

Modernist Poetry

T. S. ELIOT (1888-1965)	1
The Hollow Men (1925).....	1
Ezra POUND (1885-1972)	5
In a Station of the Metro (1913).....	5
William Carlos WILLIAMS (1883-1963)	6
The Young Housewife (1916)	6
The Red Wheelbarrow (1923)	6
This Is Just to Say (1934)	7
A Sort of a Song (1944).....	7
Wallace STEVENS (1879-1955)	8
Anecdote of the Jar (1919)	8
Gertrude STEIN (1874-1946)	9
Tender Buttons (1914).....	9
H. D. (Hilda DOOLITTLE, 1886-1961)	14
Oread (1924).....	14
Helen (1924)	14
Mina LOY (1882-1966)	15
Parturition (1914).....	15
Three Moments in Paris (1915)	19
Langston HUGHES (1902-1967)	23
I, Too (1945).....	23

T. S. ELIOT (1888-1965)

The Hollow Men (1925)

Mistah Kurtz—he dead.

A penny for the Old Guy

I

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
Our dried voices, when
We whisper together
Are quiet and meaningless
As wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar

Shape without form, shade without colour,
Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

Those who have crossed
With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom
Remember us—if at all—not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men.

II

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream kingdom
These do not appear:
There, the eyes are
Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing
More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star.

Let me be no nearer
In death's dream kingdom
Let me also wear
Such deliberate disguises
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
In a field
Behaving as the wind behaves
No nearer—

Not that final meeting
In the twilight kingdom

III

This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Is it like this
 In death's other kingdom
 Waking alone
 At the hour when we are
 Trembling with tenderness
 Lips that would kiss
 Form prayers to broken stone.

IV

The eyes are not here
 There are no eyes here
 In this valley of dying stars
 In this hollow valley
 This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

In this last of meeting places
 We grope together
 And avoid speech
 Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless
 The eyes reappear
 As the perpetual star
 Multifoliate rose
 Of death's twilight kingdom
 The hope only
 Of empty men.

V

*Here we go round the prickly pear
 Prickly pear prickly pear
 Here we go round the prickly pear
 At five o'clock in the morning.*

Between the idea
 And the reality
 Between the motion
 And the act
 Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

Between the conception
 And the creation
 Between the emotion
 And the response
 Falls the Shadow

Life is very long

Between the desire
 And the spasm
 Between the potency
 And the existence
 Between the essence
 And the descent
 Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

For Thine is
 Life is
 For Thine is the

*This is the way the world ends
 This is the way the world ends
 This is the way the world ends
 Not with a bang but a whimper.*

Ezra POUND (1885-1972)

In a Station of the Metro (1913)

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

William Carlos WILLIAMS (1883-1963)

The Young Housewife (1916)

At ten A.M. the young housewife
moves about in negligee behind
the wooden walls of her husband's house.
I pass solitary in my car.

Then again she comes to the curb
to call the ice-man, fish-man, and stands
shy, uncorseted, tucking in
stray ends of hair, and I compare her
to a fallen leaf.

The noiseless wheels of my car
rush with a crackling sound over
dried leaves as I bow and pass smiling.

The Red Wheelbarrow (1923)

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens.

This Is Just to Say (1934)

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

A Sort of a Song (1944)

Let the snake wait under
his weed
and the writing
be of words, slow and quick, sharp
to strike, quiet to wait,
sleepless.

—through metaphor to reconcile
the people and the stones.
Compose. (No ideas
but in things) Invent!
Saxifrage is my flower that splits
the rocks.

Wallace STEVENS (1879-1955)

Anecdote of the Jar (1919)

I placed a jar in Tennessee,
And round it was, upon a hill.
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled around, no longer wild.
The jar was round upon the ground
And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.
The jar was gray and bare.
It did not give of bird or bush,
Like nothing else in Tennessee.

Gertrude STEIN (1874-1946)

Tender Buttons (1914)

OBJECTS

A CARAFE, THAT IS A BLIND GLASS.

A kind in glass and a cousin, a spectacle and nothing strange a single hurt color and an arrangement in a system to pointing. All this and not ordinary, not unordered in not resembling. The difference is spreading.

GLAZED GLITTER.

Nickel, what is nickel, it is originally rid of a cover.

The change in that is that red weakens an hour. The change has come. There is no search. But there is, there is that hope and that interpretation and sometime, surely any is unwelcome, sometime there is breath and there will be a sinecure and charming very charming is that clean and cleansing. Certainly glittering is handsome and convincing.

