

Dear Anne Spencer

From cherry blossom season, I write
to inform you the parties are still
stupid here. Last night I succumbed
to cocktails at the book-strewn home
of a fund-raising politician, trim as a
tulip, who set out platters of shrimp:
pink fingers, crooked. High-ceilinged rooms
were jammed with old men gone septic
under buttons, under powdery cheeks.
Over tea in your garden, I'd say more,
but for now let's admit I was rude,
escaping through a racket of
invisible birds, finding a friendlier
table, nibbling syllables of cheese
with women in mourning, whose
joints are painfully inflamed.
I'm tired, Mrs. Spencer, of meanness
and NDAs. I wish I could bring by
some birdsong, or the rose-scented
argument of what I've been reading,
this rainy heap of magazines.
One hopes for a breeze, impolite,
rowdy, to rip the gorgeous petals
down. One hopes to be it. I'd pen
you a note from that town in pretty tatters.
Until then I am admiringly
yours, a flock of cedar waxwings,
a bristle of spears that would rather,
some unsecretive day, be lush
and ant-starred peonies. Sincerely.