

Paul Valéry
Translated by Louis E. Gourgeois

View

If the beach leans, and if
A shadow wears away the eye and cries
And if the sky is weeping, so,
There is purity of salt on the teeth

Of the virgin air which she
Nurtures in herself then breathes out
In the direction of the seabreeze
Grown weary in its dynasty

She who does not hear them
When the lips flutter in the wind
Plays at uttering a thousand
Empty words which mutate

Under the wet flash of teeth
Where the mildest flame abounds.