Rhapsody on a Windy Night

POEM TEXT

Twelve o'clock.
Along the reaches of the street
Held in a lunar synthesis,
Whispering lunar incantations
Dissolve the floors of memory
And all its clear relations,
Its divisions and precisions,
Every street lamp that I pass
Beats like a fatalistic drum,
And through the spaces of the dark
Midnight shakes the memory
As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

Half-past one,
The street lamp sputtered,
The street lamp muttered,
The street lamp said, "Regard that woman
Who hesitates towards you in the light of the door
Which opens on her like a grin.
You see the border of her dress
Is torn and stained with sand,
And you see the corner of her eye
Twists like a crooked pin."

The memory throws up high and dry
A crowd of twisted things;
A twisted branch upon the beach
Eaten smooth, and polished
As if the world gave up
The secret of its skeleton,
Stiff and white.
A broken spring in a factory yard,
Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left
Hard and curled and ready to snap.

Half-past two,
The street lamp said,
"Remark the cat which flattens itself in the gutter,
Slips out its tongue
And devours a morsel of rancid butter."
So the hand of a child, automatic,
Slipped out and pocketed a toy that was running along the quay.
I could see nothing behind that child's eye.
I have seen eyes in the street
Trying to peer through lighted shutters,
And a crab one afternoon in a pool,
An old crab with barnacles on his back,
Gripped the end of a stick which I held him.

Half-past three,
The lamp sputtered,
The lamp muttered in the dark.

The lamp hummed:
"Regard the moon,
La lune ne garde aucune rancune,
She winks a feeble eye,
She smiles into corners.
She smoothes the hair of the grass.
The moon has lost her memory.
A washed-out smallpox cracks her face,
Her hand twists a paper rose,
That smells of dust and old Cologne,
She is alone
With all the old nocturnal smells
That cross and cross across her brain."
The reminiscence comes
Of sunless dry geraniums
And dust in crevices,
Smells of chestnuts in the streets,
And female smells in shuttered rooms,
And cigarettes in corridors
And cocktail smells in bars.

The lamp said,
"Four o'clock,
Here is the number on the door.
Memory!
You have the key,
The little lamp spreads a ring on the stair,
Mount.
The bed is open; the tooth-brush hangs on the wall,
Put your shoes at the door, sleep, prepare for life."

78 The last twist of the knife.

SUMMARY

It's midnight. The whole street seem to be held together by the moonlight. The moon whispers spells that blur the boundaries of memory—all those things that memory relates to, the way memory helps divide a person's experience of the world, and how memory brings a sense of precision to life. The speaker walks down the street, feeling that every street lamp he or she passes beats like a drum and reminds the speaker that fate is inevitable. In this darkness, midnight disrupts memory like a madman waving a bunch of dead flowers.

It's now 1:30 a.m. A street lamp coughs and then mutters, before talking directly to the speaker. The streetlamp tells the speaker to look at a woman in a doorway. She is hesitant, and the talking lamp compares the light of the doorway that shines down onto the woman to a leering smile. The lamp then draws the narrator's attention to the woman's dress, the bottom of which is ripped and sandy. The corner of the woman's eye seems to twist disconcertingly, like a pin that's been bent.

Memories flash through the speaker's mind, inspired by that twist of the woman's eye. The speaker thinks of a twisted branch on a beach that had been polished smooth by the waves, wind, and sand. The speaker compares this stiff, bleached branch to a bone offered up from the skeleton of the world itself. This prompts another memory to come to mind—that of a rusty spring in a factory yard. The spring has grown so stiff that it's ready to snap.

It's 2:30 a.m. now. The street lamp speaks again, drawing the speaker's attention to a cat making its way through the gutter. The cat gobbles up some old rotting butter that it's found. The quick movement of the cat's tongue as it laps up the butter brings to mind another memory for the speaker—this time of the way that a child had adeptly slipped a toy into his or her pocket while running along a wharf. The speaker remembers seeing a vacant, empty look in the child's eye. The thought of eyes then calls forth another memory, this time of people peeking out onto the street through their shuttered windows. The speaker then recalls the memory of being in wading pool, and an old, barnacle-covered crab holding tightly to a stick held by the speaker.

Now it's 3:30 a.m, and the lamp talks to the speaker again. This time it tells the speaker to look at the moon, and then says, in French, that "the moon holds no grudges." The lamp describes the moon as a winking and smiling old woman, whose light reaches into dark corners and washes over the grass. The lamp says the moon's memory has gone, and describes her face as being covered by dents that look like smallpox scars. In her hand the moon tightly grips a paper rose that smells like dust and old aftershave. The moon is lonely, with no company apart from the old smells of the night that cross her mind again and again. The lamp's words stir the speaker's memory. The speaker thinks of dead flowers and dusty corners, as well as of the smell of chestnuts being roasted on the street, of women behind closed doors, of cigarettes in hallways, and of cocktails in bars.

