The Agent by Kae Tienstra

Once upon a morning, weary, while I read through each sad query,
Marking many a quaint and lousy treatment of atrocious gore,
While I nodded, nearly crying, for these people sorely trying,
To be Patterson, Brown, or Oats—words escaping from their throats,
"'Tis just hacks,' I muttered dully, 'tapping at my email door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I recall, it was in the early fall,
And each separate rejection, wrought it own sad, doomed dejection
And heaped like ghosts upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished for novels, filled with drama, love and sorrow,
From my mail I sought to borrow—borrow one clear stunning voice—
From my mail I sought a creature who would be the editors’ choice—
Nameless here forevermore.

For the quick, unerroring stanzas, and the taut and true romances,
That would thrill me, fill me with delightful shivers never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
In the hopes that this great novel would approach my email door,
Some dear author with this novel entreatying at my email door.
It’s all I want and nothing more.

Deep into the email’s entrails, ventured I with hopes so stellar
Doubting, dreaming, dreams no agent ever dared to dream before
But the queries flowed so dully, boring, coarse and nothing more
Til the one that stopped my dozing, brought my sleeping brain arousing,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, “Bestseller!”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, “Bestseller!”

Back into my office turning, all my soul within me burning,
Picked up the phone with fingers cold and so unreal,
“Surely,” said I, “surely this book could be mine, even though I’ve
Wasted time, wasted weeks since this book tapped upon my email door.”
I dialed in the author’s number, waiting for the voice to tumble on my ear,
Waiting for his voice to tumble from my phone and nothing more.

But the author, when he answered, was not thrilled nor was enchanted
By my eager words so loving, by my offer to unite his fate with mine.
Though his answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
“Too late,” he said, “I’ve found another, one who’s selling as we speak.
My book is soaring, soaring and I need you Nevermore.”
Quoth the author, never stopping, as his future was just popping,
And my future from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor;
Shall be lifted—nevermore!