

Friday 16th September

Read the poem Valentine. Write about the ways in which Duffy presents love in this poem.

Valentine, which was published in 1993 as part of Duffy's collection 'Mean Time', is about the speaker giving their partner an untraditional gift. The title of the poem is misleading as the reader expects the poem to be a romantic, traditional love poem but instead, Duffy writes about the harsher side of love.

Immediately, Duffy presents love as a concept that should go against the stereotypes as shown through the quotes "red rose" and "skin heart". These gifts are clichéd and lack meaning and instead, the speaker argues that "an onion" is a more appropriate symbol of love. The extended metaphor is used to explain why "cute cards" and "kissogram[s]" lack originality and have no thought behind them. As a reader, I can appreciate the sentiment of giving an original gift but I personally believe an "onion" would not be the ideal non-traditional gift for most people.

Continuing on, the poet presents love as a concept that should promise happiness and shield you from problems this can be seen through the quote, "Its platinum loops shrink to a wedding-ring, ^{with} if you like"