



Planting Gardens in Graves

R.H. Sin

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From the beloved author of *Whiskey, Words, and a Shovel* comes the first volume in an all new series.

r.h. Sin returns with a force in *Planting Gardens in Graves*: a powerful collection of poetry that hones in on the themes dearest to his readers. This original volume celebrates connection, mourns heartbreak, and above all, empowers its readers to seek the love they deserve.

Planting Gardens in Graves Details

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Author : R.H. Sin

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From Reader Review Planting Gardens in Graves for online ebook

Caitlin says

I received an eARC from the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Review originally published on my blog, Turning Pages.

I've been in the mood for poetry lately. I follow poets on Instagram, and find so many new to me writers that I love. I found R.H. Sin on Instagram and liked some of the poems he shares on there. So of course when I saw this on Netgalley, I wanted to read it. Unfortunately, I was left feeling incredibly disappointed.

What first struck me about this collection is that often the way the stanzas are broken up are jarring. It interrupted the flow of them, but not in a way that came across as meaningful to me.

I also found that the language R.H. Sin uses sometimes was offputting. The imagery he created with some crude words and phrases came across as ugly. The topics he was discussing were ugly, but to see some of the same rude words again and again in his poems was frankly disturbing.

He covers topics from love, sexism, grief, and depression. I liked only a few of the poems. Reminders For Men, To Serve and Protect, We Do Not, and Either Way are some of the ones that stood out to me. I felt the messages in those poems were conveyed well and covered important topics. There's one where Sin tells men to stop judging women, and to stop expecting things from women because women owe men nothing. There's also one about racist cops.

My issue, however, is that this collection is pitched as including poems which "empowers its readers to seek the love they deserve". This makes me mad. A lot of the poems about finding the love you deserve seem to be directed at women. In fact, there are numerous poems which seem to judge and advise women about how to handle abusive or toxic relationships. I cannot tell you how angry it made me. One poem is about a girl whose mom was abused by her dad. The poem ends by saying that the girl is just like her mother. What a cold way to talk about abuse. The other poems about abuse urge the women to leave the men who abuse them. There's so much wrong with that statement because women often stay out of fear or begin to think they deserve the abuse, etc.

In another poem, he also gives advice about what daughters should be taught by their mothers. Let me repeat this: Sin tells readers that daughters need to be taught the games men will play to get what they want so they know how to guard themselves. 1) Girls are constantly told what men will say and do to get in their pants. 2) Sin, why didn't you write a poem about **sons being told to treat girls with respect**? By this point, I lost my patience for the book. Sin directs many of his poems about sexism towards women like it's our job to guard ourselves rather than men's job to stop their problematic behaviour. It seems like Sin was trying to discuss sexism to show how woke he is. He's placed himself as a knowledgeable man who thinks he can give women's issues a voice to his large audience. But if this is the kind of thing he's going to be saying to his audience, I'd prefer he didn't write poems about that topic at all. If you want to read good poetry about sexism and feminism, go read books by the many talented female poets.

Planting Gardens In Graves is a disappointing book. It boasts that it's empowering, but I'm here to tell you it isn't. I was a fan of his work from Instagram, but after reading this book I'm left feeling sad. The bad aspects of this poetry collection outweigh the good ones.

Chanel says

I received this as an ARC on NetGalley.

I never really like this author's work, but every time I see a title on there for free I feel compelled to read it to stay justified in my opinions.

However, for the first time (by some Superbowl Sunday miracle) this one was actually slightly better than the others.

I appreciated that there were fewer pop poems and she poems, I appreciated that more poems had original titles rather than just time stamps or repeated titles throughout. I didn't really like that this work had less of a rhyme and reason to the organization of the poems, but I liked that they branched out a bit from this author's typical themes and motifs. Some of them were much racier than the works I had read previously, but not everything felt redone from works I've read previously. It still lacked the depth and complexity that I prefer in poetry, but that's not to say there isn't a place for this on someone else's shelf.

Guiana {indefinite hiatus} says

lions.

