

Double Dream of Joni Mitchell

by Derek Webster

The image of Joni holding a blood lily
across the river from the Bess in Stoon
provokes again the Canadian question.
Flip me over—who would I be
on the other side? On stepped-down
winter trails, to the bar, where you'll turn
the facets on your tumbler of salted beer
and watch ET on the grainy satellite.
That's how the great comparison begins.

Up in Laurel Canyon, aluminum sadness,
a faun on the runway. Walls of sound.
She remembers those high white palaces
and riding sweet bicycles across twilight.
Feels, like Neil, all her changes were there.
With slim strumming fingers, she picks
up her pen, fills in the hot shape of emptiness.
Every poet wishes they could write
without words, a song for both sides.