

Sestina: Like

BY A. E. STALLINGS

With a nod to Jonah Winter

Now we're all "friends," there is no love but Like,
A semi-demi goddess, something like
A reality-TV star look-alike,
Named Simile or Me Two. So we like
In order to be liked. It isn't like
There's Love or Hate now. Even plain "dislike"

Is frowned on: there's no button for it. Like
Is something you can quantify: each "like"
You gather's almost something money-like,
Token of virtual support. "Please like
This page to stamp out hunger." And you'd *like*
To end hunger and climate change alike,

But it's unlikely Like does diddly. Like
Just twiddles its unopposing thumbs-ups, like-
Wise props up scarecrow silences. "*I'm like,*
So OVER him," I overhear. "But, like,
He doesn't get it. Like, you know? He's like
It's all OK. Like I don't even LIKE

Him anymore. Whatever. I'm all like ..."
Take "like" out of our chat, we'd all alike
Flounder, agape, gesticulating like
A foreign film sans subtitles, fall like
Dumb phones to mooted desuetude. Unlike
With other crutches, um, when we use "like,"

We're not just buying time on credit: Like
Displaces other words; crowds, cuckoo-like,
Endangered hatchlings from the nest. (Click "like"

If you're against extinction!) Like is like
Invasive zebra mussels, or it's like
Those nutria-things, or kudzu, or belike

Redundant fast food franchises, each like
(More like) the next. Those poets who dislike
Inversions, archaisms, who just like
Plain English as she's spoke — why isn't "like"
Their (literally) every other word? I'd like
Us just to admit that's what real speech is like.

But as you like, my friend. Yes, we're alike,
How we pronounce, say, lichen, and dislike
Cancer and war. So like this page. Click *Like*.