It's now 4:00 a.m. The talking lamp gives the speaker instructions, pointing out the number on the door (likely of a house or apartment building) before the speaker. The lamp calls out to "Memory," before saying that the speaker (or, perhaps, "Memory" itself) has the key. The lamp then shines on the staircase and tells the speaker to climb up, into the house/apartment. The bed inside is all ready to be slept in, and the speaker's toothbrush is ready to be put to use. The lamp tells the speaker to leave his or her shoes by the door and to then get some rest—to get ready for the day to come (and life itself). The speaker views this instruction as the ultimate insult, or perhaps the final nail in the coffin.

THEMES

MEANING, PURPOSE, AND CONTROL

"Rhapsody on a Windy Night" follows an unnamed speaker walking down a street at night. The moonlight makes the world appear menacing and unfamiliar, and the speaker's mind grows troubled as memories bubble unbidden to the surface. Far from the distracting light of day, the darkness reveals the speaker's sense of control over and purpose to be illusions.

The speaker moves through a moonlit city scene populated by the kind of objects one would expect: street lamps, doorways, cats, and so on. But the night distorts reality, making these mundanities strange and even threatening: the cat laps rancid butter, the street lamps beat like "fatalistic" drums, and the only other person around looks disheveled and has a crooked glint in her eye.

The speaker walks through a world that's been twisted out of shape, in the sense that things don't behave how they should; their purpose is confused, as though a layer of chaos has been added over everything in the dark. The street lamp even begins to talk directly to the speaker: an inanimate object suddenly has a kind of consciousness, upsetting the order of the world and drawing various memories to the speaker's mind.

Importantly, these memories are tied to a sense of decay and uselessness. The speaker thinks of a branch that's been worn smooth by the elements and resembles a bone, a spring so rusty and stiff that it's about to snap, and dried up flowers. None of these items can fulfill their designated purpose anymore—the branch won't grow leaves, the spring won't

bounce, the flowers won't pollinate new plants. The fact that these are the images that the speaker thinks about suggests the speaker's own dawning sense of futility. The speaker, too, has perhaps been "eaten smooth" by the march of time and the struggle to define a sense of meaning in life.

This is in part because of the realization that the speaker isn't in *control* of his or her life, any more than the speaker is in control of the memories being "thrown up." Instead, the speaker walks along to a "fatalistic" drum beat, with the sense that there is nothing the speaker can do to change the future. Indeed, his or her actions are being dictated by the environment—the lamp tells the speaker where to go and what to do.

This revelation of a lack of control is explicitly linked to the night. Perhaps this is because there is little to distract the speaker at night, free as it is from the responsibilities and social niceties of waking hours. In any case, the speaker compares the way "midnight shakes the memory" to the way that "a madman shakes a dead geranium," as simile that links irrationality to nighttime—as though the world undergoes some twisted fairy tale spell when the clock strikes twelve. Memories, meanwhile, are like a dead flower, a memento of past experiences that will never actually *be* again. Midnight "shakes" the memory, causing elements of it to break loose and rush forth of their own accord. Yet just as the madman cannot bring the flowers back to life, the speaker cannot relive these memories—cannot return to a time when life maybe *did* have meaning (or, at least, seemed to in the speaker's comparative ignorance).

At the end of the poem, the speaker is instructed by the lamp to go home, get into bed, and "prepare for life." Yet the idea of going about business as usual with the knowledge that it's all likely meaningless is "the last twist of the knife." What an insult to have to keep trudging on, the poem suggests, when there might be no point to any of it.

Where this theme appears in the poem:

- Lines 2-12
- Lines 13-22
- Lines 33-37
- Lines 46-61
- Lines 69-78

TIME, MEMORY, AND MORTALITY

Time and memory build a sense of atrophy (that is, wasting away) throughout the poem. Instead of comforting the speaker, memories only highlight the passage of time and the inevitability of death. Furthermore, everything the speaker experiences while walking along the street provokes images and memories of decay, suggesting that all the speaker can see in life is, paradoxically, death. Whether it's the dead geraniums, the rusty spring, the old crab, or the senile moon, everything the speaker thinks of is dead or dying. These memories underscore the relentless march of time, each one a kind of symbol of the speaker's own mortal journey.

The poem is literally marked by the passage time, with five stanzas beginning with a statement of the hour. This creates a sense of anxiety, of life is slipping away. The end of the first stanza also references time: "Midnight shakes the memory / As a madman shakes a dead geranium." Essentially this is saying that time and memory play tricks on the brain. The unstoppable passage of time means all life must die, and memory is a way of trying to keep things alive for a while. Yet ultimately shaking up memories as a means to hold onto life is as useless as shaking a dead flower; for one thing, memory is unreliable and has a logic of its own. More importantly, memory is rooted in the past—meaning memory by default represents time passing by.

