

*Bryon D. Howell*

## **No Quickies Here**

Let's assume  
for a minute,  
that I honestly believe  
you're coming to see me  
on the third,  
once I can afford  
to bus you down here.

Let's assume  
for a minute,  
you truly mean  
what you say  
when you say  
you can't wait to meet me  
once the money's wired.

Let's assume,  
for a minute  
we're going to have days and days  
of unbridled sex  
in my grandmother's bed  
to celebrate  
the arrival  
of her Social Security  
check.

We've already spent  
the better part  
of three minutes  
fantasizing  
about what very well  
could be  
the greatest weekend

ever.

It's too bad

the first bag of  
crack  
and the twenty  
which will follow,  
will become  
more important  
on the third  
and by the fourth,  
I won't even have  
enough money  
to bus myself down  
to the corner store  
where  
the Western Union is.

Let's pretend,  
for a minute,  
that the only thing  
more appealing to me  
than the idea of  
screwing you  
is the familiarity  
of all notions of me  
totally and completely

screwing myself.

We've already spent,  
the better part  
of five minutes  
talking in circles  
about the inevitable.

You have to admit,  
since we've been chatting  
online  
even though we haven't  
actually met  
this has been some of  
the best sex  
you've ever had.

Let's realize  
for a minute,  
when we get right down  
to it,  
you've been  
coming harder  
than anyone I've ever  
known -

for past six months.

## **A Poem about Giving and Not Taking**

And so, I've gotten better  
at being more responsive  
when we're talking on the phone.

A few nights ago,  
you complained  
how talkative I can be  
until it's time for me  
to listen and respond to you.

It's at those times,  
you've accused me  
of becoming the Grim Reaper.

When it's your turn to talk,  
you chat about your  
daily trip  
to the free clinic,  
to get your daily chug  
of methadone.

You then proceed  
to talk about all the meals  
you've denied yourself  
since God knows when.

And then, you sit there -  
breathing and not talking  
anymore.

And so,  
I've gotten better  
at being more responsive  
when we talk on the phone.

I still tell you all about  
and new news.

I tell you how proud I am

of my lover  
for taking his meds.

And once we've gotten through  
all that,  
I nod off and start  
snoring.

See? More responsive!

In the end  
we both agree  
that the ugliest  
and most insensitive of sounds  
in the world,  
is that train of  
uh-huhs  
which always  
seem to end  
in dead silence.

Years ago,  
Elton John recorded  
a song.

“This Train Don't Stop Here Anymore.”

Ha!

Neither yours  
nor mine  
has ever really  
and truly

left its station.

**Bryon D. Howell** is a poet currently residing in New Haven, Connecticut. He has been writing poetry for a great number of years. Recently, his poetry has appeared in *poeticdiversity*, *Red River Review*, *The Quirk*, *The Cerebral Catalyst*, *The Greasy Spoon Saloon*, and *The Lost Beat*. Bryon is also the Editor-in-Chief of four online poetry 'zines.