‘An Urge for Life’*

HARRIET MONROE

That March day in Chicago in 1924 was my only chance to verify by talk and the touch of eyes and hands the impressions gained through a desultory correspondence of ten years. I found a man uncannily active in spite of slight figure and frail health; with a loving observant eye, prehensile hands, a body alert and ready to leap like a cat, and a mind as taut as a steel spring. One felt an urge for life in his company; there was nothing sedative or soothing about this faun-like creature who wore no conventional veils over a spirit that darted this way and that to its discoveries. Nothing reminded one of his physical weakness; on the contrary he seemed lithe and extra-fit for dart and recoil—one had to sharpen one’s paces to keep up with him. He looked like his pictures—the small face, triangular with its thick reddish hair and pointed beard, the narrow-chested thin-flanked body, the legs that seemed to clear the ground even when they rested. The contrast between his litheness and the solid well-rounded stability of his guardian wife was a lesson in the mystery of affinities.

* From an obituary of Lawrence published in *Poetry*, xxxvi (May 1930) pp. 93–4.

NOTE

Harriet Monroe, American poet and critic, founded and edited the magazine *Poetry*, to which Lawrence contributed. Her meeting with Lawrence in Chicago was on 19 March 1924; he had arrived in New York on 11 March and was proceeding to Taos.