

"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."

Let us go then, you and I, when the evening is spread out against the sky like patient etherized upon a table. Let us go through certain half-deserted streets, the muttering retreats of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels and sawdust restaurants with oyster shells. Streets that follow like a tedious argument of insidious intent to lead you to an overwhelming question-- Oh, do not ask, what is it? Let us go and make our visit. In the room, the women come and go talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window panes. The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window panes. Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening, lingered upon the pools that stand in drains. Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys. Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap. And seeing that it was a soft October night, curled once about the house and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time for the yellow smoke that slides along the street rubbing its back upon the window panes. There will be time, there will be time to prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet.

There will be time to murder and create, and time for all the works and days of hands that lift and drop a question on your plate. Time for you and time for me, and time yet for a hundred indecisions and for a hundred visions and revisions before the taking of a toast and tea. In the room, the women come and go talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed, there will be time to wonder, do I dare, and do I dare? Time to turn back and descend the stair with a bald spot in the middle of my hair. They will say, how his hair is growing thin. My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin. My necktie rich and modest but asserted by a simple pin. They will say, but how his arms and legs are thin. Do I dare disturb the universe?

In a minute, there is time for decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse. For I have known them all already, known them all. Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons. I have measured out my life with coffee spoons. I know the voices dying with a dying fall beneath the music from a farther room. So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all, the eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase. And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin. When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall, then how should I begin to spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways? And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all, arms that are braceleted and white and bare. But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair, is it perfume from a dress that makes me so digress? Arms that lie along a table or wrap about a shawl. And how should I presume? And how should I begin?

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets and watched the smoke that rises from the pipes of lonely men in shirtsleeves leaning out of windows. I should have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas. And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully smoothed by long fingers. Asleep, tired, or it malingers stretched on the floor here beside you and me.

Should I, after tea and cakes and ices, have the strength to force the moment to its crisis? But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed. Though I have seen my head grown slightly bald brought in upon

a platter. I am no prophet, and here's no great matter. I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker, and I have seen the eternal footman hold my coat and snicker. And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all, after the cups, the marmalade, the tea, among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me? Would it have been worthwhile to have bitten off the matter with a smile? To have squeezed the universe into a ball to roll it towards some overwhelming question. To say, I am Lazarus, come from the dead, come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all-- if one, settling a pillow by her head, should say, that is not what I meant at all. That is not it at all.

And would it have been worth it after all? Would it have been worthwhile after the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets? After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor, and this, and so much more? It is impossible to say just what I mean!

But as if a magic lantern through the nerves in patterns on a screen. Would it have been worthwhile if one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl and turning toward the window, should say, that is not it at all. That is not what I meant at all.

No, I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be. Am an attendant lord, one that will do to swell a progress, start the scene or two, advise the prince. No doubt an easy tool, deferential, glad to be of use, politic, cautious, and meticulous. Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse. At times, indeed, almost ridiculous. Almost, that times, the fool.

I grow old. I grow old. I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled. Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach? I saw wear white flannel trousers and walk up on the beach. I have heard the mermaid singing each to each. I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves combing with white hair of the waves blown back when the wind blows the water white then black. We have lingered in the chambers of the sea by sea girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown till human voices wake us and we drown.

"Gerontion."

Thou hast nor youth nor age, but as it were, an after dinner sleep dreaming of both. Here I am, an old man in a dry month being read to by a boy waiting for rain. I was neither at the hot gates nor fought in the warm rain nor knee deep in the salt marsh heaving a cutlass bitten by flies, fought.

My house is a decayed house, and the Jew squats on the window sill, the owner spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp, blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London. The goat coughs at night in the field overhead. Rocks, moss, stone crop, iron, merds. The woman keeps the kitchen, makes tea, sneezes at evening, poking the peevish gutter. I, an old man, a dull head among windy spaces. Signs are taken for wonders. We would see a sign. The word within a word, unable to speak a word, swaddled with darkness. In the juvescence of the year came Christ the tiger. In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering Judas, to be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk among whispers. By Mr. Silvero with caressing hands, at Limoges who walked all night in the next room.

By Hakagawa, bowing among the Titians. By Madame de Tornquist, in the dark room shifting the candles. Fraulein von Kulp who turned in the hall, one hand on the door. Vacant shuffles weave the wind. I have no ghosts. An old man in a draughty house under a window knob.

After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now. History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors and issues. Deceives with whispering ambitions. Guides us by vanities. Think now. She gives when our attention is distracted, and what she gives, gives with such supple confusions that the giving famishes the craving.

Gives too late. What's not believed in or is still believed in memory only. Reconsidered passion gives too soon. Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed with till the refusal propagates a fear. Think. Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices are fathered by our heroism. Virtues are forced upon us by our impudent crimes. These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing three.

