not when you believe in soup
and I smiled
her conversion widening the river of my kitchen
by a Nile.

WITHOUT GROUCHY OLD PREMINGER

Before my Aunt Lil and Uncle Jimmy
sold their tract home, piano
and the gold Cadillac
with the white upholstery
to go to Costa Rica to buy a cantina
in the banana groves,
my Aunt Lil had a white fox stole
she wore low on her shoulders
with a mother-of-pearl cigarette holder,
highheel wedgies, and a white, tight sheath-dress.
A very sexy lady.
A Gypsy Rose Lee
doing what she pleased
without grouchy old Preminger.
Aunt Lil and Uncle Jimmy didn't get rich, though,
down in Costa Rica, which in English
really means "rich coast,"
and since I was just a kid at the time,
it was none of my business
what they did with all that money.
But today, 25-some years later,
my Aunt Lil tells me
how it was too damn hot down there
in that godforsaken place to wear her fox.
So hot that the white satin lining
stuck to her skin like Scotch tape;
the scorpions and bugs
were as big as her shoes
and got right in bed with you --
and she never got so sick
of bananas in her entire life.

-- Joan Jobe Smith
Fountain Valley CA