

Conjugation

An instance here or there and then the dream.
An elevator up to the ground floor
wedding party in a poppy field of strangers
talking to no one in particular
of where they've been, where they think they're going,
who they know or knew and when, and how
under what circumstances the day unfolds
its weather or not. The bride's parents, a couple
themselves once, cried and the groom's best man,
drunk again, told off-color tales out of school
that let people secretly laugh at him
behind their bubbly flutes while at the same time
savoring the put-downs of the joyful conjugate,
knowing everything will not work out
but end in trite variations on a theme:
bluejeans off and on, body parts
juxtaposed, vital fluids exchanged,
someone with the same name but different eyes
promising more than anyone could hope for,
giving each other to one another
with all the sincerity and best intentions
Dionysos "*the god who comes*" but doesn't
anymore might offer in consolation
for the absence of all but vicarious orgies
as the sweet musk of desire fills the air
and the sun goes down lengthening shadows
extending from some of the guests' cloven feet
as they give their best to the drooping maid of honor
wondering where that lucky girl has gone
who caught the bouquet with such a smile on her lips
hoping against hope that this might mean the little
point of emptiness she feels inside
soon will quicken into something she can count on
when all the suits and ties and party dresses
are taken off for good and the lights go on
in room after room where those who weren't invited,
having once sailed on ghostships of their own,
do the dirty work of cleaning up
the mess of spilled drinks and half-eaten cake
left behind by those who were.