

# Halfway Between War and Whore

by N. Jed Todd

There's a sine wave standing  
Between the world's oldest profession  
And the second-oldest

Which is on top and which is bottom  
That's a matter of time and phase shift  
But it never really mattered to me

Me, I'm a PSYOPer, agitprop and hearts & minds  
Deception and defection appeals, hope and lies

Somewhere in between, lying on the origin line  
Halfway between war and whore  
Not sure where I'd rather be

At the nodes that never change  
No matter how fast you vibrate  
Can't ever get so fast as to get away

All we do is multiply, extra nodes halfway between,  
Stable and enduring among the destruction  
Promising it's not our fault

Always the same kind eyes, half-lidded smile,  
A friendly face asking you to lie down  
And just. stop. fighting.  
Not honest enough to fuck to keep you there

A wink and a wave to the fellow stable nodes  
Our spooky brother just beside us  
And beyond him lies the priest

I don't know who's on top today  
And who it is, let's say, that's not  
One respected and the other reviled

Not so sure it matters.

Can't say here at the end of days  
I still want false love condemned

While feigned anger and hate  
Buys you college and a VA loan

But there you are. And me.

And us. Liar, thief, and priest.

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**N. Jed Todd** is a Texas refugee, TAMSter, retired US Army Psychological Operations Master Sergeant, and a Russian linguist. Also a civil servant until recently, working for the Air Force on tech modernization and information warfare. But since the greatest information weapon is hope, he's turned to poetry and fiction for solace (published in *As You Were* and in several Middle West poetry collections), and to his family, his daughter Meera and wife Ami.