**The Night of the Dance**
The cold moon hangs to the sky by its horn,
   And centres its gaze on me;
The stars, like eyes in reverie,
Their westering as for a while forborne,
   Quiz downward curiously.

Old Robert draws the backbrand in,
   The green logs steam and spit;
The half-awakened sparrows flit
From the riddled thatch; and owls begin
   To whoo from the gable-slit.

Yes; far and nigh things seem to know
   Sweet scenes are impending here;
That all is prepared; that the hour is near
For welcomes, fellowships, and flow
   Of sally, song, and cheer;

That spigots are pulled and viols strung;
   That soon will arise the sound
Of measures trod to tunes renowned;
That She will return in Love’s low tongue
   My vows as we wheel around.

 —Thomas Hardy

 **Danse Russe**

If I when my wife is sleeping

and the baby and Kathleen

are sleeping

and the sun is a flame-white disc

in silken mists

above shining trees,—

if I in my north room

dance naked, grotesquely

before my mirror

waving my shirt round my head

and singing softly to myself:

“I am lonely, lonely.

I was born to be lonely,

I am best so!”

If I admire my arms, my face,

my shoulders, flanks, buttocks

against the yellow drawn shades,—

Who shall say I am not

the happy genius of my household?

 —William Carlos Williams

 **Dance of the Macabre Mice**

In the land of turkeys in turkey weather
At the base of the statue, we go round and round.
What a beautiful history, beautiful surprise!
Monsieur is on horseback. The horse is covered with mice.

This dance has no name. It is a hungry dance.
We dance it out to the tip of Monsieur’s sword,
Reading the lordly language of the inscription,
Which is like zithers and tambourines combined:

The Founder of the State. Whoever founded
A state that was free, in the dead of winter, from mice?
What a beautiful tableau tinted and towering,
The arm of bronze outstretched against all evil!

 —Wallace Stevens

 **At the Old Place**

Joe is restless and so am I, so restless.

Button’s buddy lips frame “L G T TH O P?”

across the bar. “Yes!” I cry, for dancing’s

my soul delight. (Feet! Feet!) “Come on!”

Through the streets we skip like swallows.

Howard malingers. (Come on, Howard.) Ashes

malingers. (Come on, J.A.) Dick malingers.

(Come on, Dick.) Alvin darts ahead. (Wait up,

Alvin.) Jack, Earl, and Someone don't come.

Down the dark stairs drifts the steaming cha-

cha-cha. Through the urine and smoke we charge

to the floor. Wrapped in Ashes’ arms I glide.

(It’s heaven!) Button lindys with me. (It’s

heaven!) Joe’s two-steps, too, are incredible,

and then a fast rhumba with Alvin, like skipping

on toothpicks. And the interminable intermissions,

we have them. Jack, Earl and Someone drift

guiltily in. “I knew they were gay

the minute I laid eyes on them!” screams John.

How ashamed they are of us! we hope.

 —Frank O’Hara