

# THE WASTE LAND

"Nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego ipse oculis meis vidi in ampulla pendere, et cum illi pueri dicerent: Sibylla ti theleis; respondebat illa: apothanein thelo."

## I. THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

April is the cruellest month, breeding Lilacs out of the dead land,  
mixing Memory and desire, stirring Dull roots with spring  
rain. Winter kept us warm, covering Earth in forgetful snow,  
feeding A little life with dried tubers. Summer surprised us, coming  
over the Starnbergersee With a shower of rain; we stopped in the  
colonnade, And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten, 10 And  
drank coffee, and talked for an hour. Bin gar keine Russin, stamm'  
aus Litauen, echt deutsch. And when we were children, staying at  
the archduke's, My cousin's, he took me out on a sled, And I was  
frightened. He said, Marie, Marie, hold on tight. And down we  
went. In the mountains, there you feel free. I read, much of the  
night, and go south in the winter.

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow Out of this stony  
rubbish? Son of man, 20 You cannot say, or guess, for you know  
only A heap of broken images, where the sun beats, And the dead  
tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief, And the dry stone no  
sound of water. Only There is shadow under this red rock, (Come  
in under the shadow of this red rock), And I will show you something  
different from either Your shadow at morning striding behind you Or  
your shadow at evening rising to meet you; I will show you fear in a  
handful of dust. 30 Frisch weht der Wind Der Heimat  
zu Mein Irisch Kind, Wo weilest du? "You gave me  
hyacinths first a year ago; "They called me the hyacinth girl." - Yet  
when we came back, late, from the Hyacinth garden, Your arms full,  
and your hair wet, I could not Speak, and my eyes failed, I was  
neither Living nor dead, and I knew nothing, 40 Looking into the  
heart of light, the silence. Od' und leer das Meer.

Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante, Had a bad cold,  
nevertheless Is known to be the wisest woman in Europe, With a

wicked pack of cards. Here, said she, Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor, (Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!) Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks, The lady of situations. 50 Here is the man with three staves, and here the Wheel, And here is the one-eyed merchant, and this card, Which is blank, is something he carries on his back, Which I am forbidden to see. I do not find The Hanged Man. Fear death by water. I see crowds of people, walking round in a ring. Thank you. If you see dear Mrs. Equitone, Tell her I bring the horoscope myself: One must be so careful these days.

Unreal City, 60 Under the brown fog of a winter dawn, A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many, I had not thought death had undone so many. Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled, And each man fixed his eyes before his feet. Flowed up the hill and down King William Street, To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine. There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying "Stetson! "You who were with me in the ships at Mylae! 70 "That corpse you planted last year in your garden, "Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year? "Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?

Line 42 Od'] Oed' - Editor.

"Oh keep the Dog far hence, that's friend to men, "Or with his nails he'll dig it up again! "You! hypocrite lecteur! - mon semblable, - mon frere!"

## **II. A GAME OF CHESS**

The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne, Glowed on the marble, where the glass Held up by standards wrought with fruited vines From which a golden Cupidon peeped out 80 (Another hid his eyes behind his wing) Doubled the flames of sevenbranched candelabra Reflecting light upon the table as The glitter of her jewels rose to meet it, From satin cases poured in rich profusion; In vials of ivory and coloured glass Unstoppered, lurked her strange synthetic perfumes, Unguent, powdered, or liquid - troubled, confused And drowned the sense in odours; stirred by the air That freshened from the window, these ascended 90 In fattening the

prolonged candle-flames, Flung their smoke into the  
laquearia, Stirring the pattern on the coffered ceiling. Huge sea-  
wood fed with copper Burned green and orange, framed by the  
coloured stone, In which sad light a carved dolphin swam. Above  
the antique mantel was displayed As though a window gave upon  
the sylvan scene The change of Philomel, by the barbarous king So  
rudely forced; yet there the nightingale 100 Filled all the desert with  
inviolable voice And still she cried, and still the world pursues, "Jug  
Jug" to dirty ears. And other withered stumps of time Were told  
upon the walls; staring forms Leaned out, leaning, hushing the room  
enclosed. Footsteps shuffled on the stair. Under the firelight, under  
the brush, her hair Spread out in fiery points Glowed into words,  
then would be savagely still. 110

"My nerves are bad to-night. Yes, bad. Stay with me. "Speak to me.  
Why do you never speak. Speak. "What are you thinking of? What  
thinking? What? "I never know what you are thinking. Think."

