



## OH, MY STARS!

T H E Y E A R O F L A M E P O E T R Y

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**T**here once was a star named Doug  
Brendel,  
onstage every week (or it seemed).  
For years he appeared on the North Shore:  
The audiences clapped and beamed.

But this year, some feared  
that poor Doug disappeared.  
The theatregoers  
who hated him cheered.

*Doug took the year off, he professes,  
to write up a novel he'd dreamed.*

**M**eanwhile, greater legends were rising,  
new bright shining stars without peer.  
Kristina in May scored her A.A.,  
community college's dear.

Then U.Mass requested  
she join them fulltime  
For classes called "honors."  
Her joy was sublime.

*Her bach'lor's is certain now, since she  
writes papers like William Shakespeare.*

**A**nd Lydia Charlotte is acting,  
directing, and writing, and more.  
She summured at Emerson (Boston)  
to see what they might have in store.

They loved her, and now they've  
invited her back,  
For fall 2020,  
the full freshman track;

*But so has New York: AMDA\* wants her.*

*She'll go this fall. (But through which door?)*

**O**ur first two stars — Natalie, Kristofer —  
still live in faraway places.  
Nat: Pennsylvania. Kris: North Carolina.  
Both thinking of changing home bases.

But otherwise, back here  
in old Massachusetts,  
Don't look for much change to  
occur. It's no use. It's

*New England, you see, where it's stasis*

*the populace mostly embraces.*

**F**or any more detail, just email,  
or text or FaceTime or whatever.  
And sorry: We know Christmas letters  
in rhyme are not generally clever.

But Garrison Keillor's  
new limerick digest

Has gone to Doug's brain, and  
he's sadly obsessed.

*You can try to persuade him to stop it,  
in Ipswich, next time we're together.*

Sorry to report, the Brendels are mixed in their reviews of this BrendelGram.

**"I**t's beyond my powers of perception,"  
Kristina replies, cryptically.

"The rhyme scheme is all over the place!"  
Lydia Charlotte advises — and she should know,  
because she's actually spent the entire last  
semester studying poetry at Ipswich High School.

"You start with a limerick," she complains,  
"then move to an ABAB format, then stick a  
rhyming couplet on the end that doesn't rhyme.  
So it ends up being ABCB DDED FD, which  
isn't pleasant to read or hear."

She offers her own alternative, as follows:

There once was a man named Doug Brendel  
Who appeared on a stage every day  
But the good parts have started to dwindle.  
"He's finally gone!" So they say.  
But to those who have started to fear  
That Doug Brendel would never come back:  
Doug Brendel's been working all year  
To write the good novel you lack.

"Or something like that," Lydia Charlotte adds.  
"Or go the limerick route."

She's on a roll now:

There once was a man named Doug Brendel,  
Whose days on stage started to dwindle.  
But there's no need to fear,  
For he shan't disappear.  
He's just writing a book for your Kindle!  
And though Doug has been making up time,  
Kristina's been busy with rhyme!  
She went and got her A.A.,  
But U.Mass. Lowell's won the day —  
So now she's a student fulltime!

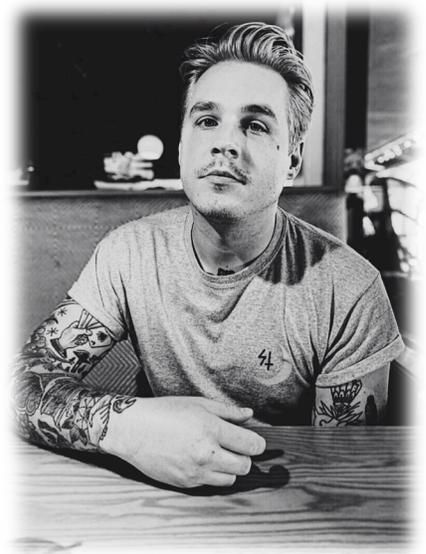
"Or something along those lines," Lydia  
Charlotte counsels.

To which Dad offers a simple reply:

"Next year, I'm not showing you my first  
draft."



*The stunning  
Nat and her  
lovable boys,  
Romeo &  
Reese*



*The heartthrob Kris and his awesome ink*

**Merry Christmas!**  
**THE BRENDELS AT DRAGONHEAD**  
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