



Robin Farias

October 20, 1959 - September 21, 2024

Robin Farias exited this life at the too-young age of 64 on September 21, 2024, at Houston Methodist Hospital, listening to her favorite music and holding the hands of her husband of 44 years, Ken Farias, and her daughter Katherine Farias. Considerate to the end, she made sure to wrap things up in time for Kenny to make his strict 10 PM bedtime.

Her parents, Sgt. William “Sonny” Adkins and Wilma Jean (Harless), welcomed her into this world on October 20, 1959, in Charleston, West Virginia. Wilma Jean was the baby of four sisters, and Robin was the baby of all the cousins. She idolized her older brother Redgie and his best friend David “The Hog” Heizer, and in her early years, she was frequently recruited by them to participate in all manner of neighborhood mischief and trouble. She was a decorated soldier in the Great Wyoming Street Egg War of 1969 and could often be found being held up by her ankles out of a second-story window of the old house to more accurately drop water balloons on passersby.

She began playing music professionally at 14 and was the youngest member of the West Virginia musicians' union. In 1980, her jazz trio played a gig at Clara's rooftop jazz bar in Charleston, where she caught the eye of the young Ken Farias, who used to come to Clara's to listen to live music and unwind with friends after work. She always wore a wedding ring when she played to “keep the creepers away,” but this didn't dissuade my dad, who asked her

longtime friend and bandmate Rusty to introduce them. He asked her for a date—and with her day job as a 911 dispatcher and innate West Virginian distrust of outsiders—she only agreed after running him through a background check and calling to verify his employment. When he showed up to their first date with a mattress in the backseat (nothing weird; he was just helping a friend move), she flashed him the knife she kept in her purse and made sure he knew that her brother was a cop and that she definitely knew how to use it. They were married four months later.

She was a musical savant and never met an instrument she couldn't play. Her first love was a piano, which her parents saved up to buy her for Christmas one year. Her Aunt Thalia discovered her extraordinary ability to play by ear, and every time she came to town, she would take her out to her shiny Caddy to listen to the radio and learn all the newest songs. She also played the flute, drums, cello, violin, guitar, and even the bagpipes. A few years back, she began hearing a deep booming voice in her head ordering her to “Buy. The. Harp.” and so—channeling Field of Dreams—she finally broke down and let my dad buy her a gorgeous pedal harp and set about teaching herself to play. If you would like to listen to some of her piano recordings, they are available on SoundCloud:

<https://soundcloud.com/robin-rae-783473534>

Beyond her musical superpowers, my mother was incredibly gifted—she was a dancer, a figure skater, a majorette, a writer, editor-in-chief of her high school newspaper, an artist, a seamstress, a musician, and a figure skater. Her love of figure skating followed her throughout her life, and she later became a figure skating coach. In addition to the many children she taught to skate, she also passed her love of the ice and passion for the sport on to me and my cousins.

Mom always described herself as “the artsy-fartsy one” of our family—she

studied interior design at the University of Charleston and could usually be found at home in a paint-splattered shirt in the middle of one of her many home renovation projects. She loved to sew and was wicked with a needle—from lovingly making my ice skating costumes to intricate needlepoint embroidery to hand-quilting with her mother. She painted, sketched, and colored, and she taught me to recognize patterns in the cosmos, find faces in wood grain, and discern animal shapes from the clouds. She was so creative, and my favorite day of the week as a child was when Mom came to my elementary school to teach arts and crafts.

Dubbed “The Mouth” by her brother Redgie, Mom loved to talk—to anyone, anywhere, anytime, about anything—and considered herself the keeper of the family lore. She shared a love of genealogy with her nephew James Adkins, and together, they worked to uncover family skeletons and secrets and build a family tree reaching back more than 30 generations. She was known for her hilarious and incredibly detailed stories, and she shared her “gift of gab” and uncanny ability to come up with irreverent parody song lyrics on the drop of a dime with her niece Bethany Sullivan.

Mom was an avid traveler and had an amazing sense of adventure. She lived abroad in St. Croix before meeting my dad, and later on, she lived in Taiwan with Dad and in Paris with me. She visited Japan, Greece, England, Scotland, France, Spain, Portugal and the Azores Islands, Italy, and Switzerland, and she was looking forward to visiting Roswell, New Mexico, to uncover the mysteries of the universe and satisfy her love of all things UFO-related, and then to Florence to see the Statue of David once she got to feeling better. She and my dad also moved around frequently for his work—which she also enjoyed because it always meant an opportunity for a new project—calling Newark, Delaware, and Chattanooga, Tennessee, home before finally settling down here in Houston.

Mom often joked that she liked animals better than most people, and she was never without a beloved pet—domestic or wild. As a child, she raised a baby alligator and an ornery foul-mouthed parrot, and she was known around the neighborhood for pushing her cherished dog, the Mook Hound, in a buggy up the street to get some ice cream when she got too old and sore to make it on her own. My godfather Tony's favorite memory of my mom was when a huge snake came down the chimney at the Poca House, and my dad tried to scare her with it. She was apparently not impressed and instead responded, laughing, "Oh Kenny, it's just a black snake." She has left her two enormous rough collies, Sandy and Sherry, and her turtle Myrtle, in the care of her husband and daughter, with very strict rules for their maintenance (No haircuts! Fresh raw beef for Myrtle!).

But out of all her many accomplishments and talents, the thing she was most proud of was being my mom and Dad's wife. She used to tell me how much she loved to "brag on us"—telling anyone and everyone who would listen all about our achievements, big or small, and beaming with pride anytime something good happened that she could share. And now we get to use this forum to brag on her, and we will tell anyone and everyone who will listen that she was the very best mom and the very best wife in the entire world—our loudest cheerleader and strongest advocate—and we never doubted for a second that we were completely supported and thoroughly loved, to the moon and back.

If you knew my mom, then you know she hated being in the spotlight, and to honor that, we are not holding services at this time. We also ask that you not send flowers, please. What would have made Mom the happiest is for you to think of her while you sing along to the music she loved

Playlist: "The Mouth of the South"

<https://www.tunemymusic.com/share/pN4ZDgVCky>

or to share with us your most cherished stories about her on the Tribute Wall
<https://www.addisonfuneralhomes.com/m/obituaries/Robin-Farias/Memories>
section of this site.

If you feel compelled to spend some money to honor her memory, we ask that,
in lieu of flowers, you send donations to Houston's longest-running no-kill
animal shelter and welfare society, Special Pals

<https://specialpals.org/donations/?form=SPECIALPALS>

Please be sure to check the box on the donation form to dedicate your
donation and include Robin's name in the honoree's name field.