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Millicent Borges Accardi

KEEPS me Some Money

Larry fit that phrase into every conversation. As the talk rolled around we'd say, "Larry, you wanna go to Vegas?"

And he would slam his wallet on the counter, saying, "KEEPS me some money." Larry was not cheap but he was frugal.

Eventually, he bought a house, two stories high, in Carson near the refinery where we worked. We'd tease him, "Larry,

how'd you afford that?" and he'd say, "KEEPS me some money!" Somewhere he found a plastic Jacuzzi, all dirty

and cracked, that he stored in the backyard

until me and Ernie could come by, and
we said, “Larry why doncha get a new one?”

And he’d smile, “KEEPS me some money.”
I wanna say his wife’s name was Camille,
but I don’t remember. She tried to keep Larry

in tow whenever he did something she didn’t
like. She’d yell at him, a phrase I promised Larry,
even after his divorce, that I would never repeat.

Millicent Borges Accardi, an award-winning Portuguese-American writer, is the author of four poetry collections, including *Quarantine Highway* and *Only More So*. She has been awarded many fellowships, including from the National Endowment for the Arts, CantoMundo, the California Arts Council, the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, The Corporation of Yaddo, Fundação Luso Americano (Portugal), and the Barbara Deming Foundation. She is also a Fulbright Fellow.