

Five Minutes Earlier

You would have seen
the wedding gown
and a seated crowd

the flashing camera,
the change of clothes
and the children with ice cream

now the music screams
through the speaker boxes
and the young men gyrate in the aisle

for those who watched bemused
and express good wishes
for the departed bride

the rice still being tossed
by a young girl
at a handsome boy

the food still served
to the ones who came late
or were occupied earlier

and the father now composed
stands among the chairs
and reminisces with friends

the mother saddened
moves wearily upstairs
with consoling relatives

and in the crowd
the faces turn about
while people search for a mark

to carry away in memory
of another wedding day
and a new life—for someone else.

KIN MAN YOUNG TAI