

EZRA  
POUND

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*Collected  
Shorter Poems*



# Collected Shorter Poems

Ezra Pound

  
*faber and faber*  
LONDON · BOSTON

*First published in 1952*  
*as Personae: Collected Shorter Poems*  
*by Faber and Faber Limited*  
*3 Queen Square London WC1N 3AU*  
*Reprinted 1961*  
*Second edition, as Collected Shorter Poems, 1968*  
*Reprinted 1973*  
*First published as a Faber Paperback in 1984*  
*reproducing the edition published by*  
*New Directions, New York*  
*as Personae: The Collected Shorter Poems*  
*of Ezra Pound in 1949 (tenth printing)*  
*Printed in Great Britain by*  
*Redwood Burn Limited Trowbridge Wiltshire*  
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*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Pound, Ezra

Collected shorter poems.

I. Title

811'.52 PS3531.082

ISBN 0-571-13213-8

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## Collected Shorter Poems



## THE TREE

**I** STOOD still and was a tree amid the wood,  
Knowing the truth of things unseen before;  
Of Daphne and the laurel bow  
And that god-feasting couple old  
That grew elm-oak amid the wold.  
'Twas not until the gods had been  
Kindly entreated, and been brought within  
Unto the hearth of their heart's home  
That they might do this wonder thing;  
Nathless I have been a tree amid the wood  
And many a new thing understood  
That was rank folly to my head before.

## THRENOS

**N**O more for us the little sighing.  
No more the winds at twilight trouble us.

Lo the fair dead!

No more do I burn.

No more for us the fluttering of wings

That whirred in the air above us.

Lo the fair dead!

No more desire flayeth me,

No more for us the trembling

At the meeting of hands.

Lo the fair dead!

No more for us the wine of the lips,

No more for us the knowledge.

Lo the fair dead!

No more the torrent,

No more for us the meeting-place

(Lo the fair dead!)

Tintagoel.

## LA FRAISNE

**F**OR I was a gaunt, grave councillor  
Being in all things wise, and very old,  
But I have put aside this folly and the cold  
That old age weareth for a cloak.

I was quite strong—at least they said so—  
The young men at the sword-play;  
But I have put aside this folly, being gay  
In another fashion that more suiteth me.

I have curled 'mid the boles of the ash wood,  
I have hidden my face where the oak  
Spread his leaves over me, and the yoke  
Of the old ways of men have I cast aside.

By the still pool of Mar-nan-otha  
Have I found me a bride  
That was a dog-wood tree some syne.  
She hath called me from mine old ways  
She hath hushed my rancour of council,  
Bidding me praise

Naught but the wind that flutters in the leaves.

She hath drawn me from mine old ways,  
Till men say that I am mad;  
But I have seen the sorrow of men, and am glad,  
For I know that the wailing and bitterness are a  
folly.

And I? I have put aside all folly and all grief.  
I wrapped my tears in an ellum leaf  
And left them under a stone  
And now men call me mad because I have thrown  
All folly from me, putting it aside  
To leave the old barren ways of men,

Because my bride  
Is a pool of the wood, and  
Though all men say that I am mad  
It is only that I am glad,  
Very glad, for my bride hath toward me a great love  
That is sweeter than the love of women  
That plague and burn and drive one away.

Aie-e! 'Tis true that I am gay  
Quite gay, for I have her alone here  
And no man troubleth us.

Once when I was among the young men . . .  
And they said I was quite strong, among the young  
men.

Once there was a woman . . .  
. . . but I forget . . . she was . . .  
. . . I hope she will not come again.

. . . I do not remember . . . . .

I think she hurt me once, but . .  
That was very long ago.

I do not like to remember things any more.

I like one little band of winds that blow  
In the ash trees here:  
For we are quite alone  
Here 'mid the ash trees.

## CINO

*Italian Campagna 1309, the open road*

**B**AH! I have sung women in three cities,  
But it is all the same;  
And I will sing of the sun.

Lips, words, and you snare them,  
Dreams, words, and they are as jewels,  
Strange spells of old deity,  
Ravens, nights, allurements:  
And they are not;  
Having become the souls of song.

Eyes, dreams, lips, and the night goes.  
Being upon the road once more,  
They are not.  
Forgetful in their towers of our tuning  
Once for wind-runeing  
They dream us-toward and  
Sighing, say, "Would Cino,  
Passionate Cino, of the wrinkling eyes,  
Gay Cino, of quick laughter,  
Cino, of the dare, the jibe,  
Frail Cino, strongest of his tribe  
That tramp old ways beneath the sun-light,  
Would Cino of the Luth were here!"

Once, twice, a year—  
Vaguely thus word they:

"Cino?" "Oh, eh, Cino Polnesi  
The singer is't you mean?"

"Ah yes, passed once our way,  
A saucy fellow, but . . .

(Oh they are all one these vagabonds),  
Peste! 'tis his own songs?

Or some other's that he sings?

But *you*, My Lord, how with your city?"

But you "My Lord," God's pity!  
And all I knew were out, My Lord, you  
Were Lack-land Cino, e'en as I am,  
O Sinistro.

I have sung women in three cities.  
But it is all one.

I will sing of the sun.

. . . eh? . . . they mostly had grey eyes,  
But it is all one, I will sing of the sun.

"'Pollo Phoibee, old tin pan, you  
Glory to Zeus' aegis-day,  
Shield o' steel-blue, th' heaven o'er us  
Hath for boss thy lustre gay!

'Pollo Phoibee, to our way-fare  
Make thy laugh our wander-lie;  
Bid thy 'fulgence bear away care.  
Cloud and rain-tears pass they fleet!

Seeking e'er the new-laid rast-way  
To the gardens of the sun . . .

. . . . .  
I have sung women in three cities  
But it is all one.

I will sing of the white birds  
In the blue waters of heaven,  
The clouds that are spray to its sea."

# NA AUDIART

*Que be-m vols mal*

NOTE: Anyone who has read anything of the troubadours knows well the tale of Bertran of Born and My Lady Maent of Montagnac, and knows also the song he made when she would none of him, the song wherein he, seeking to find or make her equal, begs of each preëminent-lady of Langued'Oc some trait or some fair semblance: thus of Cembelins her "esgart amoros" to wit, her love-lit glance, of Aelis her speech free-running, of the Vicomtess of Chalais her throat and her two hands, at Roacoart of Anhes her hair golden as Iseult's; and even in this fashion of Lady Audiart "although she would that ill come unto him" he sought and praised the lineaments of the torse. And all this to make "Una dompna soiseubuda" a borrowed lady or as the Italians translated it "Una donna ideale."

**T**HOUGH thou well dost wish me ill  
Audiart, Audiart,

Where thy bodice laces start  
As ivy fingers clutching through  
Its crevices,

Audiart, Audiart,  
Stately, tall and lovely tender  
Who shall render

Audiart, Audiart,  
Praises meet unto thy fashion?  
Here a word kiss!

Pass I on  
Unto Lady "Miels-de-Ben,"  
Having praised thy girdle's scope  
How the stays ply back from it;  
I breathe no hope  
That thou shouldst . . .

Nay no whit  
Bespeak thyself for anything.  
Just a word in thy praise, girl,  
Just for the swirl  
Thy satins make upon the stair,  
'Cause never a flaw was there  
Where thy torse and limbs are met  
Though thou hate me, read it set