There is no gratitude in mercy and in medicine. There can be breakages in Japanese. That is no programme. That is no color chosen. It was chosen yesterday, that showed spitting and perhaps washing and polishing. It certainly showed no obligation and perhaps if borrowing is not natural there is some use in giving.

A SUBSTANCE IN A CUSHION.

The change of color is likely and a difference a very little difference is prepared. Sugar is not a vegetable.

Callous is something that hardening leaves behind what will be soft if there is a genuine interest in there being present as many girls as men. Does this change. It shows that dirt is clean when there is a volume.

A cushion has that cover. Supposing you do not like to change, supposing it is very clean that there is no change in appearance, supposing that there is regularity and a costume is that any the worse than an oyster and an exchange. Come to season that is there any extreme use in feather and cotton. Is there not much more joy in a table and more chairs and very likely roundness and a place to put them.

A circle of fine card board and a chance to see a tassel.

What is the use of a violent kind of delightfulness if there is no pleasure in not getting tired of it. The question does not come before there is a quotation. In any kind of place there is a top to covering and it is a pleasure at any rate there is some venturing in refusing to believe nonsense. It shows what use there is in a whole piece if one uses it and it is extreme and very likely the little things could be dearer but in any case there is a bargain and if there is the best thing to do is to take it away and wear it and then be reckless be reckless and resolved on returning gratitude.

Light blue and the same red with purple makes a change. It shows that there is no mistake. Any pink shows that and very likely it is reasonable. Very likely there should not be a finer fancy present. Some increase means a calamity and this is the best preparation for three and more being together. A little calm is so ordinary and in any case there is sweetness and some of that.

A seal and matches and a swan and ivy and a suit.

A closet, a closet does not connect under the bed. The band if it is white and black, the band has a green string. A sight a whole sight and a little groan grinding makes a trimming such a sweet singing trimming and a red thing not a round thing but a white thing, a red thing and a white thing.

The disgrace is not in carelessness nor even in sewing it comes out out of the way.

What is the sash like. The sash is not like anything mustard it is not like a same thing that has stripes, it is not even more hurt than that, it has a little top.

A BOX.

Out of kindness comes redness and out of rudeness comes rapid same question, out of an eye comes research, out of selection comes

painful cattle. So then the order is that a white way of being round is something suggesting a pin and is it disappointing, it is not, it is so rudimentary to be analysed and see a fine substance strangely, it is so earnest to have a green point not to red but to point again.

A PIECE OF COFFEE.

More of double.

A place in no new table.

A single image is not splendor. Dirty is yellow. A sign of more in not mentioned. A piece of coffee is not a detainer. The resemblance to yellow is dirtier and distincter. The clean mixture is whiter and not coal color, never more coal color than altogether.

The sight of a reason, the same sight slighter, the sight of a simpler negative answer, the same sore sounder, the intention to wishing, the same splendor, the same furniture.

The time to show a message is when too late and later there is no hanging in a blight.

A not torn rose-wood color. If it is not dangerous then a pleasure and more than any other if it is cheap is not cheaper. The amusing side is that the sooner there are no fewer the more certain is the necessity dwindled. Supposing that the case contained rose-wood and a color. Supposing that there was no reason for a distress and more likely for a number, supposing that there was no astonishment, is it not necessary to mingle astonishment.

The settling of stationing cleaning is one way not to shatter scatter and scattering. The one way to use custom is to use soap and silk for cleaning. The one way to see cotton is to have a design concentrating the illusion and the illustration. The perfect way is to accustom the thing to have a lining and the shape of a ribbon and to be solid, quite solid in standing and to use heaviness in morning. It is light enough in that. It has that shape nicely. Very nicely may not be exaggerating. Very strongly may be sincerely fainting. May be strangely flattering. May not be strange in everything. May not be strange to.

DIRT AND NOT COPPER.

Dirt and not copper makes a color darker. It makes the shape so heavy and makes no melody harder.

It makes mercy and relaxation and even a strength to spread a table fuller. There are more places not empty. They see cover.

NOTHING ELEGANT.

A charm a single charm is doubtful. If the red is rose and there is a gate surrounding it, if inside is let in and there places change then certainly something is upright. It is earnest.

MILDRED'S UMBRELLA.

A cause and no curve, a cause and loud enough, a cause and extra a loud clash and an extra wagon, a sign of extra, a sac a small sac and an established color and cunning, a slender grey and no ribbon, this means a loss a great loss a restitution.

A METHOD OF A CLOAK.

