

**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*.