

I Am A Wordsmith
By: Jean Johnson

I dreamt that I had joined a poetry-slam
And in this dream I dreamt, you asked me who I am
I said, "I am a Wordsmith," and this is what I dreamt
You asked me what was that; you asked me what I meant

And I said:

I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

I make the words that spin in your head
I craft the dreams that are spoken and said
I take your longings and your desire
And I make them burn with pure verbal fire
I shape and evolve the world around you
And then I destroy it--and rebuild it when I'm through

For I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

Mine is the profession that is oldest, it's true
Not prostitutes, not shamans--the Wordsmith, that's who.
When the first ape saw a fruit on a tree
He ooked, "I want banana"--I am his progeny.
From "I want banana" to "The Great Banana Quest"
Telling what happens is what Wordsmiths do best.

For I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

I can take your world, reshape its sky and ground
I can take reality and turn it all around
I can take a beloved friend and turn him into your foe
I can turn the darkest villain into your personal hero
I can make you weep by sending a man to his death
And make you praise me for it all in the same breath

For I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

I have ended a story on an incomplete note
And have had people begging me in words that they wrote
To tell them how it ends and yet, most profound
They reread that story, sitting there spellbound
And say it is the best and sweetest, saddest tale they're read

And how they happily imagine what comes next in their head

For I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

I said, I am a Wordsmith, wielding tools of communication
I can rouse or quell a people, and make or break a nation
I can bore you to tears, yes--or bring you to your feet
I am what gives music an appeal beyond its beat
I have the power to vivisect your soul
Rip out your heart, and show it to you, whole

For I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

With the tools of my trade, I strip your lives bare
Exposed in my descriptions, I define your what and where
I disclose your ambitions, and hint at your inner strife
I tell you how to die, and how to bravely live your life
I show you how to act, what is kind and what's polite
I tell you how to win a war without you having to fight

For I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

I give you words like ecstatic, sublime, and morose
I show you how to make a friend, and how to bring them close
I give you the means to rise above the texting L-33t
And trample them in the dust of poetic, metric feet
I define honor and courage, reinventing heroes of old
I show you how to be soft, and be gentle, and when to be bold

For I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine.

And in the end, when I looked you in your face
I had held you in your seat, had held you in your place
In this poet-slam, I have drawn out my line
I have dared you to cross it, dared you to redefine--
But, speak not a word, 'lest you use my tools of trade
For in speaking itself, my very point shall be made!

I am a Wordsmith, and that power is mine!