

The Party

Janet McCann

this party in all the rooms
of the old frame house,
laughter in the high bedrooms
washing out over the porches like light,
over the groups
scattered across the lawn,

friends sitting in growing shadows
under the bushes in dusk
and all the windows in the house open!

they sit on wooden railings,
on the porch swing, the steps bleached bare,
on all the floors in the house
and in the deep grass.

you might catch a glimpse of yourself
standing in another doorway,
or hear your dead grandfather's voice
in the murmur
next to the forsythia.

in every room a different scene,
but none of them are strange
nor does anyone look up as you pass,
not the girl crowned with braids
or the bluejeaned boy with his hand
on her shoulder. Not the old couple
poring over a map.

it will be much later
when we all go home. Calling goodbyes
across the dark garden,
goodbyes echoing back
from the lawn chairs,
the peeling porch railing.