MODERNIST/SLIGHTLY POST-MODERNIST POETRY

Group 1:

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| **In a Station of the Metro** |   |
| by [Ezra Pound](http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/161) |
|  |
| The apparition of these faces in the crowd;Petals on a wet, black bough. |  |

\*\*You only need to discuss the above poem very briefly, but reflect on why this is one of the most famous Modernist poems (crazy, right?)

**Portrait d'une Femme**

  by [Ezra Pound](http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/161)

Your mind and you are our Sargasso Sea,

London has swept about you this score years

And bright ships left you this or that in fee:

Ideas, old gossip, oddments of all things,

Strange spars of knowledge and dimmed wares of price.

Great minds have sought you—lacking someone else.

You have been second always. Tragical?

No. You preferred it to the usual thing:

One dull man, dulling and uxorious,

One average mind—with one thought less, each year.

Oh, you are patient, I have seen you sit

Hours, where something might have floated up.

And now you pay one. Yes, you richly pay.

You are a person of some interest, one comes to you

And takes strange gain away:

Trophies fished up; some curious suggestion:

Fact that leads nowhere; and a tale or two,

Pregnant with mandrakes, or with something else

That might prove useful and yet never proves,

That never fits a corner or shows use,

Or finds its hour upon the loom of days:

The tarnished, gaudy, wonderful old work;

Idols and ambergris and rare inlays,

These are your riches, your great store; and yet

For all this sea-hoard of deciduous things,

Strange woods half sodden, and new brighter stuff:

In the slow float of differing light and deep,

No! there is nothing! In the whole and all,

Nothing that's quite your own.

                     Yet this is you.

Group 2:

**somewhere i have never travelled,gladly beyond**

  by [E. E. Cummings](http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/156)

somewhere i have never travelled,gladly beyond

any experience,your eyes have their silence:

in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,

or which i cannot touch because they are too near

your slightest look easily will unclose me

though i have closed myself as fingers,

you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens

(touching skilfully,mysteriously)her first rose

or if your wish be to close me, i and

my life will shut very beautifully ,suddenly,

as when the heart of this flower imagines

the snow carefully everywhere descending;

nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals

the power of your intense fragility:whose texture

compels me with the color of its countries,

rendering death and forever with each breathing

(i do not know what it is about you that closes

and opens;only something in me understands

the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)

nobody,not even the rain,has such small hands

Group 3:

**Sailing to Byzantium**

  by [W. B. Yeats](http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/117)

That is no country for old men. The young

In one another's arms, birds in the trees

—Those dying generations—at their song,

The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,

Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long

Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.

Caught in that sensual music all neglect

Monuments of unageing intellect.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,

A tattered coat upon a stick, unless

Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing

For every tatter in its mortal dress,

Nor is there singing school but studying

Monuments of its own magnificence;

And therefore I have sailed the seas and come

To the holy city of Byzantium.

O sages standing in God's holy fire

As in the gold mosaic of a wall,

Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,

And be the singing-masters of my soul.

Consume my heart away; sick with desire

And fastened to a dying animal

It knows not what it is; and gather me

Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take

My bodily form from any natural thing,

But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make

Of hammered gold and gold enamelling

To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;

Or set upon a golden bough to sing

To lords and ladies of Byzantium

Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

Group 4:

# From Third Avenue On by Djuna Barnes

AND now she walks on out turned feet
Beside the litter in the street
Or rolls beneath a dirty sheet
Within the town.
She does not stir to doff her dress,
She does not kneel low to confess,
A little conscience, no distress
And settles down.

Ah God! she settles down we say;
It means her powers slip away
It means she draws back day by day
From good or bad.
And so she looks upon the floor
Or listens at an open door
Or lies her down, upturned to snore
Both loud and sad.

Or sits beside the chinaware,
Sits mouthing meekly in a chair,
With over-curled, hard waving hair
Above her eyes.
Or grins too vacant into space—
A vacant space is in her face—
Where nothing came to take the place
Of high hard cries.

Or yet we hear her on the stairs
With some few elements of prayers,
Until she breaks it off and swears
A loved bad word.
Somewhere beneath her hurried curse,
A corpse lies bounding in a hearse;
And friends and relatives disperse,
And are not stirred.

Those living dead up in their rooms
Must note how partial are the tombs,
That take men back into their wombs
While theirs must fast.
And those who have their blooms in jars
No longer stare into the stars,
Instead, they watch the dinky cars—
And live aghast.

Group 5:

**The Hollow Men**

*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.