A single climb to a line, a straight exchange to a cane, a desperate adventure and courage and a clock, all this which is a system, which has feeling, which has resignation and success, all makes an attractive black silver.

A RED STAMP.

If lilies are lily white if they exhaust noise and distance and even dust, if they dusty will dirt a surface that has no extreme grace, if they do this and it is not necessary it is not at all necessary if they do this they need a catalogue.

A BOX.

A large box is handily made of what is necessary to replace any substance. Suppose an example is necessary, the plainer it is made the

more reason there is for some outward recognition that there is a result.

A box is made sometimes and them to see to see to it neatly and to have the holes stopped up makes it necessary to use paper.

A custom which is necessary when a box is used and taken is that a large part of the time there are three which have different connections. The one is on the table. The two are on the table. The three are on the table. The one, one is the same length as is shown by the cover being longer. The other is different there is more cover that shows it. The other is different and that makes the corners have the same shade the eight are in singular arrangement to make four necessary.

Lax, to have corners, to be lighter than some weight, to indicate a wedding journey, to last brown and not curious, to be wealthy, cigarettes are established by length and by doubling.

Left open, to be left pounded, to be left closed, to be circulating in summer and winter, and sick color that is grey that is not dusty and red shows, to be sure cigarettes do measure an empty length sooner than a choice in color.

Winged, to be winged means that white is yellow and pieces pieces that are brown are dust color if dust is washed off, then it is choice that is to say it is fitting cigarettes sooner than paper.

An increase why is an increase idle, why is silver cloister, why is the spark brighter, if it is brighter is there any result, hardly more than ever.

H. D. (Hilda DOOLITTLE, 1886-1961)

Oread (1924)

Whirl up, sea—
whirl your pointed pines,
splash your great pines
on our rocks,
hurl your green over us,
cover us with your pools of fir.

Helen (1924)

All Greece hates
the still eyes in the white face,
the lustre as of olives
where she stands,
and the white hands.

All Greece reviles
the wan face when she smiles,
hating it deeper still
when it grows wan and white,
remembering past enchantments
and past ills.

Greece sees, unmoved,
God's daughter, born of love,
the beauty of cool feet
and slenderest knees,
could love indeed the maid,
only if she were laid,
white ash amid funereal cypresses.

Mina LOY (1882-1966)

Parturition (1914)

I am the centre
 Of a circle of pain
 Exceeding its boundaries in every direction

The business of the bland sun
 Has no affair with me
 In my congested cosmos of agony
 From which there is no escape
 On infinitely prolonged nerve-vibrations
 Or in contraction
 To the pinpoint nucleus of being

Locate an irritation	without
It is	within
	Within

It is without
 The sensitized area
 Is identical with the extensity
 Of intension

I am the false quantity
 In the harmony of physiological potentiality
 To which
 Gaining self-control
 I should be consonant
 In time

Pain is no stronger than the resisting force
 Pain calls up in me
 The struggle is equal

The open window is full of a voice
 A fashionable portrait painter
 Running upstairs to a woman's apartment
 Sings

“All the girls are tid'ly did'ly
 All the girls are nice
 Whether they wear their hair in curls
 Or —”

At the back of the thoughts to which I permit
 crystallization

The conception Brute
 Why?

 The irresponsibility of the male
 Leaves woman her superior Inferiority.
 He is running upstairs

I am climbing a distorted mountain of agony
 Incidentally with the exhaustion of control
 I reach the summit
 And gradually subside into anticipation of
 Repose
 Which never comes.
 For another mountain is growing up
 Which goaded by the unavoidable
 I must traverse
 Traversing myself

Something in the delirium of night hours
 Confuses while intensifying sensibility
 Blurring spatial contours
 So aiding elusion of the circumscribed
 That the gurgling of a crucified wild beast
 Comes from so far away
 And the foam on the stretched muscles of a mouth
 Is no part of myself
 There is a climax in sensibility
 When pain surpassing itself

Becomes exotic
 And the ego succeeds in unifying the positive and
 negative poles of sensation
 Uniting the opposing and resisting forces
 In lascivious revelation

Relaxation
 Negation of myself as a unit
 Vacuum interlude
 I should have been emptied of life
 Giving life
 For consciousness in crises races
 Through the subliminal deposits of evolutionary
 processes

Have I not
 Somewhere
 Scrutinized
 A dead white feathered moth
 Laying eggs?
 A moment
 Being realization
 Can
 Vitalized by cosmic initiation
 Furnish an adequate apology
 For the objective
 Agglomeration of activities
 Of a life
 LIFE
 A leap with nature
 Into the essence
 Of unpredicted Maternity
 Against my thigh
 Tough of infinitesimal motion
 Scarcely perceptible
 Undulation
 Warmth moisture

