

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Joan Jobe Smith: Two Poems

Joan Jobe Smith · Wednesday, October 12th, 2016

Joan Jobe Smith, founding editor of Pearl and Bukowski Review, worked 7 years as a go-go girl before graduating from CSULB and the UCI MFA Program. Since 1950 her art, poetry, prose, cooking columns, memoirs and reviews have been published in more than 1000 literary journals, newspapers, anthologies—and one billboard when she was age 9 and won a Red Cross Safety Poster contest with her rhyming aphorism: “Always wait for the green/And you will become a Safety Queen.” With her poet husband Fred Voss she has done 7 reading tours of UK and Scotland, debuting at Aldeburgh Poetry Festival, 1991, and last appearing 2012 at the Hull Literature Festival and the Betsey Trotwood pub in London. Her UK-published poetry collection THE POW WOW CAFE was a finalist for the 1999 Forward Prize. A Pushcart honoree with 23 poetry books (including 2 cookbooks), her award-winning work has recently appeared in AMBIT (UK), Swallow Dance, Chiron Review, Nerve Cowboy, Like A Girl, Circe’s Lament, Ladyland: Litteratur Feminine Americaine (France) and the Silver Birch Poetry Series. Her 2012 literary profile *Charles Bukowski: Epic Glottis: His Art & His Women (& me)* and her 2014 memoir *Tales of An Ancient Go-Go Girl* are available via amazon.com and for sale @ Gatsby’s Books and Fingerprints, in Long Beach, California. Fall, 2016, the New York Quarterly will publish her selected/new poetry *Moonglow a Go-Go*.

Moonglow á Go-Go

Come on baby, it’s June!
Dance us to the moon!
Light our fire, smite our dire while I swoon
seeing you in your blue suede shoes, white
sport coat and a pink carnation, me in my tight
tight red dress, high heel sneakers so we can go-
go shake rattle and roll, rock around the clock as
you drive your cherry-cherry pie Buick 69 fast
past Route 66, the yellow rose of Texas, gals in
Kalamazoo, Mississippi mud, New York, New York,
beyond the sea, smoke upon the water, blue heaven
and the twelfth of never somewhere over the rainbows.
Only you can love me tender, dance me where stardust
trombones moan us weightless as we sway sambas

cha-cha high and low-down in outer space with Mars
 Saturn and Jupiter in our face, the stars a tiara prize
 in my hair, moonglow á go-go in your devil moon eyes
 as we fox trot a boogie-woogie wa-wa-wa-Watusi sighs
 and do-wop and be-bop-a-lula like a sister Lucy.
 Call me li'l' Darlin', kiss me once, kiss me twice my
 60-minute man as saxes slap our backsides.
 Waltz me in the Milky Way, far-out and out of sight
 tango, dip me a total eclipse as our backbones slip
 and you light my fire, smite my dire, kiss again my lips
 begin the beguine dancing me, prancing me, enchanting me
 crooning and spooning me April and May and June
 all the way to
 the moon.

O, Jim, look up there, in the air

on that building across from Fingerprints there
 on 4th Street in Long Beach, California—June, 2016:
 it's YOU, Jim Morrison, from 1967, flying in the stucco sky
 jet-plane, propelled by a mysterious mojo-rising
 a levitating Oracle breaking on through
 to the other side as you, Jim, in that old Jim Coke photo,
 sing, scream, and zing and zap in that microphone so long ago.
 I didn't like you back then, Jim, in 1967,
 nagging me to light your fire. I wanted heaven
 with Elvis loving me tender, wanting me, needing me,
 Tony Bennett wooing me with his When Joanna Loved Me
 Frank Sinatra longing for me because he got me
 under his skin but you, Jim, you called me an L.A. Woman
 so alone, so alone, my hair burning, told me about heartache
 and the loss of god, how faces look ugly
 when you're strange. Was I strange, Jim, back then? Yes, and Why:
 I was a go-go girl when all the good women were housewives
 baked cookies for their babies on their Sears Kenmore gas ranges
 while I, one in 5, tried to get out alive
 with killers on the road with brains squirming like toads
 because that no-good man had done left me with nothing but a
 fine-tooth comb and no milk in the refrigerator, the rent due.
 O, Jim, you were no hanky-panky Frankie, no, no.
 Nor did you leave your heart in my San Francisco
 but you never called me a Hound Dog, didn't think me cruel
 so I forgive you now, Jim, in 2016, 50 years later
 as I watch you, Flying Jim Morrison, up there in the air, breaking
 on through to the other side where death makes angels of us all,
 finally breaking through to me because I'm old and grown up now

and can take it now, Jim, take it how you told me The Truth, not lies—
my very own write-on, right-on Mr. Mojo Rising.

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