Again, the speaker's memories themselves directly link to atrophy and death. The branch—once part of a living tree—evokes a skeleton, having been whittled away over time into a stark reminder of mortality. In stanza five, meanwhile, the sight of a stray cat conjures the memory of a child at the beach. As this memory, like the branch before, is linked to the beach, perhaps the atmosphere of decay and menace in the speaker's adult world is drawing the speaker's memory back to a more innocent time of childhood vacations. This might be an attempt to assuage the dread of mortality by retreating to a happier past, yet it's ultimately of no use; again, the mere *existence* of these memories is a sign that time has gone by and that the speaker is closer to death than ever before.

As the poem progresses, the sense of atrophy and decay intensifies. Even the moon has "lost her memory," which itself represents a kind of death; memory creates a set of reference points from which one may construct an identity, and thus without it that identity ceases to be. For the speaker, almost the opposite happens: the onslaught of memories intensifies as the poem builds towards its conclusion, becoming increasingly random as if the speaker is trying to grasp onto anything to comfort his or her anxious mind.

In the penultimate stanza, the street lamp says that the speaker has the key to get into his or her house, and exclaims "Memory!" But this might be a sarcastic joke on the lamp's part. The speaker *should* hold the key to his or her own life, but the speaker's mind is totally overrun by experiences and memories that evoke death, and which thus undermine any sense of purpose in even the most commonplace of tasks.

According to the poem, then, time and memory almost have a life of their own, as capable of destabilizing someone's mind as offering it reassurance—through turning life into a constant reminder of death.

Where this theme appears in the poem:

- Line 1

- Lines 10-12
- Line 13
- Lines 23-32
- Lines 33-45
- Line 46
- Lines 49-55
- Lines 62-68
- Lines 69-78

LINE-BY-LINE ANALYSIS

LINES 1-7

Twelve o'clock.
Along the reaches of the street
Held in a lunar synthesis,
Whispering lunar incantations
Dissolve the floors of memory
And all its clear relations,
Its divisions and precisions,

The poem opens as the clock strikes midnight, setting up a quiet, nocturnal atmosphere when most people would be asleep. A number of stanzas start in the same way—with a reference to the time—which helps establish the speaker's diminishing sense of control as the night wears on. Midnight is particularly associated with the supernatural, and so here hints at that loss of control to come.

Lines 2-6 suggest a dreamlike blurring of the boundaries between time, the speaker's memory, and the world itself. Line specifically 2 establishes the urban environment through which the speaker walks, while lines 3-6 suggest that this environment is under some kind of spell, perhaps cast by the moon.

Indeed, the street seems to be "held" in the moonlight, the assonant /l/ sounds linking "held" with "lunar." It's not too clear yet what is actually *going on* in the poem, but things certainly seem dreamlike and somewhat unnerving. And already the question of who is in control—the moon, the speaker, or someone/something else altogether—is starting to be asked.

Line 4 introduces the idea of "lunar incantations." An incantation is a kind of spell or charm, suggesting that the usual logic of the world can be undermined late at night. In other words, the night makes ordinary things—the same street that the speaker has perhaps walked down casually during the daylight—seem strange, mystical, or foreign. Sibilance throughout these lines—especially apparent with the /s/ and /sh/ sounds in words like "whispering," "synthesis," "dissolve," "relations," and "precisions"—adds to the hushed, mysterious quality.

Throughout history, the moon has been associated with magic and witchcraft, both of which are ways of disrupting the way the world usually works. But it's not clear who or what is actually doing the whispering here—the syntax of the lines allows for the source of the "incantations" to be disembodied (that is, it's not explicitly connected to a subject). However, the most likely source of these magical "incantations" seems to be the moon itself. That is, rather than a person appealing to the moon for supernatural assistance, here the roles are reversed: the *moon* offers incantations of its own.

Lines 5-7 make clear the effects of these "incantations." Namely, they:

> Dissolve the floors of memory
> And all its clear relations,
> Its divisions and precisions,

In other words, these spells destabilize the certainties of the speaker's human existence. Memory, rather than being kept in a little box or room in the mind, is starting to seep into the speaker's lived experience of the world, blurring the line between reality and imagination. The assonance of /o/ sounds ("dissolve the floors of memory") creates a feeling of slowness that mimics this process of dissolving.

Likewise, the matching "-ion" suffixes on "relations ... divisions and precisions" links these words together sonically—they are all part of the way in which human beings usually make sense of the world, and are under threat in the darkness of the night.

LINES 8-12

Every street lamp that I pass
Beats like a fatalistic drum,
And through the spaces of the dark
Midnight shakes the memory
As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

Lines 8 to 12 help establish the speaker's role in the poem. Perhaps the fact that the "I" doesn't appear until line 8 hints at the way in which the certainty of the self is undermined throughout. Overall, the lines signal the speaker's diminishing sense of control and the destabilization of the speaker's mind.

