

POET-MONGERS

I think I see.

A new twist in hooking the poor unpublished poet
who has accumulated a zillion rejection slips. . .
Not the overdone, 3-column, Britannica-size Who's Who
for anybody's mediocre, "no-more-than-16-line" rhymes,
but my own personal agent, at a wholesale price,
with promises as genuine as pre-printed address labels.

At a nominal \$300 a whack? A knickknack-paddy-whack?
What a deal! What a steal! What a feel!
Give the doggies a bone! Tickle their hopeful little egos.
They'll spend half their year's anticipation boasting,
"I have an agent who's keeping in touch with me!"

Let's see your menu of strategic form-letter files:
"Looks promising with several publishers. . .so far."
"Another lead has come up. . .will write more later."
"Don't give up hope. . .just a little market slump."
"Too bad your twelve-month contract is over, because
the market's picking up right now, and right now
we'll extend your contract another year at half-price!"

No?

"Well then, if you can help out, we have found a publisher!
You provide only half the cost of printing (what a deal!),
and they will print 1000 of your book for 5000
or 2000 for 7000 or 3000 for 9000 or more!
We'll even refer you to a successful marketing agency!"
What a deal! What a steal! What a feel!

And when milked for all it's worth, you run another ad:
"Calling all amateur hopefuls! Money or not, hope you come!"

As clear as my computer-inserted name in your personal letter:
fools with hope and their money are quickly parted!
Crowds of \$300-fools are out there for the hoping,
and you'll squeeze the juice right from their fruitful hearts,
all wishing their creations read and known and shared. . . .

I really do see.

— *David L. Hatton, 5/27/1995*