The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours. Think at last. We have not reached conclusion when I stiffen in a rented house. Think at last I have not made this show purposelessly, and it is not by any concitation of the backward devils. I would meet you upon this honestly. I that was near your heart was removed therefrom to lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.

I have lost my passion. Why should I need to keep it since what is kept must be adulterated? I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. How should I use them for your closer contact? These, with a thousand small deliberations protract the profit of their chilled delirium, excite the membrane, when the sense has cooled, with pungent sauces. Multiply variety in a wilderness of mirrors.

What will the spider do? Suspend its operations? Will the weevil delay? De Bailhache, Fresca, Mrs. Cammel, whirled beyond the circuit of the shuddering bear in fractured atoms. Gull against the wind in the windy straights of Belle Isle or running on the Horn. White feathers in the snow, the Gulf claims. And an old man, driven by the trades, to a sleepy corner. Tenants of the house. Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season.

"The Hollow Men."

We are the hollow men. We are the stuffed men leaning together, headpiece filled with straw. Alas. Our dried voices, when we whisper together, are quiet and meaningless as wind and dry grass or rats' feet over broken glass in our dry cellar.

Shape without form, shade without color. Paralyzed force. Gesture without motion. Those who have crossed with direct eyes to death's other kingdom. Remember us, if at all, not as lost, violent souls but only as the hollow men, this stuffed men.

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams. In death's dream kingdom, these do not appear. There, the eyes are sunlight on a broken column. There is a tree swinging, and voices are in the wind singing more distant and more solemn than a fading star.

Let me be known nearer in death's dream kingdom. Let me also wear such deliberate disguises-- rat's coats, crow skin, crossed staves in a field, behaving as the wind behaves. No nearer. Not that final meeting in the twilight kingdom.

This is the dead land. This is cactus land. Here, the stone images are raised. Here, they receive the supplication of a dead man's hand under the twinkle of a fading star. Is it like this in death's other kingdom? Waking alone at the hour when we are trembling with tenderness. Lips that would kiss form prayers to broken stone.

The eyes are not here. There are no eyes here in this valley of dying stars, in this hollow valley, this broken jaw of our lost kingdoms. In this last meeting places we grope together and avoid speech gathered on this beach of the tumid river. Sightless, unless the eyes reappear as the perpetual star, multifoliate rose of death's twilight kingdom. They hope only of empty men.

Here we go round the prickly pear, prickly pear, prickly pear. Here we go round the prickly pear at 5 o'clock in the morning. Between the idea and the reality, between the motion and the act, falls the shadow. For Thine is the kingdom.

Between the conception and the creation, between the emotion and the response, falls the shadow. Life is very long. Between the desire and the spasm, between the potency and the existence, between the essence and the descent, falls the shadow. For Thine is the kingdom. For thine is-- life is-- for thine is the-- this is the way the world ends. This is the way the world ends. This is the way the world ends. Not with a bang but a whimper.

"Triumphal March."

Stone. bronze, stone, steel, stone, oak leaves, horses' heels over the paving. And the flags, and the trumpets, and so many eagles. How many? Count them. And such a press of people. We hardly knew ourselves that day or knew the city.

This is the way to the temple, and we, so many, crowding the way. So many waiting. How many waiting? What did it matter on such a day? Are they coming? No, not yet. You can see some eagles and hear the trumpets. Here they come. Is he coming?

The natural wakeful life of our ego is a perceiving. We can wait with our stools and our sausages. What comes first? Can you see? Tell us. It is 5,800,000 rifles and carbons, 102,000 machine guns, 28,000 trench mortars, 53,000 field and heavy guns.

I cannot tell how many projectiles, mines, and fuses. 13,000 airplanes, 24,000 airplane engines, 50,000 ammunition wagons, now 55,000 army wagons, 11,000 field Kitchens, 1,150 field bakeries. What a time that took. Will it be he no? No. Those are the golf club captains. These, the scouts.

And now, the societe gymnastique de Poissy. And now, come the mayor and the liverymen. Look, there he is now. Look. There is no interrogation in his eyes or in the hands. Quiet over the horse's neck. And the eyes, watchful, waiting, perceiving, indifferent. Oh, hidden under the dove's wing, hidden in the turtle's breast. Under the palm tree at noon. Under the running water. At the still point of the turning world. Oh, hidden.

Now they go up to the temple. Then, the sacrifice. Now come the virgins bearing urns, urns containing dust. Dust. Dust of dust. And now, stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oak leaves, horses' heels over the paving.

That is all we could see. But how many eagles, and how many trumpets? And Easter Day we didn't get to the country, so we took young Cyril to church. And they rang a bell. And he said, right out loud, crumpets. Don't throw away that sausage. It'll come in handy. He's artful. Please, will you give us a light? Light. Light. Et les soldats faisaient la haie? Ils la faisaient.

