

*There's a sad man and a lonely woman
on a windswept beach*

by Abigail George

I watch Death arrange itself at the church.
I watch Death arrange itself at the grave.
Death brings monk and poverty to the table.
Its sinful nature eats at the kitchen table.
Death buries people. It eats flesh, intimidates
skin-covered things. The poverty of the sea
murmurs. Monkish Death murmurs. Death
has a back like a tree. I give the casino of
Death coins. I feed off on them. The sad man hides
his face. He is crying. Tears fall down his face.
The lonely woman writes in her journal on

the beach that Death will come for every
virgin winter leaf,
every painter, lecturer, reader, every garment
belonging to man, child, woman is marked
for life. Death does nothing but fret about life,
dancing toward it, palms itchy, swaying in
the air of God's language, taking hold of it,
then inviting shroud, enticing the burned-out,
stretched mountain, loud grass, the painted
thunder of birds swooping low then high in
the air alongside the publicity of life, persona
of family. Death has magnetic layers, partners

with the electric, is a proud, detached sellout.
Death is to be feared. I'm wrapped in
death but there's also hope in the letting go
of you. Rejoicing of life bottomland-deep
in our roots, our stems. Medicinal anxiety but
also the sun is behind me. You're not here.
Instead you found the exit out semi-properly.
The phoenix. That's the one thing that Death
cannot commit to. The sun and moonlight.
Mars rising out of the sea. The uplifting of
humankind. Ocean wave after ocean wave.