

## *Leaning Into the Party*

STEPHEN ROBERTS

I was having a good time at the party  
until I leaned back on the door frame  
into the kitchen, dislodging an antique  
serving platter from the wall where  
it had hung, presumably for years,  
from a single bent nail, well driven,  
according to the hostess, by an ancestor  
with some degree of separation yet  
close enough to be reminisced over,  
as great old uncle so-and-so who had  
built the dwelling, over a century ago.

The lady of the house had just finished  
elaborating on the history and all family  
connections when I, simply trying to relax,  
leaned against her ancestor's handiwork  
causing the exquisitely hand-painted plate  
to slip and shatter in the kitchen doorway.  
Screaming silently through her inherited  
violet eyes, but smiling, she poured me  
a second glass of a richly dark cabernet.  
Then I ambled into her living room  
onto the amazingly plush, white carpet.