

## Photographer unknown

Rommi Smith

You are the story I come after.

Your wide-brimmed hat holding  
a horizon. You are the lessons

of the last plane, which landed the night before  
the law changed. Yet, dreams are bigger

than a sub-clause. And you are more  
than the promise of a footnote. I am

the postscript of the passport –  
in your left hand.

A WritersMosaic commission in response to a photograph of a couple arriving at Gatwick at dusk, the night before the passing of the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act marked the ending of the freer movement of people from the Commonwealth to Britain. This image is one of 34 which Rommi Smith has selected and written about for the TopFoto exhibition *Changing the Story: photographs of British life in Black and White (1917-1962)*, which she has curated at the North Wall Gallery, Oxford. The North Wall is based on the campus of St Edward's School.

## **Rommi Smith**

Rommi Smith is an award-winning poet, playwright, theatre-maker, performer and librettist. A BBC Writer in Residence, she is the inaugural British Parliamentary Writer in Residence and inaugural Poet in Residence for Keats' House, Hampstead. A Visiting Scholar at City University New York (CUNY), she has presented her research and writing at institutions including: The Segal Theatre, The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and City College New York.

A Doctor of Philosophy in English and Theatre, Rommi is recipient of a Hedgebrook Fellowship (USA) and is a winner of The Northern Writers' Prize for Poetry 2019. She was recently awarded a Cave Canem fellowship in the US. She is writer-in-residence for Topfoto, the UK's leading photographic archive and a forthcoming poet in residence for the Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere.

A recording of this poem can be found at **[writersmosaic.org.uk](http://writersmosaic.org.uk)**

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