

Songsmith – Austin Monthly Critique Session  
Monday, May 18, 2020

The Songsmith – Austin Monthly Critique Session was held via Zoom (moderated by Mississippi's most-excellent Tara Heflin) from 7:04 pm to 9:48 pm. We had 14 Zoom attendees and heard 13 awesome works in progress.

Rick Cates started the session with an mp3 of his heartfelt “A Day (Disabled Veterans)”, a tribute to disabled military veterans who are dying at an alarming rate. Rick's song described their difficulties and the group's comments included some lyrical changes. Very strong work, Rick!

Stewart Moser sent lyrics and an mp3 of his song “Up, Out, & In”, which again had interesting chord changes, while describing the songwriter's angst concerning Covid 19. The listeners really enjoyed this song and provided some great lyrical possibilities including the first verse. Nice, Stewart!

Bill Evans sent in a mp3 of his song “My Turn to Cry”, and upbeat tune about learning hard truths in a relationship, very reminiscent of a 60's pop tune, but updated for the new millennium. With a very strong chorus (and supporting verses), the group had only a few lyric suggestions. Great, Bill!

Joe Strouse sent his song “Leaving Manhattan”, which equated the feeling of finally going back into public with leaving Manhattan after a day in the city. Suggestions included clarifying the relationship and making sure it was adequately described.

Pattie Stuart, provided an mp3 and lyrics for her wonderful song “Hogs in Austin”, which humorously described increased feral hog activity in local places such as Tony Tarrytown. The listeners loved this tune and had only a few lyric and structural suggestions for Pattie. Wonderful, Pattie!

Brian Macleod provided lyrics and an mp3 of his song “Coasting in the Nick of Time”, which used biblical imagery for supporting life's chances and sometimes, opportunities. Comments from the group included some minor lyric clarification, but overall, another great effort from Brian!

John Stearle sent a video (!) of his song “Social Distancing” which described John's displeasure with inconsistencies with current methods for minimizing exposure to Covid 19. This song was provocative, very well done, and the biggest comment was that the images limited the lyric statements. Only you, John – great work!

Michael Stinson sent an mp3 and lyrics for his song, “For A Better Day”, an endearing tune which described his daughter's challenging life. Great internal rhymes and story – listeners suggested eliminating the final verse but with very few other significant comments. Stellar work, Michael!

David Stewart provided lyrics and an mp3 of his song “Hello Whiskey”, which humorously described waking up and anticipating a very challenging day. David’s very strong chorus and great descriptions made this song very strong. The group offered a few lyrical suggestions which were minor. Outstanding, David!

First-timer Debra Redmond recited her song “Un-Draw You”, which described the painful process of romantic separation. This heartfelt song had some great images which all of the listeners really enjoyed. Suggestions included some potential title changes as well as some chorus and verse tweaking. Welcome Debra!

Greg Livingston sent an mp3 of his wonderfully-re-written “Fly Baby, Fly”, describing a heroine in the song leaving home for a new life. The group really enjoyed Greg’s hard work on this song and very few suggestions were offered because of Greg’s efforts. Great job, Steve Perry – oops – I mean Greg!

Mary Dawson provided lyrics and an mp3 of Bob Jenkins ‘s song “The Mount Zion Holiness Tabernacle Church With Signs Following”, a hilarious (and very well crafted) upbeat songs about religion and snakes. Yes, indeed, snakes. The listeners really enjoyed this song and very few suggestions were offered. Thanks, Mary!

Jacquelyn Fraley played her song “The World Spins Round”, as sweet song about how life has a habit of defining who we are and who we become. Jacquelyn’s work on this song was evident and the listeners really enjoyed it. Several small comments were given for this song. As always, great effort, Jacquelyn!

And as always, the Songsmith - Austin monthly critique session meets on the third Monday of each month. We’ll do this again by Zoom conference on Monday June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. If you’d like to be included please contact Tara Heflin ([tara.incognito@gmail.com](mailto:tara.incognito@gmail.com)) and she’ll help get you in! Send her your lyrics (Word format, please) and if you’d prefer we hear a recording, please also send an mp3 of your song.

See you on Monday, June 15th!