The speaker has a curious relationship with the street lamps. Whereas usually they would hardly be noticed, the speaker thinks of the lamps as beating "like a fatalistic drum." The consonance of /m/ sounds in "lamp" and "drum" ties the two items together conceptually, matching the speaker's description. This simile is unsettling, though—it's not every day that streetlights get compared to drums. Each "beat" of the street lamp (each time the speaker passes by its light) seems to express something "fatalistic"—something inevitable and out of the speaker's control. The regularity of the nighttime urban scene undermines the speaker's sense of agency and authority over his or her own life.

Lines 10 to 12 then offer up a key image. Here, a personified

midnight exerts its influence on the speaker's memory, shaking it like a "madman shakes a dead geranium." This simile links time and memory together with mortality (the flower is "dead"). "Midnight," "memory," and "madman" are further tied together by the alliteration of /m/ sounds and the consonance of /d/ and /n/ sounds.

As with so many lines in the poem, these are about the blurring of boundaries and the undermining of certainty. The night-time environment disrupts the way in which memory can be a reminder of life—of good times and happy occasions—and instead suggests something all the more bleak and sinister.

Cleverly, however, the use of "as" in line 12 allows for the possibility that lines 11 and 12 are distinct and unrelated events that are happening at the same time. That is, the link between the midnight's effect on the memory and the madman could be a false one, though the view that "as" indicates simile seems more likely. The uncertainty, of course, supports the poem's overall effort to undermine any sense of stability.

LINES 13-18

Half-past one,
The street lamp sputtered,
The street lamp muttered,
The street lamp said, "Regard that woman
Who hesitates towards you in the light of the door
Which opens on her like a grin.

The second stanza opens in the same way as the first: with a statement of the time. The night is passing linearly, and an hour and a half has gone by. What's fascinating here is that there is no indication of what has been going on in between the two stanzas, or indeed how "long" the actions and thoughts of the first stanza took to pass. In other words, the stanza break between line 12 and 13 manages to introduce another layer of uncertainty into the poem—merely through a line's worth of blank space.

The stanza introduces a shift in the tense as well. The first stanza was in the present tense and now the poem employs the past (and the poem switches between the two tenses throughout). This makes it hard to tell if the poem is happening "now"—in its own present—or is itself occurring within someone's memory. The blur between these two possibilities is a deliberate effect throughout, matching the idea presented in lines 4 and 5 (that the night blurs the boundaries between lived experience and memory).

The anaphora in the repeated first words of lines 14, 15, and 16 has an unsettling effect—it's almost like something that would be heard in a nursery rhyme or fairy tale. "Sputtered" and "muttered" chime together with assonance and consonance as the street lamp comes to personified life. If the end of the first stanza served to suggest a troubled psyche, the introduction of speech to the street lamp makes it doubly unnerving.

The street lamp's speech instructs the speaker to cast his gaze on a woman in a doorway. The sinister suggestiveness of "grin" combined with the tear in her dress hints at the possibility of sexual violence and of a detached, anonymous encounter. The woman is in all likelihood a "lady of the night"—a prostitute.

LINES 19-22

You see the border of her dress
Is torn and stained with sand,
And you see the corner of her eye
Twists like a crooked pin."

One of the poem's recurring motifs is the blurring of boundaries, which contributes to the poem's sense of general breakdown between meaning and insignificance, between life and mortality, and between experience and memory.

Line 19 mentions this motif explicitly in the word "border": this is the line between nudity and being covered. The fact that this border is "torn" embodies the idea that these boundaries can't be relied upon, and also carries with it a suggestion of violence similar to the poem's final line (which evokes violence through its reference to the twist of a knife).

The sibilance between "stained" and "sand" links them together via sound, while visually the two words appear "stained" with the same first letter. It's a weird image—sand is not something that really *stains*—but the poem often functions through associations that follow a tenuous, twisted sense of logic (much like the logic that happens within a dream).

The idea of sand "staining" something also foreshadows the following stanza's shift towards the memory of the smooth branch (which has also been "stained," or worn smooth, by elements like sand, water, and wind). Line 20 thus hints at the beach-based image to come in the next stanza, and a beach notably represents another blurry boundary. Beaches are the border between land and water, but they are constantly shifting, each wave carrying with it the potential of change.

Finally, the crooked pin further adds to the sense of a reality under threat. A pin usually holds something together, but here it is "crooked." In other words, like memory in the poem, it has lost its original function; it's been distorted, or bent out of shape.

LINES 23-29

The memory throws up high and dry
A crowd of twisted things;
A twisted branch upon the beach
Eaten smooth, and polished
As if the world gave up
The secret of its skeleton,
Stiff and white.

