



Douglas Thompson Gilman

He had the Z-28. He drove fast. He smoked. He drank. His hair was long. He played his 8-tracks loud. He taunted authority. He liked to challenge. But between those snarls, there was the grin: wide and inviting. Son of the sweetest, most patient woman on the Mountain, that foundation always reemerged.

There was a certain sense of music to Gilly Dog.

Though in his last years that music was decidedly religious, all of us knew he previously carried the notes of sweet rebellion. Think of the taunting, “*Almost Cut My Hair*” (he didn’t). Or the rock anthem, “*We’re Not Going to Take It*”.

He was the innocence of The Young Rascals; the thunder of Led Zeppelin; the explosiveness of The Who; the taunting of Neil Young and the sweet cool of JJ Cale. He was all of it, in step with the times.

On the mound, his over-the-top high arc pitches were an invitation to a debate—and his inevitable run-ins with the senior umpires both entertained and worried us. How far would he take it? To the edge? To elimination? Turning his back to the umpire and grinning to the outfield was his shining reply. On some level, we knew, he longed for ejection.

*I’m eighteen and I like it
Yes I like it
Oh I like it love it like it love it*

He loved the scene. The girls. The team. The game. The challenge. The party afterwards. The trip to the Mug . He was in his element.

At the towns 100th anniversary, we all remember the pitch that shattered Sam’ Robinson’s front glass. At the 2015 Reunion, Gilly Dog, like a lovable Prodigal Son returning, was overwhelmed with the affection, love and well wishing. Completely sober as a new man of spirit, he seemed inebriated with gratefulness. All who sought him out were met with a warm and sincere appreciation. He was moved deeply.

The last two years—and the pandemic—robbed him --and us-- the chance to be reunited. To see that smile again. To hear that deep baritone voice greet us. He wanted it badly. You could hear it in his voice. He *loved his friends*. He loved The *Fonty Dogs* and all the rocking and reeling in the years. Those times---the ones that unite us.

*I can feel the hand of a stranger
And its tightening around my throat
Heaven help me, Heaven help me
Take this stranger from my boat*

*I’m your captain, I’m your captain
Though I’m feeling mighty sick
Everybody listen to me
And return me my ship*

*I’m your captain
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah
I’m your captain
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah*

*I’m getting closer to my home....
I’m getting closer to my home..*

He is Home. And in the end, the love he took, was equal to the love he gave.

God Bless you Gilly Dog. You take part of us with you. You were the times.

