

Maj Ikle

Dyke Shoes

Two women: both dykes.

One primped up pretty/ giving it the bleached blonde/
lipsticked, feather bowered girlie.

The other is a manshe/ a himher/ the butch.

Nobody stares at us/ because there is nothing to see/ we are
looking like them/ camouflaged

Me and Bee/ my Bee/ broad in the coat/ gorgeous tall/
working class enough/ to be proper tough and we need to
be

It is 1987 when every single day/ one of us dies from AIDS.

We will die but the government will do nothing/ because we
die from ignorance/ literally.

Anarchy in the UK is getting soft/ it's going off the boiling
stage/ leaving us at the mercy of tepid ballads/ that focus
our eyes on the guise of/ 'I just wanna to dance with
somebody' or fill our pockets with 'loads a money.'

Except we are three million unemployed/ nothing to do but
watch *Jim'll Fix It* on telly/ to learn about/ love.

Or *Blankety Blank* to hear jokes about/ the blacks and the
poofers/ lesbians though

they say we are alone when we are together/ just we two
making do/ waiting for a real man to give us a proper
seeing to.

Seriously.

If we had collected a 'naff tax' on just that/ we could have
bought us an island by now/ to escape to.

Bee and I are glad we don't look gay/ we are homophobia-
free happy this way/ passing for strait we become more
and more/ blatantly sexual so/ strange as it sounds/
Debenhams becomes the site of our/ DIY porno

Leaving our clothes in the changing rooms/ like Mr. Benn we
wander about for hours/ dressed like old ladies in corsets,
hats, or wigs.

Or we don dog collars and drop to all fours/ playing puppy
who'll fetch/ along shop corridors.

Nobody bothers us

Nobody is paid enough to care/ if we go *Rocky III* in
sportswear/ or if Bee orders a milky coffee in a silk suit/
from menswear first floor/ and I lay across her lap/
the best example of St. Trinian's flirtery/ until the women's
toilets call.

Or/ we lock ourselves into British library reading rooms/
refusing when asked to come out quietly/ until they fetch
the key and we storm out imperious/ shouting "where's the
loo?"

But the truth is every gap between parked cars/ is our
personal pissoir.

The scrawls on the dyke toilet walls tell us/ 'Lesbians are
fucking everywhere,'/ so Bee and I try to go there/ no
graveyard or alley escapes our lewdliness/ and we are not
just fingers wet/ we throat clenching some/ whole hand
fisting/ pushing heads between legs/ learning how only
women come.

Suddenly we capture the camera's stare/ *Love Bites*, by Della
Grace/ is our pretend family album/ we become a gang in
there/ sexing each other up/ at fake weddings with whips/
rattling our big fat bike chains and sticking out mucky
rubber dicks.

Then we were on TV/ penetrating the nations living rooms
where the country eat their tea/ so now even Margaret
Thatcher can see us/ frigging in the rigging/ there was
fuck all else to do.

Pop stars like Madonna and Sinéad O'Connor/ want people
to think they might be dykey/ we have made the zeitgeist/
they look more like us than we do/ as lesbian chic floods
the mainstream.

Cheek more than chic though/ prostituting us worse than
 pimps do/ never giving us a single penny/ of the money/
 do you?

I lie/ they do pay in a way/ you could say I lived off/ the wages
 I was due/ three pounds a day/ all I had to do was queue/
 but you better not be late/ because they could make you
 worse than wait

So unlike my foreign girl sisters/ I didn't have to do hand
 jobs/ in the peep shows of Soho/ still it was not enough to
 keep me out/ of toe curling second hand shoes/ and that
 shit don't go.

At 21/ shoes don't really bother anyone/ we live in skin/ ours
 and other animals'/ searched and found our sister kin/
 gathered together all other ones/ that didn't fit in.

Together we made place into space/ gave ourselves
 permission to play/ any game any way/ because finally we
 were in/ Bee and me belonging/ to a dyke sex family/ we
 started spreading the love we felt/ financially/ socially/
 sexually/ by showing each other our cunts/ lips/ clits/ skin
 colour/ we were pleasing ourselves and one another/ by
 spreading our legs widely.

And/ finding that we were
 All of us the same
 All of us different
 All of us 'proud of it' Dyke Queens/ resisting the shame regime
 By coming fucking together.