**Modernist Poems**

[**E. E. CUMMINGS**](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/e-e-cummings)

**[Buffalo Bill 's]**

Buffalo Bill ’s

defunct

               who used to

               ride a watersmooth-silver

                                                                  stallion

and break onetwothreefourfive pigeonsjustlikethat

                                                                                                     Jesus

he was a handsome man

                                                  and what i want to know is

how do you like your blue-eyed boy

Mister Death

[**next to of course god america i**](https://allpoetry.com/next-to-of-course-god-america-i)

“next to of course god america i  
love you land of the pilgrims’ and so forth oh  
say can you see by the dawn’s early my  
country ’tis of centuries come and go  
and are no more what of it we should worry  
in every language even deafanddumb  
thy sons acclaim your glorious name by gorry  
by jingo by gee by gosh by gum  
why talk of beauty what could be more beaut-  
iful than these heroic happy dead  
who rushed like lions to the roaring slaughter  
they did not stop to think they died instead  
then shall the voice of liberty be mute?”  
  
He spoke. And drank rapidly a glass of water

[**WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS**](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/william-carlos-williams)

**This Is Just To Say**

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

[**WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS**](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/william-carlos-williams)

**The Red Wheelbarrow**

so much depends

upon

a red wheel

barrow

glazed with rain

water

beside the white

chickens

**EZRA POUND**

[**A Pact**](https://allpoetry.com/A-Pact)

I make a pact with you, Walt Whitman--  
I have detested you long enough.  
I come to you as a grown child  
Who has had a pig-headed father;  
I am old enough now to make friends.  
It was you that broke the new wood,  
Now is a time for carving.  
We have one sap and one root--  
Let there be commerce between us.

**Wallace Stevens**

**Anecdote of a Jar**

# 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.

[**ELIZABETH BISHOP**](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/elizabeth-bishop)

# **One Art**

The art of losing isn’t hard to master;

so many things seem filled with the intent

to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day. Accept the fluster

of lost door keys, the hour badly spent.

The art of losing isn’t hard to master.

Then practice losing farther, losing faster:

places, and names, and where it was you meant

to travel. None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my mother’s watch. And look! my last, or

next-to-last, of three loved houses went.

The art of losing isn’t hard to master.

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster,

some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.

I miss them, but it wasn’t a disaster.

—Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture

I love) I shan’t have lied. It’s evident

the art of losing’s not too hard to master

though it may look like (*Write* it!) like disaster.

………………………………………………………………………………………

[**Marianne Moore**](https://poets.org/poet/marianne-moore)

*Poetry*

I too, dislike it: there are things that are important beyond all this fiddle.  
   Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers that there is in  
   it after all, a place for the genuine.  
      Hands that can grasp, eyes  
      that can dilate, hair that can rise  
         if it must, these things are important not because a

high-sounding interpretation can be put upon them but because they are  
   useful; when they become so derivative as to become unintelligible, the  
   same thing may be said for all of us—that we  
      do not admire what  
      we cannot understand. The bat,  
         holding on upside down or in quest of something to

eat, elephants pushing, a wild horse taking a roll, a tireless wolf under  
   a tree, the immovable critic twinkling his skin like a horse that feels a flea, the base—  
   ball fan, the statistician—case after case  
      could be cited did  
      one wish it; nor is it valid  
         to discriminate against “business documents and

school-books”; all these phenomena are important. One must make a distinction  
   however: when dragged into prominence by half poets, the result is not poetry,  
   nor till the autocrats among us can be  
     “literalists of  
      the imagination”—above  
         insolence and triviality and can present

for inspection, imaginary gardens with real toads in them, shall we have  
   it. In the meantime, if you demand on the one hand, in defiance of their opinion—  
   the raw material of poetry in  
      all its rawness, and  
      that which is on the other hand,  
         genuine, then you are interested in poetry.