

Emma J. Gibbon
emma.j.gibbon@gmail.com

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SHORT

Minotaur

Oh, you are the best of me,
big and solid and filthy,
possessed with knowledge.
All the dark and secret places:
These are yours.
I am the forest
that you can retreat to.
You're a monolith
hiding in the dark.

You're soil and loam smell.
Let me burrow into you.
Minotaur.
Your huge head above me;
arms bridge my shoulders.
We're the labyrinth for the other.
I'll keep walking you
if you keep walking me.

I am inside-out in the dark.
You're the whisper in my ear.
We fill the room,
the walls bulge with us.

You're heat signature,
red and orange.
I'm blue hand prints,
wrap myself around and assimilate your glow.

Liminality Issue #21 Autumn 2019
<http://www.liminalitypoetry.com/issue-21-autumn-2019/minotaur/>

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Lightbulbs

Pushing my soles down onto
broken light bulbs.
Fuck eggshells,

they're not fragile
or satisfying enough for this
dance that I perform for you.

My wink is an all-knowing one
as I shimmy,
breaking myself like whitewater

against your hip,
reassembling as grit-teethed mercury.

Enduring while tying cherry stalks with my tongue.

Liminality Issue #22 Winter 2019-20

<http://www.liminalitypoetry.com/issue-22-winter-2019-20/lightbulbs/>

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LONG

Consumption

I had always envied Emily's beauty
her life it seemed
charmed
and I a hobgoblin in her wake,
the ugliest sister,
while she of the flaxen hair,
rosebud lips
and a laugh that
tinkled like spun glass
sailed ahead.

Even when the sickness settled into her bones
like a cursed sea fret
and the hack, hack, hack of her cough filled rooms
still her suitors came.

This creature,
this consumption,

enhanced her beauty still.
Burrowed into her body
and made it shine
like a thing that must die.

Her cheeks, inflamed, bloomed
in their hollows
and those famed lips,
crimson and blood-bitten

but it was her eyes
her eyes
that stopped the menfolk across
the room
feverish green
gasoline on water burning
come-hither and much, much more.

How I wanted what she had
How I wanted to be her
How I wanted

I watched her obsessively
as she lounged on every chaise longue
trying to hide what she produced with her hack, hack, hack.
She was sly but not as sly as
I. I tracked those delicate handkerchiefs she
spat into,
folded,
and tucked under cushions,
pillows,
behind drapes,
trying to hide the shame
of her mortality.

Still the men simpered,
her tragedy an aphrodisiac.

When she was abed,
swimming in laudanum dreams,

I would retrace her faltering steps,
collect the small silken packets
she would leave like presents.

When alone I would open them,
inspect the slime,
the bloody sputum.
Steeling myself,
I would lick the silk,
consume her sickness,

steal her beauty for myself.

Eye to the Telescope Issue #33 July 2019
<https://eyetothetelescope.com/archives/033issue.html>

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Fune-RL

It will be perfect,
my mother said.
No potty training
or messes on the carpet.

I know you wanted an RL dog
but they're rare now
and expensive.

Not the one
I want,
I said.

You're thinking of the designer ones.

There's others.
I've seen them at the trash depository.
Maybe we could ask the women who work
there where they got theirs from?

I don't want you speaking to those women again,
my mother said.
It's unhygienic.

They're nice ladies,
I said.
She tutted and turned her face to her manicure.

No.

No RL dogs in this house
but what about this little guy.

She turned her screen to me and
I admit he was cute.

A DG-147.
He was sleek, shiny,
copper-colored
with a REAL-FEEL nose
and panting tongue.

His little spring tail
wagged and wagged

and he had one eye—
a camera lens in the middle of his forehead
so he could record his adventures.

Ok, I said.

I like him
and I did.

Deeg and I have been companions for years.
Always together.
He has got me through the bad times and the good.
He's my best friend,
just like his box said he would be.

I am a responsible dog owner
Even though my mother thought I wouldn't be.
I have oiled him
and uploaded his updates
and rubbed his shiny flanks with a dry duster.

I ordered replacement parts for him
when his wore out.
Wanted him to be my dog forever.
I worried that if I died he would be alone but

now they say he is obsolete.
They don't make them like him anymore.
He needs a new motherboard
but they don't supply them.

My mother won't help me find someone to fix him.
Asked me if I wanted a DG-1000.

I don't.

She says I am too old to cry over a toy.

I told her she is too old

and she locked herself in her capsule.

I don't want Deeg to suffer
so tomorrow I will turn him off.

I will don my gas mask and go to the trash depository.
I will make my mother take me
and I will disobey her and talk to the nice ladies
and ask them to take care of my dog.

I will tell them that he has been a good boy,
the best
and that he couldn't have been a better dog
even if he was an RL one
and that he is irreplaceable.

I will ask them to let me pet one of their RL dogs

and on the drive home I will tell my mother

that I can't wait until she is obsolete.

Strange Horizons Issue: 15 July 2019
<http://strangehorizons.com/poetry/fune-rl/>

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