The third stanza makes a big imaginative leap. It takes an element of the previous stanza's content—the action of

"twisting"—and brings to the speaker's mind other "twisted things." Again, the logic here is dreamlike, each image quickly conjuring something perhaps only tangentially related. The speaker's mind seems overactive and overstimulated, taking visual cues and making abrupt links between lived experience and memories.

The phrase "throws up" again suggests the speaker's lack of control over these memories—indeed, the memory is arguably personified here, given its own sense of agency and will. "Throws up," of course, also carries with it a suggestion of bodily rejection and sickness, as though these memories make the speaker nauseous or unwell. Again, the poem is filled with a sense of instability.

Essentially, this stanza is made up of two images. The first is:

> A twisted branch upon the beach
> Eaten smooth, and polished
> As if the world gave up
> The secret of its skeleton,
> Stiff and white.

This image evokes the passage of time. The process that has changed the branch from something spiky and prickly into being "smooth" and "polished" is one that takes a very long time—hundreds of years, perhaps, of waves and sand eroding the branch's exterior. The speaker interprets this image for the reader, aligning it through simile with a "skeleton."

A skeleton, of course, is a reminder of death, the certainty of mortality that every human being carries with them under the surface of life. The branch looks like a bone—and in its reminder of timescales well beyond the scope of human experience, this image brings thoughts of mortality to the speaker's mind.

LINES 30-32

> *A broken spring in a factory yard,*
> *Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left*
> *Hard and curled and ready to snap.*

The second image in the third stanza is a kind of man-made mirror of the first. If the branch has become skeleton-like through its contact with sand, air, and waves—natural elements—the spring has become a dead object through its neglect. That is, it has been discarded, and has grown so stiff as to be useless as a spring.

This ties in with the speaker's position in the poem—the speaker doesn't seem to be able to go with life as usual, particularly by the poem's end. The rust on the spring is a visual reminder of its decay into uselessness, and thus mirrors the inevitable movement from life to death—the "fatalistic" drumbeat—that seems to vex the speaker throughout the poem. The sibilance in lines 30-32 ("spring," "rust," "clings," "strength," "snap") seems to cling the words in the same way that rust "clings" to the spring. Finally, the spring carries with it connotations of a modern, industrial world that here is shown to be in a state of atrophy (gradual wasting away). The spring is "ready to snap," just as the speaker's mind is at breaking point too.

These lines also serve to make the speaker seem more isolated. Normally, a factory yard would be a site of great activity, with lots of people working on making or repairing things. But it's now some time between half-past one and half-past two in the morning, and the factory is silent. It's in this silence that the speaker notices the spring. In other words, the quiet and unnerving time of night allows the speaker to see beyond the usual distractions of life, and notice subtle but strong reminders of mortality everywhere.

LINES 33-39

> *Half-past two,*
> *The street lamp said,*
> *"Remark the cat which flattens itself in the gutter,*
> *Slips out its tongue*
> *And devours a morsel of rancid butter."*
> *So the hand of a child, automatic,*
> *Slipped out and pocketed a toy that was running along the quay.*

The fourth stanza begins in the same way as the first and second, with a statement of the time. Another hour has passed, and it's now 2:30 in the morning. Lines 34 to 37 report what the street lamp said next. The street lamp implores the speaker to notice a cat going about its night-time business. But the street lamp doesn't say *why* the things it mentions are worth noticing, leaving it for the reader to decide why they're in the poem.

The cat is in full survival mode and is most likely a stray. It's trying to find something to eat, while also remaining guarded the any potential threats that come with the nocturnal urban environment. Just as the cat has certain things it must do to survive—licking butter that's gone bad from a street gutter—the speaker has certain ways of living (which are foregrounded in the poem's conclusion through the mention of objects like the shoes and toothbrush).

But lurking under the surface here is a questioning of life's meaning—the speaker can see the functional point in what the cat is doing, but no apparent purpose to living other than mere survival. There is something grotesque about the cat and its "rancid butter," similar to the feeling conjured by the image of the woman in stanza 2. The rancidness of the butter suggests decay. The long, open vowel sounds in line 37 ("devours a morsel of rancid butter) create a sense of perverse luxury, suggesting that the cat enjoys eating its discovery.

Lines 38 to 39 are the speaker's *own* associations, brought to mind at the sight of the cat. Just as the image of the woman stanza 2 "threw up" memories of a branch and a rusted spring respectively, the visual action of the cat's tongue here reminds

the speaker of something from the speaker's own experience. This appears to be a childhood memory, in which a kid unthinkingly puts a toy in their pocket (in a visually similar way to the cat's retracting tongue).

The mention of childhood and child's play is deliberately at odds with the psychological struggle happening throughout the poem, which seems linked to adulthood and the search for meaning and purpose in the world. It seems to recall a moment of carefree spontaneity. The image of the child throws the poem's final image—of the implied return to the work day—into starker relief: the dismal drudgery of adulthood seems all the more depressing in contrast to the joy of youth.

