

Robert Lowell

(1917-1977)

Ezra Pound (1969)

Horizontal in a deckchair on the bleak ward,
some feeble-minded felon in pajamas, clawing
a Social Credit broadside from your table, you saying,
“...here with a black suit and black briefcase; in the briefcase,
an abomination, Possum’s *hommage* to Milton.”
Then sprung; Rapallo, and then the decade gone;
then three years, then Eliot dead, you saying,
“And who is left to understand my jokes?
My old Brother in the arts...and besides, he was a smash of a poet.”
He showed us his blotched, bent hands, saying, “Worms.
When I talked that nonsense about Jews on the Rome
wireless, she knew it was shit, and still loved me.”
And I, “Who else has been in Purgatory?”
And he, “To begin with a swelled head and end with swelled feet.”