

# Homage to Roy Orbison

*by Irene McKinney*

If I can touch the voice of Roy Orbison  
singing "only in dreams" and if I can

swallow the sweet pudding of his song  
then why shouldn't a piece of music

fill in for human contact? Maybe it does  
for a second or two, but life is long, or we are,

in our minds, and the singing we do gives us  
a taste and not a meal. And what would

happen without it? Would we reconcile  
since there would be no contrast, no lift of

Roy's dulcet tones to guide us up to immense  
heights of one-pointed ecstasy? So why not sing

as hard and deep as we can? Why not feel out  
the song-nerve and trace its trajectory?

I think that in the voice's rise  
and wail we finally wake and hear the voice

of an angel. "Sweet dreams baby" Roy throbs.  
If so, we go past abrasions and promontories

of broken stony sounds, and emerge up here  
where the guitar is a guru, and where Roy's

sweetness is the rule and his sense of form  
shapes up this shard-filled life. "Move on

down the line." So there, do it, dance in  
a strange way and who cares. When the

listeners judge by their sweetness gauge  
and their sucked-in breath at "crying over

you," will anyone care that he dyed his  
black hair and had false teeth? I thrash

and shout like a teenage girl for the duration  
of the song. "I got a woman mean as she

can be." (I think that's me.) He told me  
that anything I wanted he would  
give it to me, and you know? He did.

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