

The Un-selfie Project

AUSTEN LEE

one year old,
of one hundred babies
i'm ninety-ninth biggest.
my mother was proud,
skull full
of brains—
she wanted me
to take up
space,

calls me loved,
not liked.

outstretched arm
forced embrace,
you float
between me
and screen.

left eye locked in
socket
right eye fuck me eye;
followers
finger my face
dull.

Visit theunselfieproject.com to see more
of this poetry project.

looking
 glass self
 shot through
 mirror
 you see me
 backward,
 like it.
 see me at
 party and
 avoid eyes,
 only exist
 in lenses
 pixelated,
 not this—
 filter-less and
 switched-around,
 right-ways.

my selfie—
 vernacular
 self-portrait;
 no gallery
 but mine
 has me on display;
 your fleeting glance
 in temporary awe,
 then lost
 in an archive
 of millions.

#nomakeupselfie
 lips nipple pink
 lash-long raw
 tell me don't
 need it
 tell me you like
 kli ke l like
 it tell me
 all things
 i don't
 need d n
 deen ed n

 dne ndd

 ne ee
 d n

what one calls
 "peer reaction"
 positive reinforcement
 double-tap
 in my lap
 that quick
 satisfying
 buzz

you are
 a found poem
 on the bus
 grocery store line
 cereal box poem
 bathroom stall poem
 you are
 worshipped in a thousand
 thousand
 screens.

image excess
 one of them is me
 the rest are
 the rest

heads
 boxes
 blue light
 before
 bed

the rest
 rest
 r es
 t
 rest
 rtset
 re

str

remember watching
 grandpa gut a fish
 reddest red you ever saw
 gutttest guts
 scratch of knife on spine
 sounded good
 smell of wet leaves

remember scales,
 first time you ever saw
 first time wanted to
 breathe
 underwater;

the dream
 you had
 gills

 #mermaidvibes

remember looking
 at sixteen-year old skin
 in girls
 washroom mirror?

that old thing was
 warped
 made you
 thin
 then fat

that night
 post a picture:
 new long legs
 soak up
 afterschool sun

your friend writes
 you a letter:

#botoxbitch

natural
 shimmering sunlight,
 strobe light, tv
 video game light
 flash frequency,
 dotted pattern,
 forward-facing lens—
 your face less
 liked, your
 lipstick looks
 like shit;

growing problem of
 photosensitivity.

in 50 years
instagram will be old
as photo albums.

grandkids,
scrolling through,
will think life
was lived in
empty rooms,
 eyes
 away
 from the

lens sen l se

 les
 ns
 l sen
ln,

take a selfie
in the dark
movie theatre
 flash
bottom of
 ocean
cave belly spelunker
selfie sticks are
banned on this
 roller coaster
 want to
 lose an arm?
wanna climb a
 big glass tower?
sit on the edge
 tongue hung cute,
erect like a
 wet finger
feeling wind
 wanna go to
a rave?
teeth chatter selfie

 melt-brain
wanna hike
 that big
shiny
 castle?
spit over edge
wear matching
shoes
 friends for
ever
 wanna see
the river
 from way
up high?
wanna see
whathappensif
 we
 fall?

unique poet girl
 instagram poet
 face like words
 most efficient
 kind of
 poem
 jawbone
 clichéd phrase
 lips broken
 pause
 freckles enjambed
 jammed
 under eye
 turn the other

cheek
 instagram poet
 strike out a few
 lines
 show me
 how you see
 the world through a mirror
 tell me
 how it feels
 to be followed,
 instagram poet
 teach me
 how to master
 this form.

selfie like a poet
 1 in 200 make it
 the rest deleted.

selfie like a poet
 filters metaphors
 for your face
 truer than the low sun
 more real
 than skin
 because you are whole;
 the world
 needs
 to see
 how complete
 you are.