Queen-Anne’s Lace

By William Carlos Williams

Her body is not so white as anemone petals nor so smooth—nor so remote a thing. It is a field of the wild carrot taking the field by force; the grass does not raise above it. Here is no question of whiteness, white as can be, with a purple mole at the center of each flower. Each flower is a hand’s span of her whiteness. Wherever his hand has lain there is a tiny purple blemish. Each part is a blossom under his touch to which the fibres of her being stem one by one, each to its end, until the whole field is a white desire, empty, a single stem, a cluster, flower by flower, a pious wish to whiteness gone over—or nothing.