LINES 40-45

I could see nothing behind that child's eye.
I have seen eyes in the street
Trying to peer through lighted shutters,
And a crab one afternoon in a pool,
An old crab with barnacles on his back,
Gripped the end of a stick which I held him.

Line 40 is a deeply unsettling and mysterious line. The speaker relates seeing "nothing" behind "that child's eye," implying a kind of deadness or disconnectedness. Given that that the other images in the poem are suggestive of a state of atrophy, or wasting away, perhaps this memory relates to the speaker's first conscious sense of mortality. In the life of the other child's eyes—the "windows to the soul"—the speaker perceived life's inevitable end. "Nothing" might not mean absence itself, but the *presence* of death, which returns everything to nothingness.

Lines 41 to 45 represent another imaginative leap by the speaker. Having just cut from the image of the cat to the memory of a child, this next link is facilitated by "eyes," as the speaker moves from the child's eye to other "eyes" in the street. The eye, of course, is a key organ of perception, and the focus on eyes here foregrounds that the poem, too, is about the way humans perceive the world—and how reliable their perceptions really are.

Lines 41 and 42 have an atmosphere of paranoia. If the poem is partly about the speaker trying to figure out his or her place in the world, the disembodied eyes peering out at the speaker helps to intensify this sense of self-consciousness. Just as the speaker perceives the objects and inhabitants of the urban nighttime all around, the speaker's subjectivity is undermined by the looks of other people. The image of people looking through "lighted shutters" is suggestive of a desire for clarity and meaning where perhaps none can be found.

Lines 43 to 45 abruptly yoke the poem back in the direction of memory, as the speaker recalls holding a crab on the end of a stick. This "old crab" clinging on to the stick could represent the speaker trying to hold on to sanity.

LINES 46-54

Half-past three,
The lamp sputtered,
The lamp muttered in the dark.
The lamp hummed:
"Regard the moon,
La lune ne garde aucune rancune,
She winks a feeble eye,
She smiles into corners.
She smoothes the hair of the grass.

Line 46 brings with it another shift in the poem's time—another hour goes by and it's now 3:30 a.m. The personified street lamp repeats its earlier actions—sputtering, muttering, and then speaking. The anaphora of "the lamp" here mimics the grammatical construction of lines 14 and 15. The repetition has a spell-like quality, recalling the "lunar incantations" of line 4 and again underscoring the mysterious strangeness of the world at night.

The lamp now draws the speaker's—and the reader's—attention to the moon, which is also personified. The lamp characterizes the moon as a once-elegant figure whose beauty is fading and memory is failing. Line 51 is in French, and roughly translates as "the moon does not keep grudges." As will be later suggesting in line 55, this isn't necessarily because the moon is particularly forgiving—but rather because she has lost her memory. Even the moon—the object that seems to cast the nighttime in an otherworldly, strange glow—is herself destabilized and discombobulated.

Lines 52-54 also use anaphora, each outlining a simple action characteristic of the moon. The simplicity of the syntax here—"she winks," "she blinks," "she smoothes"—suggests that the moon bounces quickly from one action to the next, as though unable to remember the previous action (an idea supposed by line the loss of memory in line 55).

The alliteration of "moon" with "memory" links the two words together conceptually, as they have been repeatedly throughout the poem (recall that the same type of alliteration can be found in the first stanza). The moon has strong links with insanity—indeed, the word "lunacy" originally referred to madness directly linked to the moon. The poem emphasizes the links between the moon and madness, suggesting that there is something specific about this time of night that destabilizes the certainties that help get people through their days. In the absence of the day's hustle and bustle, the moon shines its cold light on the human world and casts doubt on whether that world is a meaningful one.

Furthermore, the moon here is a kind of stand-in for the speaker. She holds no grudges, is winking and smiling. That is, she seems to want to engage with the world, to make contact. But she isn't able to because of the sheer distance between the moon and the earth. The speaker, too, is becoming distanced

from the surrounding world, as the speaker's disruptive and overactive imagination takes control.

LINES 55-61

The moon has lost her memory.
A washed-out smallpox cracks her face,
Her hand twists a paper rose,
That smells of dust and old Cologne,
She is alone
With all the old nocturnal smells
That cross and cross across her brain."

Lines 55 to 61 continue flesh out the character of the moon. Of course, the poem is now almost in the realm of nonsense, with it being unclear where these thoughts are coming from. Though the words are presented as being the streetlamp's, the reader has to consider whether the words are really occurring in the troubled imagination of the speaker.

