



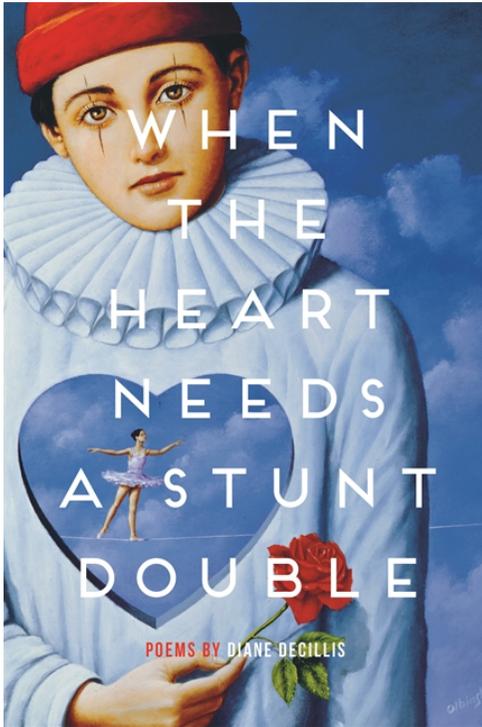
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For Immediate Release



DETROIT, MI, September 25, 2020 — Who wouldn't want a metaphorical stunt double to take the perilous fall that comes with the pain of loss or profound disappointment? The poems in *When the Heart Needs a Stunt Double* by Diane DeCillis consider resourceful ways in which we become our own stunt double and explore through a poet's eyes the anatomy of the mind, body, and soul.

Although many of these poems investigate loss and heartbreak, this book is not about being a victim. It's about how we not only survive our most challenging moments but how we thrive in spite of them. These are poems about all of the ways our hearts both help us and betray us during major life events: dealing with divorce, the death of a loved one, separation from those closest to you, or with the agonizing experience of memory loss. The speaker appreciatively observes "how hard the muscle has worked / lifting and lowering the weight of love and sorrow." DeCillis writes that loss can feel like your heart is limping "like a wounded animal / before you sink into the shelter of your own shadow." But with every loss in these poems comes rebirth—a beautiful, sensory-rich wildflower garden of new breaths and experiences. The character of the heart is depicted as a piece of human anatomy at the same time it's portrayed as its own world; an entire planet. DeCillis personifies the mitral, aortic, and pulmonary valves, describing our bodies as blooming with vegetation, a recursive image of living things thriving inside living things.

When the Heart Needs a Stunt Double takes us on a journey of what it means to be fully human. It touches upon the gifts we find in humor, nature, art, food, and how we celebrate the beauty of our scars. These are love poems: to others, to the self, to the

body. DeCillis makes it clear that wounds need attention and care, but that loss always strengthen us. This collection will be admired by poetry lovers of all kinds, and those who enjoy modern and corporeal love poems.

Author:

Diane DeCillis is the author of *Strings Attached* (Wayne State University Press, 2014), winner of the Michigan Notable Book Award and the 2015 Next Generation Indie Book Award and finalist for the Forward INDIES Award. Her poems, stories, and essays have appeared in numerous journals.

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<https://www.wsupress.wayne.edu/books/detail/when-heart-needs-stunt-double>

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