

BRENDAN CONSTANTINE

The Long While

We'd been sitting I don't know
how long, candles having that
effect on time, when you leant

across & said, What the country
needs is a servant class.

Words
that pushed me back in my seat.
No, you said, I mean an actual

class like a school, where we'd
all learn to serve. There'd be
whole semesters devoted to

waiting your turn or bowing or
scrubbing a patch of red carpet.
People would be graded on

not asking about their grades.
What do you think?

I thought
we'd been here quite a while
without seeing a menu. Then

I remembered how late it was,
we were in a barn, the table
between us a bed of straw.