Line 55 states a clear loss of certainty, echoing the instability that has run throughout the poem up until this point. Indeed, memory is a major part of the way people make sense of their lives. The loss of memory, then, is akin to the loss of any reliable sense of meaning or purpose. It's also worth remembering that the moon has illuminated the night sky for the entirety of humankind's existence (and, of course, beyond that). In that sense, the moon's "cracked" fave has borne witness to *everything* humanity has ever tried to do—all of its civilizations, wars, technological advances, and the minutia of individual lives. But the moon can offer no record of what it's seen—hence why its memory is lost. And without that memory, the poem suggests that humanity is lost too.

Line 56 uses consonance (perhaps even cacophony) to bring the visual image of the moon's face to auditory life, with the harsh sounds of "smallpox" and "cracks" almost making the reader have to perform this cracking action with their tongue (if speaking aloud). The pockmarks are, of course, the craters of the moon, but they are described in a way that makes them appear unfamiliar and unsettling, just like the rest of the nocturnal world that surrounds the speaker.

The use of "twist" in line 57 harks back to the "twisted" images of the second stanza, with the "paper rose" also mirroring the "dead geranium" in line 12. In both instances, flowers don't suggest beauty and life, as they so often symbolize, and instead stand in for the absence of these more positive associations. Together with the smell of "dust and old Cologne," the imagery here once again suggests decay; things that once evoked beauty and vibrancy have been covered in dust, grown brittle and stale (much like the rusted spring in stanza 3). As the night gets later—the hours ticking by—mortality becomes all the more present.

LINES 62-68

The reminiscence comes
Of sunless dry geraniums
And dust in crevices,
Smells of chestnuts in the streets,
And female smells in shuttered rooms,
And cigarettes in corridors
And cocktail smells in bars.

Once the lamp has finished speaking, line 61 makes the poem jump from the "old nocturnal smells" of the moon to smell-based memories of the speaker. Much of the poem functions like this, with sensory perceptions allowing for jarring conceptual leaps. Memory is usually something people rely upon to make sense of the world—but here it is in the driving seat, taking on a life of its own, with even the most tenuous of associations bringing about a flood of memories.

The grammar of line 62 emphasizes the speaker's lack of agency, his inability to control the workings of his memory. It isn't "I remembered" but "the reminiscence comes." That is, it is the memory itself that performs the action.

What follows is a quick-fire list of smell memories—dry geraniums, dust, chestnuts, "female smells," cigarette smoke, and cocktails. The geraniums obviously link with the end of the first stanza (line 12, where "a madman shakes a dead geranium") suggesting that, for whatever reason, the thought of dead geraniums comes readily to the speaker's mind. The "dust in crevices" brings to neglect, or things falling into disrepair (much like the rusted spring from earlier in the poem). There is a link, then, between the poem's sense of atrophy (gradual decay) and the image of dust, which also carries with it the suggestion of the passing of time. The speaker's awareness of mortality—of all eventually turning to dust—is clear.

The chestnut smell is more urban, which fits with the poem's setting (chestnuts might be roasted by street vendors). Meanwhile, the smells in lines 66, 67, and 68—from women, cigarettes, and cocktails—are more focused on the pursuit of pleasure, whether through sex, intoxication, or both. Perhaps the speaker pursued these things as a distraction from dawning futility of life and inevitability of death. The speaker might be latching onto the experiences that make up a life, all of which crumble and fade with time.

The use of sibilance in lines 62 and 68 ("reminiscence comes" and "smells in bars") creates the sense that these memories come to the speaker's mind rapidly, and that they are all closely—bizarrely—linked. The polysyndeton serves the same function, offering up the smells as the relentless unfolding of a list.

LINES 69-78

The lamp said,
"Four o'clock,
Here is the number on the door.
Memory!
You have the key,

The little lamp spreads a ring on the stair,
Mount.
The bed is open; the tooth-brush hangs on the wall,
Put your shoes at the door, sleep, prepare for life."
The last twist of the knife.

As the poem draws to its conclusion, the personified lamp announces the time: 4 a.m. (four hours after the poem's beginning).

In this stanza, the speaker's agency is entirely removed. The lamp issues instructions as though the speaker has been rendered incapable of even the most basic of tasks. The lamp points out the number on the door, tells the speaker to use the key, turn on the lamp, get into bed, brush his or her teeth, put his or her shoes by the door, and sleep. In other words, the lamp is now issuing instructions for the most basic and mundane tasks that the speaker needs to do to get from one moment to the next.

This loss of control is in large part based on the dominance of the speaker's memory, which has been drawing connections between scenes on the street with recollections throughout the poem. Emphasizing this, the lamp shouts "memory!" in line 72.

This moment of apparent apostrophe doesn't point to a specific memory, but is a restating of memory's strong importance in the poem; memory shapes the speaker's experience of the world yet seems to have a life of its own. Memories bounce off one another in the speaker's mind almost haphazardly, tossing up images and associations seemingly out of nowhere.