Stir of incipient life
 Precipitating into me
 The contents of the universe
 Mother I am
 Identical
 With infinite Maternity
 Indivisible
 Acutely
 I am absorbed
 Into
 The was—is—ever—shall—be
 Of cosmic reproductivity

Rises from the subconscious
 Impression of a cat
 With blind kittens
 Among her legs
 Same undulating life-stir
 I am that cat

Rises from the sub-conscious
 Impression of small animal carcass
 Covered with blue bottles
 —Epicurean—
 And through the insects
 Waves that same undulation of living
 Death
 Life
 I am knowing
 All about
 Unfolding

The next morning
 Each woman-of-the-people
 Tiptoeing the red pile of the carpet
 Doing hushed service
 Each woman-of-the-people

Wearing a halo
 A ludicrous little halo
 Of which she is sublimely unaware

I once heard in a church
 —Man and woman God made them—
 Thank God.

Three Moments in Paris (1915)

I.

ONE O'CLOCK AT NIGHT

Though you had never possessed me
 I had belonged to you since the beginning of time
 And sleepily I sat on your chair beside you
 Leaning against your shoulder
 And your careless arm across my back gesticulated
 As your indisputable male voice roared
 Through my brain and my body
 Arguing dynamic decomposition
 Of which I was understanding nothing
 Sleepily
 And the only less male voice of your brother pugilist of the intellect
 Boomed as it seemed to me so sleepy
 Across an interval of a thousand miles
 An interim of a thousand years
 But you who make more noise than any man in the world when you
 clear your throat
 Deafening woke me
 And I caught the thread of the argument
 Immediately assuming my personal mental attitude
 And ceased to be a woman

Beautiful half-hour of being a mere woman
 The animal woman
 Understanding nothing of man

But mastery and the security of imparted physical heat
 Indifferent to cerebral gymnastics
 Or regarding them as the self-indulgent play of children
 Or the thunder of alien gods
 But you woke me up
 Anyhow who am I that I should criticize your theories of plastic
 velocity

“Let us go home she is tired and wants to go to bed.”

II.

CAFE DU NEANT

Little tapers leaning lighted diagonally
 Stuck in coffin tables of the Cafe du Neant
 Leaning to the breath of baited bodies
 Like young poplars fringing the Loire

Eyes that are full of love
 And eyes that are full of kohl
 Projecting light across the fulsome ambience
 Trailing the rest of the animal behind them
 Telling of tales without words
 And lies of no consequence
 One way or another

The young lovers hermetically buttoned up in black
 To black cravat
 To the blue powder edge dusting the yellow throat
 What color could have been your bodies
 When last you put them away.

Nostalgic youth
 Holding your mistress's pricked finger
 In the indifferent flame of the taper
 Synthetic symbol of LIFE
 In this factitious chamber of DEATH
 The woman

As usual
 Is smiling as bravely
 As it is given to her to be brave
 While the brandy cherries
 In winking glasses
 Are decomposing
 Harmoniously
 With the flesh of spectators
 And at a given spot
 There is one
 Who
 Having the concentric lighting focussed precisely upon her
 Prophetically blossoms in perfect putrefaction
 Yet there are cabs outside the door.

III.

MAGASINS DU LOUVRE

All the virgin eyes in the world are made of glass

Long lines of boxes
 Of dolls
 Propped against banisters
 Walls and pillars
 Huddled on shelves
 And composite babies with arms extended
 Hang from the ceiling
 Beckoning
 Smiling
 In a profound silence
 Which the shop walker left trailing behind him
 When he ambled to the further end of the gallery
 To annoy the shop-girl
 All the virgin eyes in the world are made of glass
 They alone have the effrontery to
 Stare through the human soul
 Seeing nothing
 Between parted fringes

One cocotte wears a bowler hat and a sham camellia
And one an iridescent boa
For there are two of them
Passing
And the solicitous mouth of one is straight
The other curved to a static smile
They see the dolls
And for a moment their eyes relax
To a flicker of elements unconditionally primeval
And now averted
Seek each other's surreptitiously
To know if the other has seen
While mine are inextricably entangled with the pattern of the carpet
As eyes are apt to be
In their shame
Having surprised a gesture that is ultimately intimate

All the virgin eyes in the world are made of glass.

Langston HUGHES (1902-1967)

I, Too (1945)

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.