

Neon Pink Lipstick: Jo McDonough

Standing at the mirror,
neon pink lipstick in my hand.
That's not who I am!
That's not a colour for red heads,
for mothers, grandmothers,
for people over 60,
for respectable women who are modest and polite,
who don't walk home in the dark
and are always in by 9.

Neon Pink?
That's not how the family knows me,
They are content with a
Mother - traditional and predictable,
Natural or neutral,
Who doesn't draw attention
Or hog the floor
Who listens with enthusiasm
Never points out a flaw,
Whose opinions and ideas are muted
And ignored.

Neon Pink?
That's not how a husband knows me:
Consistent and safe,
Who is always around
With a cheer and a wave,
Keeping things tidy,
up to date with the news,
Predictable evenings,
And politically correct views.

No! Neon pink is forbidden!
It's forbidden to change the lie of the land,
To create a different path or be someone new,
It makes others uncomfortable
If I speak loudly or break out in dance in a crowded room,
Or leave the mess in the sink
and take a snooze,
If I stay out very late with friends
Walking in the light of the moon.

Yet, I will say what I think and
Write my dreams in a rhyme,

Look out for those that do listen
And listen in return to young and old alike,
To trust that I am
ever evolving til the last breath of life.

Neon pink
Who cares what they think!

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