

POEM FOR POUND, November 1st, 1972

i

It threatened to snow all day.
The shaggy clouds
blustered over the mountains
and I thought
of old men going on journeys
and remembered your "Exile's Letter."

Now you are on the dark highway.
Perhaps it is twisted like sheep's guts,
cold with winddriven stars.
Perhaps you move unrecognized,
among the rabble of souls released today,
your leonine white head pressing forward eagerly!

ii

I imagine a painting
by el Greco:
a host of dead poets in heaven
lift the prince
out of his heavy armor into light.

The well-oiled doors are open.
You were prepared.
The day, which has waited ages
is fulfilled:
death becomes your full-dress uniform.

iii

Go.
Thou hast outlived thy poems.

Go, go leisurely,
pass beyond the great wall without hindrance.

Enter thy house of cut stone,
thy painted paradise,
thy land of blue embroidery and smooth jade,
thy Cathay of memory.

Go, go swiftly,
leave us in exile on the barbarous frontier.

Go.
Thou hast forgotten all of thy poems.