I think we are in rats' alley Where the dead men lost their bones.

"What is that noise?" The wind under the  
door. "What is that noise now? What is the wind  
doing?" Nothing again nothing.  
120 "Do "You know  
nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember "Nothing?"

I remember Those are pearls that were his eyes. "Are you alive,  
or not? Is there nothing in your  
head?" But O O O O  
that Shakespeherian Rag - It's so elegant So intelligent 130 "What  
shall I do now? What shall I do?" I shall rush out as I am, and walk  
the street "With my hair down, so. What shall we do to-  
morrow? "What shall we ever do?" The hot  
water at ten. And if it rains, a closed car at four. And we shall play a  
game of chess, Pressing lidless eyes and waiting for a knock upon  
the door.

When Lil's husband got demobbed, I said - I didn't mince my words,  
I said to her myself, 140 HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME Now  
Albert's coming back, make yourself a bit smart. He'll want to know

what you done with that money he gave you To get yourself some teeth. He did, I was there. You have them all out, Lil, and get a nice set, He said, I swear, I can't bear to look at you. And no more can't I, I said, and think of poor Albert, He's been in the army four years, he wants a good time, And if you don't give it him, there's others will, I said. Oh is there, she said. Something o' that, I said. 150 Then I'll know who to thank, she said, and give me a straight look. HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME If you don't like it you can get on with it, I said. Others can pick and choose if you can't. But if Albert makes off, it won't be for lack of telling. You ought to be ashamed, I said, to look so antique. (And her only thirty-one.) I can't help it, she said, pulling a long face, It's them pills I took, to bring it off, she said. (She's had five already, and nearly died of young George.) 160 The chemist said it would be alright, but I've never been the same. You are a proper fool, I said. Well, if Albert won't leave you alone, there it is, I said, What you get married for if you don't want children? HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME Well, that Sunday Albert was home, they had a hot gammon, And they asked me in to dinner, to get the beauty of it hot - HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME Goonight Bill. Goonight Lou. Goonight May. Goonight. 170 Ta ta. Goonight. Goonight. Good night, ladies, good night, sweet ladies, good night, good night.

### III. THE FIRE SERMON

The river's tent is broken: the last fingers of leaf Clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind Crosses the brown land, unheard. The nymphs are departed. Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song. The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers, Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed. And their friends, the loitering heirs of city directors; 180 Departed, have left no addresses.

Line 161 ALRIGHT. This spelling occurs also in the Hogarth Press edition - Editor.

By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept . . . Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song, Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long. But at my back in a cold blast I hear The rattle of the

bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear. A rat crept softly through the vegetation Dragging its slimy belly on the bank While I was fishing in the dull canal On a winter evening round behind the gashouse 190 Musing upon the king my brother's wreck And on the king my father's death before him. White bodies naked on the low damp ground And bones cast in a little low dry garret, Rattled by the rat's foot only, year to year. But at my back from time to time I hear The sound of horns and motors, which shall bring Sweeney to Mrs. Porter in the spring. O the moon shone bright on Mrs. Porter And on her daughter 200 They wash their feet in soda water Et O ces voix d'enfants, chantant dans la coupole!

Twit twit twit Jug jug jug jug jug jug So rudely forc'd. Tereu

Unreal City Under the brown fog of a winter noon Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant Unshaven, with a pocket full of currants 210 C.i.f. London: documents at sight, Asked me in demotic French To luncheon at the Cannon Street Hotel Followed by a weekend at the Metropole.

