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For those of you immune to the seductions of tabloid magazines stocked in supermarket check-outs, a "blind item" is a titillating morsel of gossip that doesn't name its famous subject, but leaves clues as to who it might be. But you don't have to read the gossip rags to figure out who stars in each poem in *Blind Items*—they're very much a part of our shared pop culture, whether or not we're consciously tuned into the Hollywood machine.

In this collection, Dina Del Bucchia imagines encounters with celebrities. Many are sexual, most are intimate, and all involve a fictional interaction with a star. These poems are interspersed with "blind items" about an anonymous subject who, according to Del Bucchia at a reading I attended, is an ordinary person struggling with ordinary life. (People, they're just like us!)

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Once you get past the shock value of the intricacies of making a sex tape

with Lindsay Lohan behind a Walmart or waking up to Pamela Anderson screwing one's boyfriend on the living room rug, you notice how efficiently each poem sketches a character. Del Bucchia strips each persona down, so to speak, to a few recognizable details. Alec Baldwin shelters the narrator from

Blind Items by Dina Del Bucchia

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REVIEWED BY
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the rain with his tux jacket, "the luxurious tarp of Armani," only to abandon her "in the glare of flashbulbs." He is then only heard in phone calls and voicemails—referencing one of the actor's notorious incidents with the press.

We glimpse Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen through "layers of luxury over taut emotions" and "scarves, gauze and silk extensions of weightlessness," as they float through the coffee shop where the narrator works. She tangles with Bill

Cosby in his famous "vibrant abstract of acrylic" sweaters; asks Michael Keaton to wear a Batman mask; and makes love to Patrick Kane's mullet in five stanzas. A fantasy involving Bill Murray is a highlight of the collection: receiving oral sex from the movie star creates "the illusion of wearing a lampshade on his head. A trick a less sophisticated comedian couldn't pull off."

You could argue that Del Bucchia's subjects are already so familiar, or at least their personae are, the mere mention of their name is enough to conjure an image. But the anonymous narrator is the real subject, attracting and reaching out to each star, trying to create a moment with them. The moment is nearly always fleeting—these are not odes to the beginnings of beautiful friendships—and apt to leave her empty. Coincidentally, she captures exactly the feelings I get after consuming too much tabloid candy: guilt and shame.

Blind Items is down-and-dirty fun, but it may make you rethink your movie-star crushes. »