A Poem for Tonia

Is that old man you know who?
you said looking down over
the gallery balcony at a view
of a thinning pate. Truly?
Would he say looking at us: those two
though carefully made up show
around their necks the touch of crepe
and keep their hands well out of sight.
But mostly it is the balcony I enjoy
leaning against it with wider waists
"You have a waist still!" you exclaimed
embracing me with an old friend’s frisk
as if you were in the police. How good
the balcony felt that afternoon
as if everything that had ever passed
had been in a different kind of air
and now, we ourselves, were art
walking equably around the exhibits
stepping back or peering at a texture
giving everything our wise consideration.

ELIZABETH SMITHER