I said Folk was dressed in Blues but hairier and humped. After “We acoustic banjo disciples!” Jebediah said, “When and whereforth shall the bucolic blacks with good tempers come to see us pluck as Elizabeth Cotton intended?”

We stole my Uncle Windchime’s minivan, penned a simple ballad about the drag of lovelessness and drove the end of the chitlin’ circuit to a joint skinny as a walk-in temple where our new folk was not that new, but strengthened by our twelve bar conviction. A month later, in pulled a parade of well meaning alabaster post adolescents. We noticed the sand-tanned and braless ones piled in the ladder-backed front row with their boyfriends first because beneath our twangor slept what I’ll call a hunger for the outlawable. One night J asked me when sisters like Chapman would arrive. I shook my chin wool then, and placed my hand over the guitar string’s wind-ow til it stilled. “When the moon’s black,” I said. “Be faithful.”


Source: Poetry (February 2008)