*they threw her into the lion's den
and instead of feeling fearful
she tamed the beasts*

i am

disappointed

really, the only thing

i liked about

this was that

there was less misplaced

line
breaks and maybe
even a poetic feel to
it but other
than that...

I've complained about this more than I should and that's how, more than often, R.H. Sin's poems are *so fucking repetitive* that it hurts. He writes quite a lot on the topic of heartache and the ugly sides of love, and that's a great topic to touch on and write about, but there's only so much a "they don't deserve you" or "you walked away but I lost nothing" written on every other page can do. It was enough for the first few collections, but it's getting tedious and it needs more than just that or it's just **dry, basic poetry**. This collection is where I reach my breaking point. I've managed to brush off the routine repetitions of the poems but now, I really just can't handle any of it. I'd like to see something new, not necessarily *change*, but something fresher than what I quoted.

I did like the bits of empowerment and self-love thrown in there. Heck, I was *ecstatic* to see that Sin used a few metaphors because his writing often lacks any sense of poeticness sometimes and even just that little thing alleviated the situation. Other than that, the rest was quite tiresome to read.

*sweet lies.
bitter lies
taste sweet
when spoken from the lips
of the person you love*

Amy says

"Baby focus on your goals these men are confused"

I started off not liking this much at all but once I got past the fact that technically it's not poetry, I enjoyed the ideas and empowerment this book provides.

Addy Gonzalez says

Actual Rating: 4.5

The poems are short with some increasing in length. The wording is not too flowery or frivolous. They can be short and packed with a lot of thought and meaning. As the first work I have read from r.h. sin, I have to

say I was not disappointed.

I did feel that some poems were a bit repetitive as if he just rearranged the words to sound different, but that was not always the case. Some poems were repeats, but felt different in a way.

Personally, I did enjoy it and I would consider reading more works by r.h. sin in the future.

I received a galley from NetGalley at no cost from the author or NetGalley.

Kate ? says

I think this may be my least favourite of Sins work, however having said that I still loved it!

This just seemed a bit repetitive at times. Still so, so good.

Yemi says

It's a beautiful words will put you in so many emotion, remind you you can be strong and get over all the pain and the breakup.

Fleur (FranklyBooks) says

edit: The author has denounced the idea that one of his poems is about suicide in my comment section so I've swapped the word 'suicide' with 'death'. He has brought to my attention that he has suffered the traumatic loss of his premature brother and that my interpretation of a poem about suicide is incorrect. I feel for him and hope he finds peace. However, I still stand by my first interpretation that the poem under my 'romanticising suicide' category is harmful. Furthermore, I believe that interpreting the poem as romanticising suicide is completely valid and the author could not have expected me to know that he had a premature baby brother.

I received an ARC of Planting Gardens in Graves via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

I was honestly so close to rating this 4 stars. So goddamn close.

You might not be able to tell from my Goodreads reviews, but R.H. Sin is not a new author to me. I used to have a physical copy of Whiskey Words & a Shovel II. However, I never got around to reviewing it because it was a very quick DNF and I sold it off as soon as I realised it wasn't for me. I had hopes that this one was going to be different.

At the beginning, it was. Most of the poems were heartfelt and they had enough depth to differentiate them from mere sentences. Some of them were empowering. Others evoked deep consideration about the meaning of love. Y'know, things that poems are supposed to do. That all changed after I got to around the 100-page mark. FUCK.

The book very quickly dipped into ‘what the fuck’ territory. Nothing was sacred. The author romanticised suicide in a very cliche overdone way. 2 strikes in one. He praised himself as a ‘nice guy’ which has some very uncomfortable connotations.

*Finally, his poems
derailed into mere
sentences.*

And then ended. The depth was gone. The originality was gone. I was left with the same idea reiterated over and over. Not being facetious, but the entirety of the book’s second half could be condensed into one or two poems. R.H. Sin definitely did not need 100 pages to say what he did.

No Subtlety

*men beg
for entry
then label women whores
as they exit*

*men chase pussy
then degrade women
for giving it to them*

He’s saying the exact same thing in the two different stanzas. The first is more poetic. The second is just a reiteration of the first but in a slightly less poetic way, as though he thinks that the reader probably hasn’t understood the first stanza. Perhaps his books appeal more to younger demographics, but that doesn’t mean they’re idiots.

