

Wedding Guests

by [Letitia Cary](#) (June 2024)



The Cathedrals of Fifth Avenue— Florine Stettheimer, 1931

When I saw you in the nave,
A subtle wink at me you gave;
"Surreptitious," you said we ought to be,
So we stood in nervous symmetry,
Still from a distance I could admire
Those parts of you that tend to inspire:
Your eyes pale green as aventurine,
Your nose formidably aquiline,
Your irreverent wit like that of a jester,
Your genius that of a mad professor,
Wearing a top hat and morning suit,
You winked again, but still astute,
For our two friends were getting married—
Away with love we could not yet be carried—
So I stared at the triune stained glass,
Waiting for that tense moment to pass,
Waiting for metaphors to enter my head,
Then came something Bertolt Brecht said:
Old and new wisdom mix well, unlike wine,
The alchemy between us knows no time;
You bottle my spirit, only twenty years older,
The same, but more vivacious, bolder,
Hermaphroditic halves in secret amour,
Grecian lovers amid the Latin bore,
Nothing could make me repent our sin,
Not even the choir's inaugural hymn,
Not even when we had to sit in place;
Nothing could sully the smile on my face,
For you, the groomsman, there by the font,
Are everything that I could possibly want,
So prim and proper in the upright pew,
I spent the whole service looking at you,
And when to the altar the young bride headed,
I wished it was us two being wedded.

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Letitia Cary is the pseudonym of a writer from Oxfordshire, England. She takes her name from the 17th century noblewoman who hosted The Great Tew Circle, a group of theologians and poets who discussed controversial ideas with her husband Lucius, the 2nd Viscount Falkland.

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