

# I Love Us

*by* Bud Smith

I've never shot a gun before  
but I want to.  
Can't you hate your family?  
Can't you live near a water tower with a spelling error?  
Please stand out on the lawn with a lemon lime hula hoop,  
violet ribbons in your hair and a Sunday dress on.  
I wanna drive in a rusted out car I found by the reservoir,  
my white t-shirt, my blue jeans.  
I'd like to tell your father and your mother  
that you're coming with me.  
Black velvet Elvis on the wall on a cross,  
your Italian mineral oil rain lamps leaking by the birdcage.  
I'd like them to say "no"  
It'd be nice, the air sucked out of the room,  
when I said "yes."  
I'd like to shoot them all  
Leave their bodies at the kitchen table,  
plates of gravy, hand made spaghetti.  
Then me and you could roll slow  
through wheat fields and strange farms,  
"look at that cow!"  
"that's a horse."  
"Same difference"  
West then south. Kansas then Texas.  
I'd teach you how to drive manual,  
you'd piant your toenails dayglo,  
bobbing out the passenger side window.  
We'd buy new fuzzy rest stop dice,  
those trees that smell like Christmas  
dangling off the glovebox.  
You'd say you loved me,  
we'd sleep beneath the out of range flash bulb stars

far away from the am/fm radio towers  
and the influence of the Eat at Peggy Sue Diner billboards.  
I'd kill a gas attendant in Playa Del Mar.  
You'd read stained romance novels in motel rooms,  
while I oiled the gun and laughed on the phone, to no one.  
Your brother would catch us in California, Laguna beach,  
riding his motorcycle all night, thinking his life was a movie.  
I'd like that. I'd gun him down from the roof of the Von's  
supermarket,  
you'd clap, watching him fall over in the only empty parking spot.  
"Oh, it feels so real"  
We'd eat the barely blemished fruit that you hid up your skirt  
vote Pacific coast, all the ghosts stuffed into the trunk.  
"Well, all you have to do is keep abandoning cars."  
"Can't hit a moving target, sweetie."  
You'd just smirk and toss me grapes  
I'd catch them in mid-air like an estranged circus seal  
Most of all, I want romance  
I wanna guide you through the silver streets  
I wanna make a house in a Sequoia  
1,000 feet off the muddy ground  
I wanna set bear traps and make tiger pits  
with sharpened wooden spikes hidden beneath the leaves.  
In feverish worried dreams, all you can do is extend fires  
and riot on anybody who comes between.  
Ahhh, In the middle of the wilderness  
pretend it's funny when I pick up a pinecone  
to order you a pepperoni pizza with mushrooms and onions  
kiss me so deep I almost die  
"Let's start a new life in Alaska."  
Leave in the fog. Dime store sunglasses,  
and a root beer soda in Portland, Oregon.  
Be recognized for your sins, eating a soft cone  
outside the Tasty Freeze.  
Be forever cool and polite,

when the dipshit cops arrive  
short and star struck, multiplying like bunnies  
to drag me off. Offer them gum.  
And you: don't scream  
don't send me beautiful handwritten letters  
don't kiss the envelope with fire engine red lip stick  
don't come to my execution  
just remember what we had in the Grand Canyon  
that I'm not gonna disclose here  
cause, people talk  
and I'd like our love to be private  
despite the myth around it  
that everybody thinks is their own

