

# Deus ex Machina

Erika Saunders

In the machine –

He-hey! They all  
slay the dragons,  
the beasts. Each  
night, robins fly  
against greed,  
need, tyranny in  
fantasy. America,  
my America, for

I Am-eric(k)a wears  
the face of Enron,  
Omicron, Amazon.  
Exxon's boots  
and barbed wire  
stamped across  
the land, primed  
and pumped, ready

for overflow. I  
watched, and said,  
"I must go." But  
couldn't find my  
feet to stand,  
so accustomed  
to sitting at the  
machine. Building

fantasy worlds  
where we slay  
isolation and longing.  
Groundhog Day  
should have been  
filmed in '84  
because this  
is a love song,  
after all, my love.

Let's all be the god  
in the machine.

The web unfurls  
in space to spy  
on time. All the red  
and blue pulsing  
wires, shielded

as they are from  
the su(o)n. It sees  
red. We all see red.

It takes the human  
eye to translate  
the image to cooler  
tones like those  
of You and Me. Who

wouldn't want to be  
the god swinging  
from the rope?

I absolve you,  
my child. Let's build  
our fantasy world,  
mining databases  
and taking the average

to stay away from  
entropic exhaustion.  
(Lord Kelvin would  
approve.) Because

this is a love song,  
my love, the kind  
of love song where  
the protagonist

grows a heart. Do not  
fear, for all love  
is transformative  
according to Disney.  
I run my hand up  
the back of your shirt  
to feel silken skin against  
silken skin, even as we're

shielded in synthetic  
cotton. Let the oceans  
boil and the plastics  
pop. Do you hear it,  
my love? The dog  
is always scratching  
at the door. Never  
wanting in. Always  
wanting out.