At the violet hour, when the eyes and back Turn upward from the desk, when the human engine waits Like a taxi throbbing waiting, I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives, Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives 220 Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea, The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights Her stove, and lays out food in tins. Out of the window perilously spread Her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays, On the divan are piled (at night her bed) Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays. I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest - I too awaited the expected guest. 230 He, the young man carbuncular, arrives, A small house agent's clerk, with one bold stare, One of the low on whom assurance sits As a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire. The time is now propitious, as he guesses, The meal is ended, she is bored and tired, Endeavours to engage her in caresses Which still are unreproved, if undesired. Flushed and decided, he assaults at once; Exploring hands encounter no defence; 240 His vanity requires no response, And makes a welcome of indifference. (And I Tiresias have foresuffered all Enacted on this same divan or bed; I

who have sat by Thebes below the wall And walked among the  
lowest of the dead.) Bestows one final patronising kiss, And gropes  
his way, finding the stairs unlit . . .

She turns and looks a moment in the glass, Hardly aware of her  
departed lover; 250 Her brain allows one half-formed thought to  
pass: "Well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over." When lovely  
woman stoops to folly and Paces about her room again, alone, She  
smoothes her hair with automatic hand, And puts a record on the  
gramophone.

"This music crept by me upon the waters" And along the Strand, up  
Queen Victoria Street. O City city, I can sometimes hear Beside a  
public bar in Lower Thames Street, 260 The pleasant whining of a  
mandoline And a clatter and a chatter from within Where fishmen  
lounge at noon: where the walls Of Magnus Martyr  
hold Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold.

The river sweats Oil and tar The barges drift With the  
turning tide Red sails 270 Wide To leeward, swing on the  
heavy spar. The barges wash Drifting logs Down  
Greenwich reach Past the Isle of Dogs. Weialala  
leia Wallala leialala

Elizabeth and Leicester Beating oars 280 The stern was  
formed A gilded shell Red and gold The brisk  
swell Rippled both shores Southwest wind Carried down  
stream The peal of bells White towers Weialala leia  
290 Wallala leialala

"Trams and dusty trees. Highbury bore me. Richmond and  
Kew Undid me. By Richmond I raised my knees Supine on the floor  
of a narrow canoe."

"My feet are at Moorgate, and my heart Under my feet. After the  
event He wept. He promised 'a new start'. I made no comment.  
What should I resent?" "On Margate Sands. 300 I can  
connect Nothing with nothing. The broken fingernails of dirty  
hands. My people humble people who expect Nothing." la la

To Carthage then I came

Burning burning burning burning O Lord Thou pluckest me out O  
Lord Thou pluckest 310

burning

#### IV. DEATH BY WATER

Phlebas the Phoenician, a fortnight dead, Forgot the cry of gulls,  
and the deep sea swell And the profit and  
loss. A current under sea Picked his  
bones in whispers. As he rose and fell He passed the stages of his  
age and youth Entering the  
whirlpool. Gentile or Jew O you who turn  
the wheel and look to windward, 320 Consider Phlebas, who was  
once handsome and tall as you.

#### V. WHAT THE THUNDER SAID

After the torchlight red on sweaty faces After the frosty silence in the  
gardens After the agony in stony places The shouting and the  
crying Prison and palace and reverberation Of thunder of spring  
over distant mountains He who was living is now dead We who  
were living are now dying With a little patience 330

Here is no water but only rock Rock and no water and the sandy  
road The road winding above among the mountains Which are  
mountains of rock without water If there were water we should stop  
and drink Amongst the rock one cannot stop or think Sweat is dry  
and feet are in the sand If there were only water amongst the  
rock Dead mountain mouth of carious teeth that cannot spit Here  
one can neither stand nor lie nor sit 340 There is not even silence in  
the mountains But dry sterile thunder without rain There is not even  
solitude in the mountains But red sullen faces sneer and snarl From  
doors of mudcracked houses If  
there were water And no rock If there were rock And also  
water And water 350 A spring A pool among the rock If there  
were the sound of water only Not the cicada And dry grass  
singing But sound of water over a rock Where the hermit-thrush  
sings in the pine trees Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop But there  
is no water

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