

Stephen Crane (1871-1900)
From *The Black Riders and Other Lines*, 1895

XLIV
I WAS IN THE DARKNESS;
I COULD NOT SEE MY WORDS
NOR THE WISHES OF MY HEART.
THEN SUDDENLY THERE WAS A GREAT LIGHT —

“LET ME INTO THE DARKNESS AGAIN.”

Edith Sitwell
Poetry

Ennobles the heart and the eyes,
and unveils the meaning of all things
upon which the heart and the eyes dwell.
It discovers the secret rays of the universe,
and restores to us forgotten paradises.
(1954)

Ezra Pound (1885-1972)
In a Station of the Metro

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.
(1913, 1916)

Imagism (1912-1917) – The three principles of Imagism:

1. Direct treatment of the “thing” whether subjective or objective.
2. To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in the sequence of the metronome.

Definition of “Image”

An “Image” is that which presents an intellectual and emotional “complex” in an instant of time. ... It is the presentation of such a “complex” instantaneously which gives that sense of sudden liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art. It is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works.
(From *Poetry*, March 1913)

Haiku

The fallen blossom flies back to its branch:
A butterfly.

The footsteps of the cat upon the snow:
(are like) plum-blossoms.

T. E. Hulme (1883-1917)
Above the Dock

Above the quiet dock in midnight,
Tangled in the tall mast’s corded height,
Hangs the moon. What seemed so far away
Is but a child’s balloon forgotten after play.
(1912)

T. E. Hulme (1883-1917)
Autumn

A touch of cold in the Autumn night –
I walked abroad
And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge
Like a red-faced farmer.

I did not stop to speak, but nodded,
And round about were the wistful stars
With white faces like town children.
(1912)

Edward Thomas (1878-1917)
The Cherry Trees

The cherry trees bend over and are shedding,
On the old road where all that passed are dead,
Their petals, strewing the grass as for a wedding
This early May morn when there is none to wed.
(May 1916, 1917)

Amy Lowell (1874-1925)
Aubade

As I would free the white almond from the green husk
So would I strip your trappings off,
Beloved.
And fingering the smooth and polished kernel
I should see that in my hands glittered a gem beyond counting.
(1914)

H.D. (Hilda Doolittle, 1886-1961)
Oread

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.
(1914, 1924)

Carl Sandburg (1878-1967)
Fog

The fog comes
on little cat feet.

It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.
(1916)

William Carlos Williams (1883-1963)
The Red Wheelbarrow

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens
(1923)

published in New York by Huebsch in December 1916. Pound championed the book since his early reading of the manuscript for *The Egoist*, gave Joyce much encouragement and corresponded with him, and wrote an enthusiastic review in *The Egoist*):

Definition of “epiphany”

James Joyce

He was passing through Eccles’ St one evening, one misty evening, with all these thoughts dancing the dance of unrest in his brain when a trivial incident set him composing some ardent verses which he entitled a “Vilanelle of the Temptress.” A young lady was standing on the steps of one of those brown brick houses which seem the very incarnation of Irish paralysis. A young gentleman was leaning on the rusty railings of the area. Stephen as he passed on his quest heard the following fragment of colloquy out of which he received an impression keen enough to afflict his sensitiveness very severely.

The Young Lady-(drawling discreetly) ... O, yes ... I was ... at the ... cha ... pel ...

The Young Gentleman- (inaudibly) ... I ... (again inaudibly) ... I ...

The Young Lady-(softly) ... O ... but you’re ... ve ... ry ... wick ... ed .

This triviality made him think of collecting many such moments together in a book of epiphanies. By an epiphany he meant ‘ a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself. He believed that it was for the man of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments. He told Cranly that the clock of the Ballast Office was capable of an epiphany. Cranly questioned the inscrutable dial of the Ballast Office with his no less inscrutable countenance:

–Yes, said Stephen. I will pass it time after time, allude to it, refer to it, catch a glimpse of it. It is only an item in the catalogue of Dublin’s street furniture. Then all at once I see it and I know at once what it is: epiphany.
(From *Stephen Hero*, 1904-05, Chapter XXV).

(*Stephen Hero* was the early version of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, whose hero is renamed Stephen Dedalus. The *Portrait*, after serialization in *The Egoist* from February 1914 to September 1915, was rejected by every publisher in London. Even when *The Egoist* wanted to publish it in book form, the printers refused to print it. The novel was finally

Ezra Pound (1885-1972)

The last few years have seen the gradual shape of a party of intelligence a party not bound by any central doctrine or theory.

[...] I would say that James Joyce produces the nearest thing to Flaubertian prose that we have now in English, just as Wyndham Lewis has written a novel which is more like , and more fitly compared with, Dostoevsky than is the work of any of his contemporaries. In like manner Mr. T. S. Eliot comes nearer to filling the place of Jules Laforgue in our generation. (Doing “the nearest thing” need not imply an approach to a standard, from a position inferior.)

