

Having Read the Poems of Matt Dennison

by Gita M. Smith

Having read the poetry of Dennison
I hereby give up writing.
I turn eyes to the want ads in search of
new horizons or, at least, remuneration.
Here's a good one! "Night clerk needed at the Title Pawn.
Steady pay, plus benefits.
Applicant must know a Buick from a Yugo."
No one warns about the clientele, of course,
their clouded lives, their rumpled documents,
five hundred percent interest rates.
This is red-blooded usury, American as Haliburton pie.
The clients have no stomach for it, but I do.
"Stand on the line," I say, "to have your picture made.
Your first-born child, please, over this way."
Praise be to Dennison whose talent led me here.
I am a clerk, but sweet sang-froidness, Batman,
I'm damn well-suited to officiousness.

