Paper Women
Jean Pierre Vallotton
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PAPER WOMEN

He has paper loves.
Each on her own sheet is carefully drawn: her profile, unexpected meandering hollows, a supple roundness, secret curves; her peculiar rhythm evoked by pencil strokes, lascivious dance or tender abandon. Her unique perfume, as by magic, rises from the hand that retraces her calculated poses and refusals, her cunning, her languor.

Whether she is born of past memories or of a future dream, to each he bestows the impassioned ardor of an ephemeral night, absolute devotion. For under penalty of perishing from the aftermath of his rapture, he must always, without hesitation, at the first incendiary ray of sun, impassively burn the unspoilt image of his fulfilled love.

From Pièces brèves en quart de ton
Translated from the French by James Vladimir Gill