

Catherine Arra – Five Poems



Feature Poet

Boomerang

Well, I'll tell you, 2-D ain't 3-D,
moonglow ain't sunlight,
scratch-n'-sniff ain't finger-licking,
virtual, no five-sense real.

I mean, she looked hot, fit the fantasy—
shimmery blond, sultry alto, foreign accent
and just how to place her pinky finger
to her lips like a porno doll.

She let me talk dirty, be sixteen again, let me
lure her into my wife-dumped wrecked den—
me drowning in memory of my ex, her smell
all over, and down there, pleasure-pot pink.

I never considered smell—
that reptile sense, sniffing out danger, death—
your essential run, get-the-hell-away gut scream.
Who'd a thought ...

Well, I'll tell you, it's a revenge boomerang,
a brain Hula-Hoop, fooling cold-blooded instinct.
I got her to fly to me from the other side of the world,
said I'd marry her, take care of her.

The minute she stepped off the plane wearing
that WeChat pout, I got a whiff.
In the car, a wall of illusion-fermenting stink.

The dog whined. Covered behind my seat.
At least he could still run.

Corona Blues

By the close of Covid-19
on the brink of Delta V,
runaway husband, bandit with parrot
on a quest for new exciting love,
returned—tail-tattered & shipwrecked,
knocking ...

She felt his pain.

Cool writer-dude turned out
to be a counterfeit copycat,
caged by his not-so-clever thievery.

She felt sorry for him,
how he squandered his talent.

Facebook predators
in disguised despair, paltry poetry,
seductive food pics, Daliesque portraits,
requested her friendship, messaged sweet spam.

She felt fake like them.
Avatars of noir, mystique, hard muscle.

Who are you? she'd write.
Who are you?
Bang. Bang. Blocked.

She paddled her Corona canoe up & downriver,
masked & unmasked, vaxed & vexed.
She cooked, wrote, streamed, strolled, & ran.
She executed a ballet of yoga poses.
She drank, got drunk, cried, slept it off,
& did it all again. She emptied a lake of rum.

She capsized,
prayed & died with wildlife.

She dove into the Torah of Tarot.
Tail-tattered & shipwrecked, she summoned
the avatars of humanity for help.
She swam her way home.

The Devil

I'm your badass bully bitch, the one you don't much like,
the shadow sulking behind smiles.

I poke, provoke, have you roped,
harnessed by the balls, breasts, your deep-throated guilt.

I am you rejected, you unseen, the one you
want to love, the angel you deny.

I'm the big bad metaphor,
Lucifer, Mephistopheles, vampire hunger.

Addictions, obsessions, one-night stands,
sensation severed from understanding.

I manipulate in stealth, steal who you are,
call others the you that is me.

Don't be ashamed or shame me.
I'm the terrified child, lost, alone, hiding in you.

Embrace me now. Kiss my scorched lips,
stroke my bestial belly and wild bat wings.

Heal my broken heart, take me home.
To love me is to release me.

The Lovers

I am that wicked triangle.
You between two strange angels,
Eve or Lilith, good boy or naughty other.
I tease desire, make you sweat.

I stand opposite The Devil
in a do-si-do of sacred and profane.
God angel and fallen one, we are
twins of choice, a tempting cocktail.

Choose one, never know the other
but choose you must. Indecision
is the dead-end loop cowards circle—
the heart's crossroads,

urging, beguiling ... go right, left
or straight ahead.
Be earthbound or free,
seduced or loved.

The Moon

Mistress of nightshades,
guardian of cats, owls, wolves,
sea creatures and water worlds.

In dreams, fantasy, tides, and blood cycles
I entice you to lose your way, make you
shatter me in a cruel casting of stones
on mirrored water, watch you submit as I ripple
to wholeness again and again.

Night vision portal, floating white orb, pregnant
with secrets, deceptions, the longings
you tell no one.

I answer the faith you bestow in gazing upon me,
calling my names:

Wolf in the howling hunger of January.
Worm when earth softens and sap flows.

Strawberry when night air sweetens.
Buck for velvet antlers crowning kings.

Harvest for abundance.
Blue for your lost twin.

I am the seasons of your psyche.
I carry you to fullness, erase you in darkness.

Teach you to trust what cannot be seen.

Catherine Arra is a former high school English and writing teacher. Since leaving the classroom in 2012, her poetry and prose have appeared in numerous literary journals online and in print, and in several anthologies. She is the author of *Deer Love* (Dos Madres Press, 2021), *Her Landscape, Poems Based on the Life of Mileva Marić Einstein*, (Finishing Line Press in July, 2020), *(Women in Parentheses)* (Kelsay Books, 2019), *Writing in the Ether* (Dos Madres Press, 2018) and three chapbooks. Arra lives in upstate New York, where she teaches part-time, and facilitates local writing groups. Find her at www.catherinearra.com