

Exclusive

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Lovers are that way, aren't they?
Donne saw it: *One little room*
an everywhere! Eyes lock,
hearts too, and soon we're part of
life's parade, no longer standing on the curb,
watching. For a while, at least, others recede,
become background music, faintly heard.
We're the still point of an envious world.

Perhaps everybody covets such cachet,
for that's the way with neighborhoods, too,
the gated kind, some with sleepy keepers
checking guests in and out, day and night,
never admitting the uncredentialed other,
consulting lists, making calls to assure us
that we alone get to say, Come in.

Call us elitist! Never mind—
we simply want things the way
we want them. We'll be flattered
to know you believe we were first
off the boat, first to claim our place,
the first of the first of The First.
Old Carl Sandburg, living in Carolina
among his goats, was asked to say the ugliest
word in our language. To which question
he replied, *exclusive*.