Short Sentences

*they love pussy
but not the women
they get it from*

Let’s change that into a sentence. Imagine that this appears at the end of a heart-wrenching article about gender equality and being taken for granted. *They love pussy, but not the women they get it from.* Now, which format has the most impact?

In my opinion, the sentence packs a lot more punch than the poem that R.H. Sin has written. That’s not good. Poetry and the structure of poetry is supposed to enhance meaning or send a message. This jarred structure may do it for some people but it is nowhere near as impactful as it is in prose.

Romanticising Suicide

*i loved you
but heaven loved you more
i needed you
but heaven needed you more
i lost you but gained an angel*

I completely understand that this might be a way that someone deals with the ~~suicide~~ death of someone that they used to be close to. That doesn't necessarily mean that it's healthy – especially when written in a book that's supposed to appeal to those who are depressed or feeling down. In the words of the Goodreads synopsis, this original volume celebrates connection, mourns heartbreak, and above all, empowers its readers to seek the love they deserve.

In my opinion, books that celebrate should not be celebrating the creation of an 'angel'. There really isn't anything about ~~suicide~~ death that should be celebrated. Perhaps people can find peace in the idea that the one whom they loved is in a better place but it's still pretty sketchy.

I Swear I'm A Nice Guy

*it's time for men to step up
or lose their women to men like me*

Let's get something straight first; I'm 100% for confidence. You feel good about yourself? Good. Having confidence in yourself is a wonderful thing and not vain as so many people perceive it to be. However, there is a time where one must look at oneself and consider if that confidence is completely well-founded.

This poem reminded me of r/niceguys. In summary, these are basically guys who complain about how no one is willing to fuck him despite being such a nice person. Of course, they really aren't as nice as they think they are and may actually be bigger douchebags than the 'assholes' who actually have girlfriends. I believe that R.H Sin might be emulating one of these people, but doesn't actually realise it.

He says that men will 'lose their women' as if we are possessions to be lost. News flash! We're not. It could be a slip in grammar, but coupled with the whole 'I'm better than all the other men out there' attitude, this poem makes me uncomfortable.

In Conclusion. This book is a personal experience and some may have a great deal of trouble getting through some of the poems. This could be due to mental triggers or the short, blurry sentences. Having said all of that, the first half of the book did actually house some thoughtful poetry.

Want my advice? Stop at around page 130. You'll have read most of the original ideas in the book and will probably enjoy it. So I'm going to end on a positive note with a poem with some "pretty dope" imagery.

*women with sharp tongues
cut through weak men
likes knives to bread*

note: I'm not sure that I want to recommend this book anymore due to the somewhat patronising comment left by the author. I appreciate that he has lost someone special to him, but it's uncomfortable to have a grown man comment on a teenagers review telling them that they're wrong. Post this incident, I've shared this poem numerous others and suicide IS a common interpretation.

Sandy Quach says

Some pieces were impactful, most I found weren't. Repetitive at times, unfortunately. Maybe I would change

my mind if I were to come back to this book later.

Nashali says

*and sometimes i think that this will
be my fate*

*living a life
claiming to have loved
when all i've ever known
is hate*

Maybe a 2.5

Mariah Nelson says

For the life of me i will never understand the hype behind this guy . he's so redundant and dry. And his whole "no man is worthy and every woman needs a guy like him" shtick is so disgusting. Who told him he was god's gift to women?

After his first few books his themes became over used. I cant wait til this brand of 'poetry' dies out

Joseph says

R.H. Sin has gained many fans over the last couple of years. His Whiskey, Words, and a Shovel sold out and copies were fetching quite a price. Sin made his name with short poems and used language to make words carry their maximum weight. Since the release of Whiskey, Words, and a Shovel two things have happened. First, there are collections of "poetry" flooding the market that are essentially cliches and platitudes, but nonetheless, have been readers professing love for poetry. This dilutes the work of Sin who actually uses language as a tool. Secondly, on this same note, Sin essentially writes on the same subject in all his books. That being said it does take several books before the writing seems to repeat. This is not bad in itself. It happens and sometimes it is very good. For example, AC/DC put out seventeen albums using the same three cords and was/is one of the most popular bands in rock and roll. Familiar subject matter is not always a problem; it just needs to seem fresh.

