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The Peasant Dance

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THE PEASANT DANCE

A Brueghel Painting

You can not see me.
I am standing behind the man
who is painting a festival
of villagers
that have rigor mortis
from lifting their feet
in the same position
and may stay rigid
for hundreds of years.

Still wondering
when they might
stop dancing, the villagers
look apprehensive
as a first kiss
the stable boy
is trying to give
his sweetheart.

Everyone is tired
of the repetitious
farmer playing
a drunken bagpipe tune,
but are polite
and do not show
their disgust.

Two drinkers quarrel
finding out they have
slept with each other's wife.
The first stretches both arms out
asking forgiveness. The second
raises one hand
blessing him. For their sin,

the wives have shrunken
to the size of dwarfs.
The women are smaller
than the table. In an hour,
they will completely disappear.