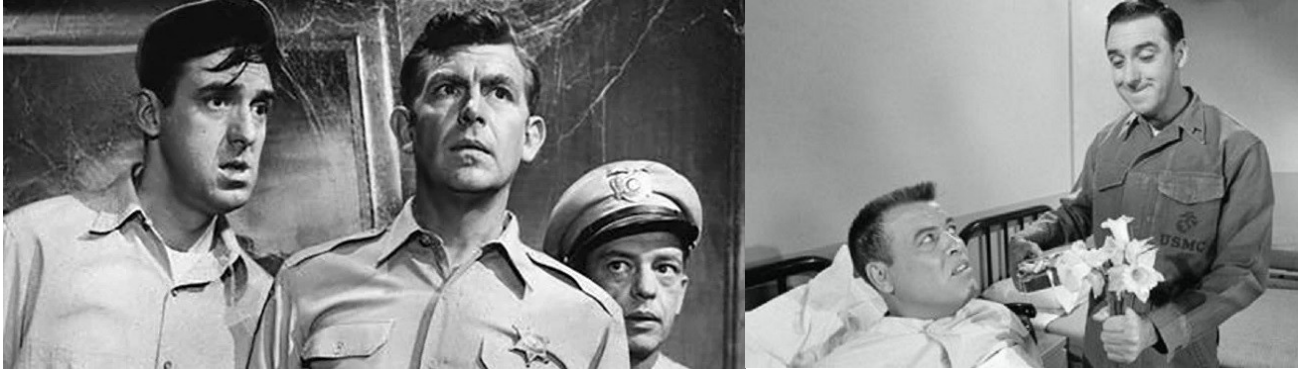


# Surprise, Surprise, Surprise!



The package was plain  
light brown as usual  
no special markings  
except the word "danger" written all over it  
in invisible ink.

There was no return address  
no way to trace it back  
to its source  
no lettering save for the person  
to whom it was addressed

which was not me.

No hint as to the what or why of it  
adorned its plain features  
no postage even.  
An enigma wrapped neatly in a box  
no doubt filled with intrigue.

Tempting though it was to delve into its mysteries

I did not.

By law and by conscience  
The thing had to be delivered  
its contents intact  
to its rightful owner  
who I do not know well

but well enough.

So I gave it to you.

# Surprise, Surprise, Surprise!

April 9, 2023  
(Easter Sunday)

DAY 9 PROMPT: Imagine you receive an unexpected delivery. It's a box—maybe a small one, maybe a big wooden crate—labeled “danger.” What's inside? Why is it dangerous? Write a poem in which this dangerous thing arrives unexpectedly.

Prompter's note: Today's prompt is all about twists and turns and surprises.

Notice how placing the unexpected delivery at the beginning creates a very different poem from one in which it's placed at the end, or in the middle.

*When* the reader is surprised matters just as much as the surprise itself.

CREDITS: [Promo still](#) courtesy CBS Television Distribution. Poetry by B Shawn Clark.

ABOUT 30 in 30: April is National Poetry Month. Poets participating in “30 in 30” strive to write at least one poem each day. The prompts for this series were provided by Ella Peary and Emily Harstone, hosts of a 2023 poetry workshop sponsored by *Authors Publish*.