

Stanley J. Solomon

Sheriff

Sheriff put out an all-points bulletin on me:
short, stubby, bearded~all wild lies sent
slanderingly buzzing along the fiber optic networks
of my America, or car by car on radios.

I didn't think it funny~
feeling like a tree felled on a country road,
roots reaching in the air, all limbs crushed
and unidentifiable, only to be chopped
for firewood by Farmer Brown~

and I told the Sheriff so, long distance, from a
cell phone:
"Sloppy research, documents unchecked,
unverified, unproofed, and for the post office,
somebody else's picture."

"Why don't you come in for a new one?"
he said, claiming he had a great digital camera
with unbelievable resolution that would do me
honors.

Told him, I'd have to pass up his paper cup of
coffee,
because of riding in a different direction these days.
But I offered instead to send my lawyer,
who will drink anything, for an hour's tête-à-tête
to try explaining why the bad call on me
was prejudicial and harmful to my career,
and my guy likes Dunkin' Doughnuts.

"Well, you just drive carefully, no speeding,
no hand-held talking on the cell."
Since then, we only e-mail over America Online,
but the State's attorney is talking settlement,
while my lawyer chunks down
a cream-filled and a strawberry-iced.

I'm never returning their library books.

Stanley J. Solomon, in addition to poetry, has also published
fiction, nonfiction, and drama in such publications as *Prairie
Schooner*, *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*, *Modern Age*,
Beloit Poetry Review, *MLA's Profession*, and *University*

Review. He has published three books on film.