



**A/N: This was printed in the SMASH HITS magazine 27 Sept. - 10 Oct. 1984 (p. 6). It was likely what inspired THIS vitriolic letter in the November edition.**

**Jimi Somerville (Bronski Beat)**

**NAME:** James William Horsburgh Somerville. You see my Mammy's name is Annie Drice Horsburgh. You better put that in or I'm not doing this.

**BORN:** June 22, 1961 in Stob Hill Hospital, Glasgow.

**HERO(INE):** Big men with muscles. No, I like them but that's not my hero. Erm. Sylvester, I suppose. (Legendary gay disco singer of „Mighty Real“ fame.)

**FIRST RECORD:** What did I buy first? Donna Summer's „Love Trilogy“. It was with my first dole cheque. You see, there was this man – no, I can't tell you that. Just say it was with my first dole cheque. Oh, I'm going to have such a bad name after this...

**DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD?** No.

**LAST BOOK READ:** A biography of the actor Montgomery Clift. It's called „Monty“. My favourite book is „Ruby Fruit Jungle“ by... I forgot her name, but she's this dyke who grew up in Brazil and moved to New York and hung around with all these actors. It's fab. It really is. It's so camp.

**FIRST CONCERT:** The B-52's at Hammersmith Palais when I first came to London, round about '79.

**BEST THING ABOUT SUDDENLY BEING A POP STAR:** Well, I was able to go out and buy a washing machine and a tumble-dryer and pay cash! I went, „I want that washing machine and that tumble dryer“ and I paid cash!

**AND THE WORST THING:** Well, we were doing this pop festival in Rotterdam, and this other band – this English band – shouted out of the windows of their coach: „The Bronskis are queer bastards!“ We don't know who it was because whoever they were, they weren't man enough to show themselves, but we were so angry. It made me realize that everything we're doing is worthwhile.

HAVE YOU EVER HIT ANYONE? If I told you, you'd be shocked! My mouth gets me into so much trouble. But it's always been for a good reason, it's all been justifiable.

FAVOURITE SINGER: I've got loads. Marc Almond, Sylvester, Aretha Franklin... loads of women because they put so much emotion into their voices. Brenda Lee is fab. So is Dinah Washington.

WHAT MAKES YOU CRY? Um... frustration... onions... and this fab video by Elton John that was banned. I don't know what it was called but it was for a song by Tom Robinson. [A/N: I really don't know what this was. Anyone?] It was about two boys at a public school. This boy has a crush on an older boy and he gets pushed around and victimised. I saw it after we'd made „Smalltown Boy“ and the two songs had so much in common. The first film I ever cried for was... what's it called? „The Imitation Of Life“. It ends with this girl running after her Mum's coffin. It's so sad. That must be every queen's favourite film.

FAVOURITE WHAM! SINGLE: What? I don't know about singles but that other one's legs! What's he called? Andrew? He's got brilliant legs. I like „Young Guns“ and „Wake Me Up Before You Go Go“. „Young Guns“ because it's got a social conscience and a sort of awareness. I think they should release it. I don't know why they don't like it now. Perhaps they spend too much time on sunbeds. Now they just do wet love songs but George Michael's still got a really lovely voice.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU WENT TO A PARTY? The last night of „The Fridge“ (gay club in Brixton) on September 30. It was fab.

DO YOU LIKE SHOPPING? I'm terrible when I go shopping. I just get a basket and throw in the most useless rubbish. I buy all this stuff you can add to things but when I start cooking I realise I've got nothing I can add to it. I used to do a lot of cooking – I made a brilliant potato soup – but I just don't have the time these days.

DO YOU STILL LIVE IN A COUNCIL FLAT IN CAMBERWELL? Oh yeah. I'd like to have a wee house with a garden and flowers. I like flowers. I used to live in a house with a garden once and I really liked it and I'd like to live in one again but I'd still stay in Camberwell. It's fab.

TELL US A SECRET: I don't have any secrets. Everyone knows too much about me now.

FAVOURITE POLITICIAN: I don't have one. I'm not really that into politicians. They're all careerists anyway. No.

FIRST CRUSH: Oooo. This boy called Danny. He used to work in a hospital laundry. (Steve Bronski: You'll embarrass somebody now, Jimi.) He probably will be embarrassed because now he's married with two kids (laughter).

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT IN YOUR POCKETS? Not a lot. My keys and... and a phone number! (Giggles) I'll have such a reputation after this. But I don't care!

"Have the courage to get up and do what you really want," **Bronski Beat** insist. They should talk. Jimi Somerville, Steve Bronski and Larry Steinbachek, who named their electro-jive combo after the kid in *The Tin Drum* whose voice shattered glass, are darn right proud to be political, socialist and gay—without outrageous clothes and makeup.

The boy-next-door Bronskis are also Britain's latest reluctant popstars. Their first single, the poignant "Smalltown Boy," zipped up the charts faster than you can say "best thing since Yaz(oo)!" and no wonder. Jimi's soaring, bluesy falsetto is as addictive as the *disco-moderne* synth hooks. In a word (well, two), simply stunning!

