

## LILY OF THE VALLEY

*Seek shelter*, said the man.  
But where will I find her?  
*You jump to conclusions, kid* —

*that she's a woman, for one.*  
*It might just be the way a leaf*  
*curls, plumb weighed down*

*by porcellaneous bells,*  
*odoriferous bells, the...Yes,*  
I butted in...*Convallaria majalis.*

But you see, I went on —  
it was dark in that house  
and I was whirling with a wraith,

helter-skelter, beds, toys  
and lamps to bump in — then  
she threw me off spinning,

and stood there, arms akimbo —  
Have you danced with her?  
He said — *don't ask; I told you*

*seek shelter.* Bizarre, I said,  
so I should build a hut, when  
I can't drive a nail straight,

*crosscut? I'll help you,* he said.  
So we walked into the valley  
found a porch of an abandoned house

and sat there a spell. I saw a wasp  
dragging a larva bigger than itself.  
In the yellowing light of afternoon

we raised up walls, even tacked up  
a dusty photograph of a couple  
holding hands. Before I knew it

the sun had set, I was alone, and  
through the loosely thatched roof  
I could see the Pleiades.