

Poetry Corner

Rejection Letter

BILL CONNOLLY

I'd been expecting you
that smug yet conciliatory tone
filtered through the impartiality of Times New
Roman.

There's no mistaking your sneering
truthfulness.
How you look down the length of the paper
at my insufficiency
hinting at how my similes hang limp
like a wet string in October drizzle.

The months I've waited for and
anticipated your sting
make me wish for a more expedient way—
perhaps a touchtone system
where I could enter my PIN

and choose to Press 1 to be let down easy
Press 2 for constructive criticism
Or 3 for the cold, hard truth.

And yet now I think I favor the idea
of my poor, inadequate poem
wandering out there in the postal system
for months,
spreading its shrouded message of possibility
among phone bills, junk mail, and calls to jury
duty.

I will continue to accept and expect your arrival
until someone says "yes"
and allows this to be my first time
to drop the envelope
and cover my mouth with my hand.

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