Necessary Light

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Published by Utah State University Press

Fargnoli, Patricia.
Necessary Light.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/9335.

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MINIATURE

*after Yannis Ritsos*

She lifts slices of orange from the cutting board
and lays them overlapping
on a plate with blue flowers,
the asters that grow in profusion
by her roadside.
Leaned back into the swirl
of his smoke, he stares at the opposite wall
as if something has disturbed it
and he has no control.
A mechanical hum,
the only sound in the room
and that, soft, almost silent.
Something sad and unassailable
has drifted away from them
and will not return.
They pretend they did not see it go.
They pretend love is still possible,
the way asters cling to some diminished
version of blue long past their peak season.
They pretend their lives are an endless rolling
through the one moment they share here
and on to the next.