"Journey of the Magi."

A cold coming we had of it, just the worst time of the year for a journey. And such a long journey. The ways deep and the weather sharp. The very dead of winter. And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory, lying down in the melting snow. There were times we regretted the summer palaces on slopes, the terraces, and the silken girls bringing sherbet.

Then the camel men cursing and grumbling and running away and wanting their liquor and women. And the night fires going out, and the lack of shelters, and the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly, and the villages dirty and charging high prices. A hard time we heard of it. At the end, we preferred to travel all night sleeping in snatches with the voices singing in our ears saying that this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley, wet below the snow line, smelling of vegetation, with a running stream and a water mill beating the darkness, and three trees on the low sky, and an old white horse galloping away in the meadow.

Then we came to a tavern with vine leaves over the lintel. Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver, and feet kicking the empty wine skins. But there was no information. And so we continued and arrived at evening, not a moment too soon finding the place. It was, you may say, satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago. I remember, and I would do it again, but set down this, set down this. Were we led all that way for birth or death? There was a birth, certainly. We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death, but had thought they were different. This birth was hard and bitter agony for us, like death, our death.

We returned to our places, these kingdoms, but no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation, with an alien people clutching their gods. I should be glad of another death.

"A Song for Simeon."

Lord, the Roman hyacinths are blooming in bowls and the winter sun creeps by the snow hills. The stubborn season has made stand. My life is light, waiting for the death's wind like a feather on the back of my hand. Dust in sunlight and memory in corners wait for the wind that chills towards the dead land. Grant us Thy peace.

I have walked many years in this city, kept faith and fast. Provided for the poor. Have given and taken honor and ease. There went never any rejected from my door. Who shall remember my house? Where

shall live my children's children when the time of sorrow is come? They will take to the goat's path and the fox's is home flying from the foreign faces and the foreign swords.

Before the time of cords and scourges and lamentation, grant us Thy peace. Before the stations of the mountain of desolation, before the certain hour of maternal sorrow. Now at this birth season of decease, let the infant, the still unspeaking and unspoken word grant Israel's consolation to one who has 80 years and no tomorrow. According to Thy word.

They shall praise Thee and suffer in every generation with glory and derision. Light upon light, mounting the saints' stair. Not for me, the martyrdom, the ecstasy of thought and prayer. Not for me, the ultimate vision. Grant me Thy peace. And a sword shall pierce Thy heart, Thine also.

I am tired with my own life and the lives of those after me. I am dying in my own death and the deaths of those after me. Let Thy servant depart having seen Thy salvation.

"Difficulties of a Statesman."

Cry? What shall I cry? All flesh is grass. Comprehending the companions of the bath, the Knights of the British Empire, the Cavaliers, oh, Cavaliers of the Legion of Honor. The Order of the Black Eagle, first then second class. And the Order of the Rising Sun.

Cry, cry, what shall I cry? The first thing to do is to form the committees, the consultative councils, the standing committees, select committees and subcommittees. One secretary will do for several committees. What shall I cry? Arthur Edward Cyril Parker is appointed telephone operator at the salary of 1 pound, 10 a week rising by annual increments of 5 shillings to 2 pounds, 10 a week. With a bonus of 30 shillings at Christmas and one week's leave a year.

A committee has been appointed to nominate a commission of engineers to consider the water supply. A commission is appointed for public works, chiefly the question of rebuilding the fortifications. A commission is appointed to confer with the Volscian commission about perpetual peace. The fletchers and javelin-makers and smiths have appointed a joint committee to protest against the reduction of orders.

Meanwhile, the guards shake dice on the marches, and the frogs, O Mantuan, croak in the marshes. Fireflies flare against the faint sheet lightning. What shall I cry? Mother, mother, here is the row of family portraits, dingy busts, all looking remarkably Roman, remarkably like each other, lit up successively by the flare of a sweaty torchbearer yawning.

Oh, hidden under the, hidden under the, where the dove's foot rested and locked for a moment, a still moment, repose of noon, set under the upper branches of noon's widest tree. Under the breast feather stirred by the small wind after noon. There, the cyclamen spreads its wings. There, the clematis droops over the lintel.

Oh, mother, not among these busts all correctly inscribed. I, a tired head among these heads, necks strong to bear them, noses strong to break the wind. Mother, may we not be some time, almost now,

together? If the mactations, immolations, oblations, impetrations are now observed, may we not be, oh hidden, hidden in the stillness of noon in the silent crooking night?

Come with the sweep of the little bat's wing, with the small flare of the firefly or lightning bug. Rising and falling, crowned with dust. The small creatures, the small creatures chirp thinly through the dust through the night. Oh, mother, what shall I cry? We demand a committee, a representative committee, a committee of investigation. Resign! Resign! Resign!