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## Beautiful Lesson of the I

Frances Brent

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Project MUSE.[muse.jhu.edu/book/9873](https://muse.jhu.edu/book/9873).



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PORT DE LA ROCHELLE

Composed out of the filings of gold and ivory,  
miniature turbaned figures collect by the stone embankment:  
A laborer unpacks his donkey, another rolls his barrel,  
the docksman lowers his wooden pole to water in the cove—

And this is the moment just after commotion  
when the beech trees are ragged and tall plaster houses  
stack about like cartons.

The eavesdropper, shielded in the window above the seawall,  
pauses in a particle of ecstasy before continuing  
thought to its vanishing point.

*In the next life, what does  
a donkey become?*