I do like that Sin keeps increasing the length of his poems. Also, he can bring new ideas into the mix. This collection works well for the fans of Sin's work and also for a newcomer. For the casual reader who has read one or two of his books with only moderate interest, there is really nothing new for you here. I do hope Sin expands his themes and continues to work longer poems. Like his work or not he certainly did create a market for himself.

Available February 6, 2018

Paola says

I love it

I love everything about this book. It teaches you so much I feel like it makes you open your eyes it understands your pain. Buy it and read it and you'll understand.

Ariana says

1.5 stars

Originally posted on: The Quirky Book Nerd

I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review

My r.h. Sin saga continues. After reading *A Beautiful Composition of Broken*, things went even more downhill when it came to this particular collection. It started off well enough, with short but sweet, impactful poetry. Each poem had the nice flow and depth that he has always showed, and the way he words everything is beautiful. There were even a few poems that touched on very different topics than the rest—some of the most powerful ones being about his own experiences with other types of love than romantic. However, every other poem was exactly the same as what he usually writes, thus making it feel like all of his collections are identical.

This time around, the style of short but powerful lines did not work in his favor. Many of the poems felt incredibly choppy and forced, like he had cut off each line at random rather than with a specific purpose. There was a sizable loss of depth due to the way that was carried out. Another strike against the collection for me that ties into this was how much subtlety he lacked when it came to conveying the messages in certain parts of his work. This stripped away anything poetic about those poems and, therefore, they lost their emotional impact. This is entirely personal, but some even felt rather crude to me.

Once again, he remains stuck on pretty much the same topic for the entire collection, each poem feeling like a differently worded version of the others. And while his focus on the strength of women is nice to see in literature, he simultaneously portrays men as being horrible and himself as being the only one worthy of being with a woman. I appreciate the feminism he is trying for and, of course, love the fact that it is becoming more prevalent in the literary world. But what I in general will never appreciate is anything that lifts any group of people higher than another—that is not what feminism is about or how equality is achieved.

Overall, the majority of this collection unfortunately failed to accomplish what I believe he was trying to. Speaking as a woman, sometimes his poems are affirming, but after awhile, I began to feel like he was treating us like we are possessions rather than humans. I believe Sin has a talent for writing beautiful poetry, but that does not come across as well when he refuses to diversify his subject matter. The few poems that touched on love that isn't romantic were wonderful and refreshing. In the future, it would be great to see him

focus more on that, even aspects of his life and more personal experiences.

Julia Sapphire says

I was sent a copy by Andrews McMeel Publishing in exchange for an honest review

4.5 out of 5 stars

I **adored** this so much! I am a huge fan of *Sin's* work and have read everything he has published. "*Planting Gardens in Graves*" was not a disappointment! His writing is beautiful and I can find myself relating to almost every single poem. To me, its so special being able to see myself in a book and have my thoughts expressed into poetry. I have read his work during tough times and **I can't even express how happy they have made me**. This was very relatable and well thought-out. I am so happy people love *Sin's* work as much as I do, the topics discussed are so important.

This collection deals with love, heartbreak, feminism, degrading stereotypes, trust, brokenness and more.

The only reason I docked it a .5 is due to the fact that it is clear that this collection is **targeted mainly towards heterosexual females**. Though I think everyone can relate to this collection, the use of pronouns and female-male relationships does not adhere to everyone. I just think if someone who identifies as a homosexual male picks this up- most likely they would be able to relate to some degree but not to the parts in which there are a message to males to treat woman right romantically. It does not mention other relationships or that it could be a male-male relationship or a female-female relationship. Though I am a heterosexual female myself and I could relate to this significantly and the topics discussed but just wanted to acknowledge the pronouns used and who I feel this collection is most targeted towards.
