

We were very tired, we were very merry—  
 We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry;  
 And you ate an apple, and I ate a pear,  
 From a dozen of each we had bought somewhere; 10  
 And the sky went wan, and the wind came cold,  
 And the sun rose dripping, a bucketful of gold.

We were very tired, we were very merry,  
 We had gone back and forth all night on the ferry.  
 We hailed, "Good morrow, mother!" to a shawl-covered head, 15  
 And bought a morning paper, which neither of us read;  
 And she wept, "God bless you!" for the apples and pears,  
 And we gave her all our money but our subway fares.

1922

### I Think I Should Have Loved You Presently

I think I should have loved you presently,  
 And given in earnest words I flung in jest;  
 And lifted honest eyes for you to see,  
 And caught your hand against my cheek and breast;  
 And all my pretty follies flung aside 5  
 That won you to me, and beneath your gaze,  
 Naked of reticence and shorn of pride,  
 Spread like a chart my little wicked ways.  
 I, that had been to you, had you remained,  
 But one more waking from a recurrent dream, 10  
 Cherish no less the certain stakes I gained,  
 And walk your memory's halls, austere, supreme,  
 A ghost in marble of a girl you knew  
 Who would have loved you in a day or two.

1922

### [I, being born a woman]

I, being born a woman and distressed  
 By all the needs and notions of my kind,  
 Am urged by your propinquity to find  
 Your person fair, and feel a certain zest  
 To bear your body's weight upon my breast: 5  
 So subtly is the fume of life designed,  
 To clarify the pulse and cloud the mind,  
 And leave me once again undone, possessed.  
 Think not for this, however, the poor treason  
 Of my stout blood against my staggering brain, 10  
 I shall remember you with love, or season

My scorn with pity,—let me make it plain:  
 I find this frenzy insufficient reason  
 For conversation when we meet again.

1923

### Apostrophe to Man

(*On reflecting that the world is ready to go to war again*)

Detestable race, continue to expunge yourself, die out.  
 Breed faster, crowd, encroach, sing hymns, build bombing airplanes;  
 Make speeches, unveil statues, issue bonds, parade;  
 Convert again into explosives the bewildered ammonia and the distracted  
 cellulose;  
 Convert again into putrescent matter drawing flies 5  
 The hopeful bodies of the young; exhort,  
 Pray, pull long faces, be earnest, be all but overcome, be photographed;  
 Confer, perfect your formulae, commercialize  
 Bacteria harmful to human tissue,  
 Put death on the market; 10  
 Breed, crowd, encroach, expand, expunge yourself, die out,  
*Homo* called *sapiens*.

1934

### I Too beneath Your Moon, Almighty Sex

I too beneath your moon, almighty Sex,  
 Go forth at nightfall crying like a cat,  
 Leaving the lofty tower I laboured at  
 For birds to foul and boys and girls to vex  
 With tittering chalk; and you, and the long necks 5  
 Of neighbours sitting where their mothers sat  
 Are well aware of shadowy this and that  
 In me, that's neither noble nor complex.  
 Such as I am, however, I have brought  
 To what it is, this tower; it is my own; 10  
 Though it was reared To Beauty, it was wrought  
 From what I had to build with: honest bone  
 Is there, and anguish; pride; and burning thought;  
 And lust is there, and nights not spent alone.

1939