

1978

Lightbulb

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Recommended Citation

Goedicke, Patricia. "Lightbulb." *The Iowa Review* 9.3 (1978): 85-85. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2417>

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Lightbulb · *Patricia Goedicke*

This one woman in town is a lightbulb,
Not the comic book kind where the idea
STRIKES, and the world's lit up

But flickering nervously, in the darkness
All around her, balancing

On the small base of her legs she's a flashlight
Looking for the answer

Her head's bigger than all the rest of her
And everything's visible, beneath the milkweed hair

She's not dainty at all,
Beneath the polka dot hats
The turbans in violent colors

Stretched over the blue wires of the veins
The almost transparent ears

There's a voice like a hacksaw,
A rasping insect whine

Though we keep telling her to come in,
Jazzing down main street this woman,
This stringy middle-aged woman

Keeps waving her pudgy hands in air
Frowning like a sawed-off corn cob

Out there all alone
With short circuits, lightning bolts shooting

In the huge glass oval of her head
The big dark eyes are too dangerous altogether,
Popping like exclamation marks,

Strutting around town in her striped jersey
Like a tiny pirate she boards everyone,

She keeps threatening the entire navy
With her questions.