

Take from the dresser of deal,<sup>1</sup>  
 Lacking the three glass knobs, that sheet 10  
 On which she embroidered fantails<sup>2</sup> once  
 And spread it so as to cover her face.  
 If her horny feet protrude, they come  
 To show how cold she is, and dumb.  
 Let the lamp affix its beam. 15  
 The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream.

1923

### Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock

The houses are haunted  
 By white night-gowns.  
 None are green,  
 Or purple with green rings,  
 Or green with yellow rings, 5  
 Or yellow with blue rings.  
 None of them are strange,  
 With socks of lace  
 And beaded ceintures.  
 People are not going 10  
 To dream of baboons and periwinkles.  
 Only, here and there, an old sailor,  
 Drunk and asleep in his boots,  
 Catches tigers  
 In red weather. 15

1931

### Sunday Morning<sup>1</sup>

I

Complacencies of the peignoir, and late  
 Coffee and oranges in a sunny chair,  
 And the green freedom of a cockatoo  
 Upon a rug mingle to dissipate  
 The holy hush of ancient sacrifice. 5  
 She dreams a little, and she feels the dark  
 Encroachment of that old catastrophe,  
 As a calm darkens among water-lights.  
 The pungent oranges and bright, green wings

1. Plain, unfinished wood.

2. Stevens explained that "the word fantails does not mean fan, but fantail pigeons."

1. This poem was first published in *Poetry* magazine in 1915; the editor, Harriet Monroe, printed

only five of its eight stanzas but arranged them in the order Stevens suggested when consenting to the deletions (I, VIII, IV, V, and VII); he restored the deleted stanzas and the original sequence in subsequent printings.

Not as a god, but as a god might be,  
 Naked among them, like a savage source.  
 Their chant shall be a chant of paradise,  
 Out of their blood, returning to the sky;  
 And in their chant shall enter, voice by voice,  
 The windy lake wherein their lord delights,  
 The trees, like serafin,<sup>6</sup> and echoing hills,  
 That choir among themselves long afterward.  
 They shall know well the heavenly fellowship  
 Of men that perish and of summer morn.  
 And whence they came and whither they shall go  
 The dew upon their feet shall manifest.

## VIII

She hears, upon that water without sound,  
 A voice that cries, "The tomb in Palestine  
 Is not the porch of spirits lingering.  
 It is the grave of Jesus, where he lay."  
 We live in an old chaos of the sun,  
 Or old dependency of day and night,  
 Or island solitude, unsponsored, free,  
 Of that wide water, inescapable.  
 Deer walk upon our mountains, and the quail  
 Whistle about us their spontaneous cries;  
 Sweet berries ripen in the wilderness;  
 And, in the isolation of the sky,  
 At evening, casual flocks of pigeons make  
 Ambiguous undulations as they sink,  
 Downward to darkness, on extended wings.

1915, 1923

## Anecdote of the Jar

I placed a jar in Tennessee,  
 And round it was, upon a hill.  
 It made the slovenly wilderness  
 Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,  
 And sprawled around, no longer wild.  
 The jar was round upon the ground  
 And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.  
 The jar was gray and bare.  
 It did not give of bird or bush,  
 Like nothing else in Tennessee.

1923

6. I.e., seraphim; angels.