

# Supply and Demand

*by Gary Hardaway*

What's the poetry good for?  
Even the poets aren't sure.  
A mug's game. Unlikable.  
A superior amusement.  
The blood jet. I think  
none have ever died

for lack of what's in there.  
One could sell lemonade  
or baked goods from a card table  
in front of the house more easily.  
Or chances at a rigged three-card game  
down on the avenue. Poetry

is a product unloved  
by any but its makers.  
A showing off for a small circle  
of the like-minded in a small  
ill-suited room at the back  
of a bar or coffee house.

There are 1.45 million readers  
of poetry in the US and  
2.9 million poets. The odds  
of an audience are bad. The odds  
of royalties, absolutely awful.  
The poets persist, taking terrible

day jobs, scrambling for grants,  
accepting the abuse of tech savvy  
but tin-eared editors for nothing  
but the satisfaction of the demigods

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Available online at *«<http://fictionaut.com/stories/gary-hardaway/supply-and-demand>»*

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who whisper phrases, un-vetted  
by focus groups, whenever they like.

