

- R. W. Chapman (Oxford, 1924), p. 35. Further references to this edition are given in parentheses in the text.
8. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 45 (1775), 37.
 9. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 45 (1775), 85-86.
 10. Samuel Johnson, *Works* (Oxford, 1825), VI, 136.
 11. *Letters*, II, 3.

SHELL IN A CITY ROOM

Sara Van Alstyne Allen

Here on the polished wood
The shell has come to rest.
Tossed by strange tides and worried by deep winds
It comes at last to the quiet harbour of this room.
It is not a flower, yet it holds as does the rose
Colour of sunrise and it keeps
The delicate tint of that unending hour.

What was the nature of the creature
Once concealed within this fluted space
Will never be revealed.
The emptiness now speaks aloud
Surrounding and rejecting the curious face
Bent like an old sun over this entity
Whose substance and whose essence is the sea.