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Valentine

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KIKI PETROSINO

Valentine

Today I got rejected from the Bible.
They sent a special envelope, which turned to palm ash

when I opened it. A whiff of frankincense floated down
from the wreckage, & a girl's voice said:

Thanks for the look.

*We've no room at present, but
your poems are stylish & convincing.*

*We hope you'll try us again.
Best, Agnes*

Stylish? Convincing? Sounds pretty nice.
But riddle me this—*Agnes*:

Why. Does this always. Happen.

Just tell me—since you're so smart.
OK?

You probably don't *need* that Bible gig—
What with your solid gold Camaro & your hunting dogs.

But me, *Agnes*? I'm not like you.
I can't afford to lick ambergris off my servants' bellies all day.

I *do* need the Bible.

It's a personal need, *Agnes*.
You've placed so much of my friends' work.

Take the Pentateuch.
You've tucked *The Book of Nico* right there, between

Leviticus & Numbers. Which is fine, OK, but did he really have
to have his own book?

Agnes, I'm asking.

I know you're jousting pink unicorns right now.
You've got a spray-tan scheduled.

Tonight, no doubt you'll sip lime cocktails
in a jacuzzi brimming

with my ex-boyfriends. I do hope you have
a droll & savvy time together.
I'll be here. Silently heating up some pizza rolls.
Then I'll use the computer.

Not to write poems, you understand.
Just—touching the keys.

It's not how anyone should
get healthy, especially not me.

But there's a darkness in that
clicking sound, a bridge so black

I can't get over—