

Julian Symons

(1912-1994)



Hart Crane (c.1938)

He jumped, seeing an island like a hand,
And where he lived, the hands were all unfriendly.
The island rose to take him: at the end
He saw all things unclearly.

Even the sea had become strange to him: he entered
To trace the visionary company of love, the voice
He heard an instant in the wind, that said
There was no hand, no choice.

And the complete vision of love or the swelling sea
Was what he could never attain; he always wanted
To live near bridges; envied the sailors, free
And happy, never tainted.

By the terrible life of the city and the dark failures
That broke his heart. He entered the sea, his fall
Made the steamer go round and round like a dog in circles,
And the island became a wall.