

The Party at Elaine's

“I saw you at Elaine’s”
he said
“I hope that’s right”

I let it go
 as you might
 a loose comment
 of any sort

Ravens flew by
 in the distance
in the western part of
 the evening

It was
an
apologetic gesture

we could have been talking
about
most anything
 and it would
 not have mattered

after awhile
we shook hands
 and said goodnight

He wanted to know Elaine
and
I knew her
 only slightly
She had these

parties you went to
on 51st St.
where the numbers
go up and down
in different ways
from one avenue to the next
and there are trees
in plots
between cement spaces

It was like one of those
salons
in Paris
where they
sneer
at the latest
impressionist exhibit
or something

You went up
these
thickly carpeted stairs
three or four flights
I think it was
and the door opens
in a blast of talk
loud conversations
are going on
you can't hear a thing

lots of wine
and cheese & crackers
that's it
no one says hello
so after awhile

you leave

On the way down
you're
bound to meet someone
on the stairs
and chat
and even
climb back up
to the party
if it's interesting

I saw him again
a few days later
at a café
and again
he made hints
about meeting Elaine
and
I had to explain
to him
I really didn't know her
could he
learn to
leave me alone
but he
bought me a coffee
and we sat
and talked for awhile
"So you don't
know her at all"
he asked?

I'd like to
know her better

I said
She's very beautiful
Elaine is hard to describe
because
she contains herself so well
tall, a nice figure
long dark hair

it's her sense of humor
It's suddenly
on the surface
and exposed
and it makes you feel
included
and interesting
That she might like you
means
that you're
worth liking
and she looks
foreword
to seeing you again

her humor is honest
and bursting out
and you want to
experience more of that
like a good wine

"But it's always the same"
I tell him
"you run into one another
in the café
and she's delighted
but already late

and so on

you could just as easily
disappear
and never be heard from
again

it's alright
I guess
Life is short
and there's a lot to do"