

Damyata: The boat responded
Gaily, to the hand expert with sail and oar
The sea was calm, your heart would have responded
Gaily, when invited, beating obedient
To controlling hands

420

I sat upon the shore
Fishing,² with the arid plain behind me
Shall I at least set my lands in order?³
London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down⁴
*Poi s'ascose nel foco che gli affina*⁵
*Quando fiam uti chelidon*⁶—O swallow swallow⁷
*Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie*⁸
These fragments I have shored against my ruins⁹
Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.¹
Datta, Dayadhvam. Damyata.
Shantih shantih shantih²

425

430

1921

1922

~~Journey of the Magi¹~~

~~"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,~~

2. V. Weston: *From Ritual to Romance*; chapter on the Fisher King [Eliot's note].

3. Cf. Isaiah 38.1: "Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." The inclusive "I," who sits in the symbolic act of fishing (seeking salvation, regeneration, eternity) with the Waste Land behind him, wonders how far he can order his affairs.

4. One of the later lines of this nursery rhyme is "Take the key and lock her up, my fair lady."

5. "V. *Purgatorio*, 26.148" [Eliot's note]. The note goes on to quote lines 145–148 of the *Purgatorio*, in which Arnaut Daniel, the Provençal poet, addresses Dante: "Now I pray you, by that virtue which guides you to the summit of the stairway, be mindful in due time of my pain." Then (in the line Eliot quotes here) "he hid himself in the fire which refines them." The purgatorial vision of refining fire—as distinct from the fires of lust—represents one of the hopeful fragments shored up by the seeker for regeneration and order.

6. "V. *Pervigilium Veneris*. Cf. Philomela in parts 2 and 3" [Eliot's note]. The Latin phrase in the text means, "When shall I be as the swallow?" It comes from the *Pervigilium Veneris* ("Vigil of Venus"), an anonymous late Latin poem combining a hymn to Venus with a description of spring. In the last two stanzas of the *Pervigilium* occurs a recollection of the Tereus-Procne-Philomela myth (except that in this version the swallow is identified with Philomela); the anonymous poet's mood changes to one of sadness, combined with hope for renewal: "The maid of Tereus sings under the poplar shade, so that you would think musical trills of love came from her mouth and not a sister's complaint of a barbarous husband. . . . She sings, we are silent. When will my spring come? When shall I be as the swallow that I may cease to be silent? I have lost the Muse in

silence, and Apollo regards me not."

7. Cf. Swinburne's *Itylus*, which begins, "Swallow, my sister, O sister swallow, / How can thine heart be full of spring?" and Tennyson's lyric in *The Princess*: "O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying south."

8. "V. Gerard de Nerval, *Sonnet El Desdichado*" [Eliot's note]. The French line may be translated, "The Prince of Aquitaine in the ruined tower." One of the cards in the Tarot pack is "the tower struck by lightning."

9. This may refer to the whole poem—fragments assembled by the speaker in the attempt to come to terms with his situation.

1. "V. Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*" [Eliot's note]. Subtitled "Hieronymo's Mad Againe," Kyd's play (1594) is an early example of the Elizabethan tragedy of revenge. Hieronymo, driven mad by the murder of his son, has his revenge when he is asked to write a court entertainment. He replies, "Why then Ile fit you!" (i. e., accommodate you), and assigns the parts in the entertainment so that, in the course of the action, his son's murderers are killed.

2. "Shantih. Repeated as here, a formal ending to an Upanishad. The Peace which passeth understanding is our equivalent to this word" [Eliot's note]. The Upanishads are poetic dialogues on Hindu metaphysics, written after the Vedas, the ancient Hindu scriptures, and in part commenting on them. The fact that the benediction is in a language so foreign to Western tradition may indicate that the solution is willed, not achieved.

1. One of the three wise men who came from the east to Jerusalem to do homage to the infant Jesus (Matthew 2. 1–12) is recalling in old age the meaning of the experience.