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The Embarkation for Cythera

Lee Van Demarr

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How Far / Lee Van Demarr

How far my hand has gone
Since you slept beside me.
In the morning it is turned up
on the pillow like a shell on a beach,
and in it the sound of water
roars on the shore across the sea.
Or it is my blood. In the early
light I lift it up and practice
letting go of your breast, your hair.
It has learned nothing else.
We will go through the day of motions
freed by demands until it
is time to sleep again. Then
we will be parted by the fear
of dreams and on its beach
the hand close around its sound.
I listen to the dark, to the wave's separation.
How fragile the sea is.

The Embarkation for Cythera / Lee Van Demarr

after Watteau

A golden light is all dissolved
Among trees and statutes and ladies
As the parties saunter along
Down to the grey-green sea below.
The gentlemen help the ladies
Since the cherubim ascend like
Frightened smoke and the boats are not
In sight, and perhaps they will be
Late. But everyone keeps walking
And their clothes are elegant, hanging
So richly right on them, soft
Vermillion, delicate orange.
The statue grown over with wild
Roses has no arms and all
Around the air and sky blur with
A steady devotion of fog.