

Terence Young

The Party

They were told the party was on.
They were told everyone would be at the party.

They should come. They should really come.

But they were of two minds.

It's a party, they said in one mind.
It's a party, they said in the other mind.

Both statements were equally true.

It was a question of timing.
It was a question of distance.

But it was neither of those things.

Do we go to parties, they asked themselves.
Do we like parties, they asked themselves.

Now they were getting somewhere.

(They had been to parties.
There were pictures.)

Parties are like Christmas, she said.
I know exactly what you mean, he said.

She went on to tell him why parties were like Christmas.
He listened politely, saying only, I know, I know and thinking

parties are like sand,
parties are like water on level ground
parties are like the wind beneath a door.

When she was finished, she asked,
Aren't we done with parties?

What do you mean by done, he asked.
You know what I mean, she said.

True, he did. But he didn't like the idea
of being done with anything.

What's the point, she asked.
Does there have to be a point, he asked.

I knew you were going to say that, she said.
It's a celebration, he said.

All parties are a celebration, she said.
I knew you were going to say that, he said.

The celebration isn't important, she said.
It's the excuse.

The excuse for what, he asked.
Parties are for getting laid, she said.

Getting laid is like sand, he said.
Getting laid is like water on level ground, she said.
Getting laid is like the wind beneath a door, he said.

Getting laid is like Christmas, they agreed.

In the end they chose not to think about the party.
In the end he came upon her washing her hair.
In the end she interrupted him shaving.

In the end they had a good time.
In the end they left early.
In the end they drifted home.