ON THE REVOLUTIONS OF SPACE

Megan Gannon

(In Which Jane Dudley's Mistaken Cosmology
Reveals her True Intent to Queen Mary)

*Good madam, of goodness
remember me.* How like some
celestial body I have kept to this
fixed circumference, skirting
in my skirts the sphere
of influence. Majesty, I have been
as hoops in a farthingale, encircling
and concealing from prying eyes
the deeds of three queens.
Some had sought to overstep
this distance, an idea
as disallowed as sun supplanting
earth at heaven's core.
If once I positioned myself
closer to the body corporate,
it was only as laces tightened
about flesh wedded to my flesh,
a pressure that stifles less
than fortifies the spine. Would
I were free of these changing
fashions, that admiring
lights might warm without
drawing close. Lady, I burn
in the balance; your oscillations
agitate oceans in ebb and flood.
Would I knew the formula for these tides.