

From Monster

By Don Zolidis

CLAIRE, 18 –

1816. Claire is pregnant, and has just been rejected by her lover, Lord Byron.

CLAIRE

You are making jokes now? I am ridiculous to you, I suppose. Just a stupid... girl to be ushered out of the room and down the stairs – if you could euthanize me in an alley you would, wouldn't you? But there's no need for that. I won't speak of the child – I won't embarrass you, my life won't embarrass you further. I've half a mind to slit my throat... but it wouldn't matter to you. Not in the slightest. Does the serpent regret when it poisons a mouse? No. I'd be one less nuisance to you, a momentary diversion, and then... nothing. No impression. No impact. No delicate tangling of souls – and you think you're a fucking poet. Prattling on about beauty and high-minded nonsense, worrying your miserable little life about meter and rhyme as if that had some purchase in the world – as if it mattered, as if your words matter – nothing you write matters, George. None of it. No immortality on your part, no fucking poems – I am telling you that you have made a life, the best damn thing you've ever made or will ever make, and you couldn't care in the slightest.

LORD BYRON

Are you quite through?

CLAIRE

NOT AT ALL! Do you make anything of value? Are you worth anything? You're a statue of a man, nothing more, resembling some angel but internally full of sawdust and bile and rot! You don't want me, you don't love, you aren't capable of the emotion, are you? You are capable only of self-love! And why wouldn't you be? Because there's nothing else of any value except your face! You rotten-hearted bastard. I am GLAD you don't pretend to love me, I can only imagine the hell a woman or man would encounter being sentenced to remain with such a loathsome narcissist. Go to hell and die.

She walks out.