

# oooOr not and (&) OthEr poeMS

By RC de W inter

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ornotandotherpoemsornotandother or not & other poems-s-s-s

**WHY I LIKE IT:** *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes...Ms. deWinter is delightful, delicious and de-lovely. 'playing the line' delves into the delirious dilemmas of d-dating: "all the dashing men / – or so they think –" "dangling secondhand emotions / on rusty hooks" "the maw of emotion / stoppered with a stone" On to "too late for apologies / i bring nothing but plastic words" Can't you imagine getting all dressed up for the gala affair, donning your 'Infinity Capris' or 'Medicated Choir Leggings' only to find she isn't there? (And all those hushed whispers so as not to upset the hostess 'the party won't start until deWinter arches in.')* "my tongue furred with straw / in the murky voice of insincerity" "but mostly it's only the ghosts sewn to my shadow / who pay attention" 'Spaghetti Western' is likely her very best. It's transcendently sardonic, so I won't even speak upon it. Ahhh, just read 'em and gleet (Well it's in the Scrabble dictionary...) Mores the pity you-all missed her salutation introducing herself, submitting her works, "Greetings from Paradise (snort)," Who could resist—Oh, RC you sleigh me... I'm just a cat's-paw for a man-hater with a rapacious sense of humor. ...come with me to the Casbah...(To maintain poet's spacing each poem is published on its own page. It's 'HOTS!' in action. Please scroll down)HS

...or not

too late for apologies  
i bring nothing but plastic words  
anywhere and everywhere i go  
invited or not

my tongue furred with straw  
in the murky voice of insincerity  
i mumble pliable lies that tremble in the slightest wind  
interpretable to suit the ear of any willing listener  
or passerby who overhears them

but mostly it's only the ghosts sewn to my shadow  
who pay attention

they never argue  
not even with my most outrageous excuses  
only snicker as they hurl insults and tomatoes  
that explode against my skin  
splattering their bloody juice in random patterns  
staining me in the liar's baptism  
as harsh and unforgiving as any penance  
delivered by a man of the collar

i accept this condemnation  
knowing sins must be atoned for  
though my atonements are nothing but  
the unwieldy fabrications of a poor carpenter  
for whom there is no forgiveness

playing the line

all the dashing men  
– or so they think –  
come out to play  
in the wading pool of shallow

armed with rods and reels  
dangling secondhand emotions  
on rusty hooks  
flycasting for the catch of the day

i'm an anchor  
dusted with crystallized tears  
glittering in the sunshine  
of their words

unimpressible  
the maw of emotion  
stoppered with a stone  
jesus couldn't roll away

but i smile  
pretending to listen  
all the while knowing  
the larceny in their hearts

weather eye

there's a disturbance in the cosmos

the weather can't make up its mind  
it's acting like a dizzy distracted  
five-year old who can't decide  
what to wear to a party  
trying on one thing after another

it's a mirror of my life

there's a disturbance in my soul  
to be perfectly honest i rarely know  
who i'm going to be from day to day  
hour to hour minute to minute  
i make it up as i go along

sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't  
if you're coming to visit  
pay no attention to the almanac  
take your best guess  
and wear a raincoat  
you can always take it off

## Spaghetti Western

Inner harbor Baltimore – muggy hot,  
even for May. Sitting with a man I knew  
I couldn't love, eating pie for lunch.  
Telling the usual lies dragged out for  
times when there's nothing else to say.

Oh, cowboy! For all your rugged bulk  
you were a small, cheap man cheating on  
the wife cheating on you, and I was the  
self-destructive fool breaking my own rule.  
by poaching the already-owned.

When we finished the pie and ran out of lies  
we started drinking. Beer, to quench the  
humid thirst of throats tired of talking.  
Then back to the hotel, where you, uninterested in  
anything but sleep, undressed, collapsed onto the  
unmade bed and sailed off to the dreamworld of  
the unmanned man.

Where every woman slavered for your attention  
and everything worked properly regardless of  
blood alcohol content. I sat in an unseasonable  
velveteen chair in that darkened room, watching the  
thin flesh of your eyelids skitter as you frolicked in  
Everyman's playground. And out came the camera.

Long after the awkward phone call during which  
we ended what should never have begun I took out  
those pictures, admiring my own handiwork.  
Wondering how I managed to make you look so desirable  
when in the flesh every weakness was on full display.

Then I took the brush and captured you forever  
on a canvas full of shadow, with just enough light to  
show off smooth skin from neck to thigh, disappearing into  
the artful ripples of an unmade bed. There you lie,  
forever somewhere between limp and stiff, immortalized  
as the eye candy you never were.

reality tv

goodbye to a tired dusty day  
forsaken  
evaporated to parts unknown  
perhaps playing somewhere on a screen  
in another dimension  
to the delight and  
amazement of our former selves

always playing catchup  
living in reruns  
magpies rewinding time stretching out  
the feelgood  
picking out the best bits to enjoy  
again and again not caring that  
we could be dead

but now the awkward world is  
on the other side of the door  
and here you are  
alive undressed  
wrap me in your  
glossy wings  
kiss me dizzy up and down  
as we slide into another episode  
xrated

**THE POET SPEAKS...** *All of my work is an amalgam of real life: personal, history, current events, science, politics, what I had for dinner, etc.*

*and*

*fantasia: dreams, hopes, fears, things that walk in the night, the voice of the sea, the smile of the moon, etc.*

**AUTHOR BIO:** RC deWinter's poetry is widely anthologized, notably in *New York City Haiku* (Universe/NY Times/Rizzoli, 2/2017), *Nature In The Now* (Tiny Seed Press, 8/2019), *Coffin Bell Two* (Coffin Bell, 2/2020), *2020 Summer Anthology: a Headrest for Your Soul* (Other Worldly Women Press, 6/2020), in print: *2River, Adelaide, Event, Genre Urban Arts, Gravitas, Kansas City Voices, Meat For Tea, the minnesota review, Night Picnic Journal, Prairie Schooner, Southword* among others and appears in numerous online literary journals.