Two of these writers have met with all sorts of opposition. If Mr. Eliot probably has not yet encountered very much opposition, it is only because his work is not yet widely known.

(From *James Joyce: At Last the Novel Appears*, February 1917)

Edgar Lee Masters (1868-1950)
Trainor, The Druggist

Only the chemist can tell, and not always the chemist,
what will result from compounding
Fluids or solids.
And who can tell
How men and women will interact
On each other, or what children will result?
There were Benjamin Pantier and his wife,
Good in themselves, but evils toward each other:
He oxygen, she hydrogen,
Their son, a devastating fire.
I Trainor, the druggist, a mixer of chemicals,
Killed while making an experiment,
Lived unwedded.
(1915, 1916)

Edgar Lee Masters (1868-1950)
Francis Turner

I could not run or play
in boyhood.
In manhood I could only sip the cup,
Not drink –
For scarlet-fever left my heart diseased.
Yet I lie here
Soothed by a secret none but Mary knows:
There is a garden of acacia,
Catalpa trees, and arbors sweet with vines
There on that afternoon in June
By Mary's side –
Kissing her with my soul upon my lips
It suddenly took flight.
(1915, 1916)

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)
Futility

Move him into the sun –
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields unsown.
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds –
Woke, once, the clays of a cold star.
Are limbs so dear-achieved, are sides
Full-nerved, – still warm, – too hard to stir?
Was it for this the clay grew tall?
– O what made fatuous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all?
(May 1918, 1920)

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89)
The Starlight Night

Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!
O look at all the fire-folk sitting in the air!
The bright boroughs, the circle-citadels there!
Down in dim woods the diamond delves! the elves'-eyes!
The grey lawns cold where gold, where quickgold lies!
Wind-beat whitebeam! airy abeles set on a flare!
Flake-doves sent floating forth at a farmyard scare!
Ah well! it is all a purchase, all is a prize.

Buy then! bid then! — What? — Prayer, patience, alms, vows.
Look, look: a May-mess, like on orchard boughs!
Look! March-bloom, like on mealed-with-yellow fallows!
These are indeed the barn; withindoors house
The shocks. This piece-bright paling shuts the spouse
Christ home, Christ and his mother and all his hallows.
(1877, 1918)

William Butler Yeats (1865–1939)
The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.
(1890, 1892)

James Joyce
A Flower Given to My Daughter

Frail the white rose and frail are
Her hands that gave
Whose soul is sere and paler
Than time's wan wave.

Rosefrail and fair – yet frailest
A wonder wild
In gentle eyes thou veilest,
My blueveined child.
(Trieste 1913, 1917)

James Joyce
She Weeps over Ragoon

Rain on Ragoon falls softly, softly falling,
Where my dark lover lies.
Sad is his voice that calls me, sadly calling,
At grey moonrise.

Love, hear thou
How soft, how sad his voice is ever calling,
Ever unanswered, and the dark rain falling,
Then as now.

Dark too our hearts, O love, shall lie and cold
As his sad heart has lain
Under the moongrey nettles, the black mould
And muttering rain.
(Trieste, 1913)

Mina Loy (1882-1966)
Gertrude Stein

Curie
of the laboratory
of vocabulary
she crushed
the tonnage
of consciousness
congealed to phrases
to extract
a radium of the word
(1929)

Mina Loy (1882-1966)
Moreover, the Moon –

Face of the skies
preside
over our wonder.

Fluorescent
truant of heaven
draw us under.

Silver, circular corpse
your decease
infects us with unendurable ease,

touching nerve-terminals
to thermal icicles

Coercive as coma, frail as bloom
innuendoes of your inverse dawn
suffuse the self;
our every corpuscle become an elf.
(1942-49, 1982)

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965)
From *The Waste Land*

Nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego ipse oculis meis
vidi in ampulla pendere, et cum illi pueri dicerent:
Σίβυλλα τί θέλεις; respondebat illa: ἀποθανεῖν θέλω.

FOR EZRA POUND
il miglior fabbro

1. *The Burial of the Dead*

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.
Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers.
Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee
With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,
And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,
And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.
Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch.
And when we were children, staying at the archduke's,
My cousin's, he took me out on a sled,
And I was frightened. He said, Marie,
Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.
In the mountains, there you feel free.
I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter.

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water.

(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.

*Frisch weht der Wind
Der Heimat zu.
Mein Irisch Kind,
Wo weilest du?*

'You gave me hyacinths first a year ago;
'They called me the hyacinth girl.'
—Yet when we came back, late, from the Hyacinth garden,
Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not
Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither
Living nor dead, and I knew nothing,
Looking into the heart of light, the silence.
Oed' und leer das Meer.

[...]
Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,
And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying 'Stetson!
'You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!
'That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
'Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
'Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?
'Oh keep the Dog far hence, that's friend to men,
'Or with his nails he'll dig it up again!
'You! hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère!'
(1921, 1922).

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965)
Journey Of The Magi

‘A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.’
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,

And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.
(1927)