

“Coalesce”

It began one narrow passageway to
classics and collector, worn covers
smelling of cigarette smoke and metal
ashcans, where On The Road and Ginsberg's
Howl met through Jack Kerouac,
its cover torn, but I held it close, moving
past toward biographies, then
music books, where Bob Dylan, Jimi, and
Janis appeared near Electric Kool-Aid
acid makers telling stories how the
magic bus—which ties in to so many
other happenings, like Alan Watts,
the Grateful Dead, no more lost
than beads and colors—and I heard
someone ask, “Do you have any poetry books
by Jeffers?” when I saw the one about
haunts in Berkeley, then songbooks from Mozart,
and Elvis from A-Z,
but I would not find him there.

Rhinestones may be found that glitter in
the dusty sunlight shining through
bedroom windows laced in patchouli and
sandalwood, but Elvis is not in movies,
nor in music, but in connections,
other places, where Autobiography of
a Yogi met my glance its way
one rainy day seeking shelter
in a bookstore, not in Berkeley, but
in Alameda.

So, I set the meeting
with Jack Kerouac and
Allen Ginsberg aside, walking down the
narrow passageway to turn again toward
the lighted spaces, patterns geometric,
glittering, and bright upon my eyes
and, have you ever noticed
the way crystal sparkles on the walls,
oh, but you knew that, and
I laugh now, because Glen Campbell
sang of rodeo queens
and cowboys studded
in leather and chaps, but Elvis was not like
Ginsberg, or even Liberace, but more like
someone seeking stars that shone for but a few,
not in that time, but now, where lights ahead
show us the way home.
They show us the way home.
They show us the way home.

By Corrine Ardoin
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