

## 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