

And you, the Self Who Sees, you may see your mast-hemmed  
 world again,  
 a score of hundred years ahead, when our ruined land has yielded  
 to a new wilderness, another rising.

We must bid this ship of grass farewell, try to stash a treasure  
 in its flooding hold worth saving—  
 a relic or a skeleton remaining when the flesh is washed away.

We have our place in the dress-parade of history—the rise and fall,  
 like pitching, moon-pulled waves:

You rode the rising peak, the flashing top of promise;  
 we ride the trough, slide into the ditch, the inexorable ditch of  
 decay.

## **Margaret Stuart**

### **LAUNCH PAD**

a giant stands astride coquina beaches  
 on cape canaveral, a hypocaust  
 beneath his feet is hell, a terminal  
 en route to heaven, where would-be travelers  
 may book expensive reservations  
 for hyperborean polemic tours.  
 created by other giants with minds  
 of steel, symbol of art and science years  
 before his time, patrician host for space ships,  
 patient sentinel enslaved in duty,  
 as bound as was prometheus but without  
 a hercules to cut the nuclear chains.  
 in vain he offers flaming gifts in lieu  
 of flight beside columbia.