

Poetry Series

Elizabeth Liechti
- poems -

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Elizabeth Liehti()

A Little Something For The Road

Last night

As I sat hunched before the window I saw a unicorn

Making its trumpet fanfare dancing maiden way

Along the alley's dirty ice. I went out to her

A carrot in one hand as for any other equine

Which she accepted.

I warmed chilled hands beneath her mane

And asked her what a unicorn was doing here

And she said: There was no other place to go that she knew of.

But perhaps, she asked, just perhaps

I knew Of a place with emerald grass and crystalline streams

And air like antique wine it was so clean?

Her velvet gaze wove a silence I wished to live inside forever.

But I knew of no such place.

That's a pity, said the unicorn

That hurry and rush leave no room for improbabilities

Like myself. May I visit you again?

Of course, I said, it does my heart a world of good

To speak with my imagination now and then.

The unicorn laughed

And left me standing in an echo of ringing hoofbeats.

It was a small forever before I remembered

To go home.

Elizabeth Liechti

Feeding The Demon

Is my little one hungry?
Then eat little monster, heap your plate, have seconds,
Heck, have thirds.
Have some nice roast rage, fresh out of the oven:
My words are just another feminine hygiene commercial
Between him and the big game.
Here's vegetable stew of thoughts:
As far as he's concerned they're static on the line,
A lost internet connection,
A spider he squashes and throws away.
Take a big bowl
I spent the afternoon prepping.
Don't forget a good scoop of humor for desert.
The drawstring broke just as he answered the door
And the FedEx guy would be a woman that time.
Can't stay angry forever.

Elizabeth Liechti

Her Room

The ceiling leaks
The rug was nineteen seventies hideous
Until the gift:
A Turkish carpet lovingly beautiful
In desert creams and crimson, oasis turquoise.
Rolled towels tucked around window frames;
Found twin lace curtains in the basement:
Dawnlight through them writes calligraphy on the tabletop
Streetlight through them makes a film noir
Out of a parking lot.
Books tucked in a fake veneer cupboard
Little world-seeds in bright packets
A little thought, a little attention
And see them bloom in a magician's trick of paper roses.

Elizabeth Liechti

Memo

What are you reading?

Words. Words. Words.

Words have a funny way of becoming as real as credit card statements

As chest-pain inducing as teenagers

Learning to drive and getting stuck in reverse

Or doing most anything really.

Get into the little cage and slam the door

Before the black storm tide of bulls can fill the street one moment

Next moment: Silence.

An upturned paving stone, and gentle dust

Wafting down a shaft of burnished light.

Elizabeth Liechti

Nova Luna

In amber-tinted afternoons while the old ones
Drink sable tea and listen to the sunlight
Dabble in the goldfish pools
The children and the griffons play mindgames
On the lawns.
Their laughing shatters a time for reflection
Into featherstorms and games of hopscotch
Along the tree branches.
Only the children can hear the griffons speak
In crescendo symphonic bursts of primary color
Or see the griffon's thoughts take form
Like the rich scent of herb gardens blooming at sunrise.
Only the griffons can taste the children's dreams:
A rich flash of cinnamon and apple cider
Steaming in a thick red mug.
So the old ones make sure the breakables are safely put away
And maintain patient silence
As children and griffons together run riot
Over flagstone paths and garden walls.
A whirl of follow-the-leader and sailor's horn-pipe
Until sunset puts a stop to games
And sends the children all to bed
Heads pillowed on the griffon's golden flanks
The griffon's wings holding dreams close to the ground
Where the children can reach them.

Elizabeth Liechti

Shoes In The Closet

Two by two
In that shadowed secret place way in the back
With the magic door.
Black and white wingtips.
Dressed in a starlit glamour of pave rings, a live orchestra,
The dancers,
Reflections glimmering on the floor.
Thunderstorm grey rubber galoshes.
Menacing somehow, like an elephant foot umbrella stand.
Two pairs of trainers. Both white.
Faithfully worn on alternate days to even out the wear
And laundered once a week. No bleach.
One pair of Egyptian leather sandals.
Soles replaced, new straps that don't quite match,
Scented with attar of roses.

Elizabeth Liechti

The Crows Fly Home Before Nightfall

The sun falls
Daylight shatters.
They spill across the air
A stream of shadows
Poured into some branched and woody vase
Stripped leafless in the winter air
Silent as thought
As open to interpretation as memory.
I stand in the snow unable to follow.

Elizabeth Liechti

The January Fly

Indecisive wind first west now south
Warm surface air, still, the threat of Lake Superior gales
Glancing fox-sly from underneath.
I sit on a dirty plastic garden chair
Cajoled outside by bits of sunlight highlighting the green
Lurking under the brown grass.
He lands on the stoop, bulky in black
A tiny ink soaked bear with fairy wings
Cautious of being gust upended
His presence as ridiculous as the taste-of-tropics temperature.
It's January for pete's sake
There should be wind-chill factors
An iced over trunk lock guarding two Sav-A-Lot bags
Of frozen milk and cheap bread.
Showing my age.
Time to story-tell the kids of wading with titan's strides
Through blue snow eyebrow deep.
The fly and I
Sit side by side and enjoy our brief slice of eternity.

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