

**1912**

**PORTRAIT D'UNE FEMME (From Ripostes)**

**Ezra Pound**

*Pound, Ezra (1885-1972) - Controversial American poet, editor, and critic who had a major influence on 20<sup>th</sup> century literature. After making hundreds of broadcasts for the Italian Fascist regime, he was tried for treason, judged insane, and held in a mental hospital for over ten years. Portrait D'une Femme (1912) From the collection, "Ripostes of Ezra Pound." Opening lines: Your mind and you are our Sargasso Sea, / London has swept about you this score years ...*

## **PORTRAIT DUNE FEMME**

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 for 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.

**THE END**