

Going-Away Party

ELTON GLASER

Inside the white envelope, I find
An invitation to my death.
You can steam off the stamps,
If you want to, for your sad collection.

It says my presence is required
For my absence: black tie and no regrets.
And no wine, no dancing, no small talk
About the weather and the war.

The date's not named, nor the place.
A blank ticket entitles you
To the silent auction afterwards
For everything I'll leave behind.

When I'm gone, if you want to send
Some last sweet word or curse,
Write in care of the nonreturn address:
Where even the shadows have shadows.