme

I'm not the one that you want telling other people's stories; I have my own trust issues, I barely talk to my own family about my own life I can't handle other people's life. But if I must, then I must. If you want the dirt, you want to talk to my Aunt; she's my brother's nina so all the cousins call her Nina even though her name is Linda. She's got a tough job, so maybe that's why she's got such a big mouth. Or it could be the fact that she works as a high school P.E. teacher; she's surrounded by tweens and teens all day for the majority of the year, that's got to be why she can be so immature some times. I might be twenty five, but she still treats me like I'm fifteen.

"Have you heard the new Iggy Azalea song yet?"

"Who's that Nina?"

She lives closer to the rest of the family than we do; she sees my grandma all the time and she knows where my other aunt and uncle are even though she hates them.

"They're going to be evicted again," she hisses to my mom across the Thanksgiving table. "They're going to try to call up mom and get her to pay for a night or two in a motel again. How are we going to deal with them this time?"

My mom hates Chisme too; she's not the oldest of her siblings, but she's always been the most responsible so even though she's grown and moved away she hates being dragged into their shit. She may or may not know the dirt, but she'd rather gouge out her eyes than repeat it and become part of the problem. She's had to deal with it longer than I have; her family has these crazy traditions that she had to participate in when she was growing up.

“Your Auntie Kathy’s trying to organize the family olympics for this summer,” she sighed. “Another huge gathering of family members that I’ve either forgotten or wish I had never met.”

“You mean like the Easter picnic? Doesn’t she organize that too?”

“Your Auntie Kathy loves to organize those things, almost as much as your Nina likes to win the games at those things.”

Their two halves of a whole, my mom and my Nina; I guess if I had to I’d say they’re the closest I’ve got to chisme. And their other two siblings, my aunt Denise and uncle Rob, their the fodder; they got all the crap that rolled down hill.

“I swear, if I knew for certain that it would do any good at all I’d call the police on them. Two grown adults, their two kids, and your cousin’s three babies all squatting in some motel isn’t bad enough but you know they’re all high on whatever shit they could get their hands on.”

“I remember when she got pregnant the first time, with that gang banger’s kid; I told her I would take her to get an abortion. I told her, I told her that it would be the best that way.”

“It’s people like that that keep having kids to mooch off the government; those poor kids. One day they’re going to be taken away. I wish it would happen sooner rather than later. At least then they’d have a chance.”

“Did you hear what our brother’s been up to? His company sent him off to China for a week; he didn’t even bother to tell us until he’d already gotten back.”

“He didn’t want to worry mom.”

My grandma might be the biggest cautionary tale of chisme; she’s had over seventy years of practice and it’s worn her down. Okay, that and maybe the fact that for those seventy years

she's also been a chain smoker. She's got a lot of people to keep up with, she had eight siblings. There's one thing that both my mom and my Nina can agree on: now that my grandma's older, had a massive heart attack, and had a pacemaker put in, it's their job to keep most of the chisme away from her. They decided that she couldn't handle that mierda.

I work really hard to keep myself out of the chisme because I hate people talking about me behind my back; as it is, I already have a lot of self-esteem issues stemming from paranoia which are connected to my eating disorder. See, I don't want my Nina knowing that because then my cousin will know and he's my sort-of godfather because he was my confirmation sponsor. If my cousin knows then his wife will know and my other cousin (his brother) and his fiancé. And before I know what's happening I'm the chisme that people are talking about at their wedding reception this coming summer; because there's always going to be that one person who gets a little "happy for the couple" and they won't recall boundaries and they'll come right up to me and say something extremely stupid like "is that why you're still single mijah? If you just cut out rice and beans I swear you'll lose 50 pounds — that's what my daughter did."

After that I'll be forced to kill whatever big mouthed bitch of a great second cousin dared to speak and become an even bigger topic for the chisme factory. It's best if I just keep to myself, respect the dangerously precarious network of family that I know nothing about.