At the same time, the poem has suggested by this point that memories are what make up a person's identity. Identity itself, then, seems chaotic and confused, something the speaker passively experiences rather than actively creates. This is in keeping with the speaker's experience of each street lamps beating like a "fatalistic drum"—a steady reminder of the speaker's lack of control over life, even as that life marches inexorably forward.

It's worth remembering the absurdity of the lines here. Though they describe everyday tasks like brushing your teeth, they're being spoken by a talking street lamp. Indeed, it's a sign of the poem's power that the street lamp's ability to talk is so convincing—that is rings as something eerie and disconcerting rather than so ludicrous as to be funny. The mundanities of life—shoes, toothbrushes, beds—are trivial yet threatening, because the speaker's actions revolve around them.

Everyday life, here, is presented as decidedly meaningless, monotonous, and pathetic. Indeed, the need to "prepare for life" is "the last twist of the knife"—the final insult, perhaps, or the final nail in the coffin, to use a cliché. By default, to live life is to approach death. The poem ends on another fatalistic note, as the speaker seems perhaps resigned to going through the motions of daily life all the while knowing that they're devoid of meaning or purpose.

The final line is isolated by its stanza break, creating a sense of drama. The rare couplet rhyme is surprising, as is the literal content of the final line. The "twist" image is already familiar and can be traced back to the second stanza (the twist of the woman's eye, and later of the paper rose), but the line offers no clue as to whether this is a literal or a metaphorical "twist of a the knife."

The lack of a verb ("twist" here is a noun) eliminates the speaker's ability to tell who performs the action, and to whom. Regardless, the connotations are obviously violent and sinister. The poem has been gradually building a sense of unease and suspense, and the final line ensures that these feelings are left in the atmosphere once the poem is over.

SYMBOLS

FLOWERS

The poem makes three mentions of flowers, in lines 12, 57, and 63. Flowers are often used as symbols of vitality and beauty; they're associated with spring, a season of renewal and rebirth after the winter months. Yet the symbol here works by *not* playing into those usual associations. Instead, the flowers in the poem represent decay, fatalism, and the inevitability of mortality.

The geranium, which is mentioned twice in the poem, is a common flower that looks pretty. Accordingly, people often put geraniums in their homes. In this sense, then, geraniums are *usually* a kind of symbol of everyday life—nothing particularly remarkable, but a small way of making the world a more visually appealing place. Roses, meanwhile, are often representative of romance and love.

However, the geraniums in this poem are dead. They are a reminder of a life that once was, but is no longer. They once possessed beauty, but they have been neglected (the geraniums in line 63 are "sunless") and therefore have been denied what they need to thrive and grow. This is perhaps like the speaker of the poem, who walks in the moonlight, rather than sunlight, and whose life is filled with a sense of fatalism—a sense that life is pointless and out of the speaker's hands. The speaker, like the flowers, is perhaps withering away in the dark.

The geranium is specifically tied to memory in line 12. Memory being akin to a "dead geranium" suggests that the former is itself a marker of decay and mortality; after all, memories by default reference the past, meaning they can only accrue as time passes. In that sense, making memories—essentially, living one's life—brings one closer to death. The flowers in the poem, so often used in art to symbolize a sense of vivacity, are just reminders of the fact that everything will fade, and everything will die—just as memory itself is a reminder of a time that has

since passed, of a part of life that is over.

The rose in line 57 is notably made of paper, meaning it's a flimsy imitation of the flower itself. This rose is not alive, and is being twisted in the hands of the moon—a figure that throughout the poem exerts a strange control over the world around the speaker and itself becomes representative of an identity breaking apart. Together, this imagery adds to the poem's sensation of futility, of its sense that life is random and meaningless, and that death is inevitable. Momentary distractions like beauty and romance are no match for the hands of fate, which "twists" and "shakes" them along with the speaker's own mind.

Where this symbol appears in the poem:

- **Line 12:** "As a madman shakes a dead geranium."
- **Line 57:** "Her hand twists a paper rose"
- **Line 63:** "Of sunless dry geraniums"

THE MOON

The moon has a central role in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," largely as a means for the speaker to illustrate the feeling of losing control and the disintegration of one's identity. The moon is personified as a female figure and is first mentioned in lines 3 and 4, when the moon is said to exert a control over the street. The moon whispers quiet spells that blur the boundary between experience and memory. This image relies upon the long-standing association between the moon and magic, or the supernatural more generally. For centuries, humankind has believed in a "lunar effect"—that the moon exerts a hold not just over the tides but on human behavior itself. Indeed, many cultures have held or continue to hold the belief that the moon can induce temporary madness. The word "lunacy," of course, has its original etymology in just such a belief, traceable as far back as Aristotle and Pliny the Elder (thinkers from Ancient Greece and Rome).

In a way, then, the moon represents a sort of chaos—the destabilization of the mind that occurs when the familiar world is covered by darkness. But the moon is also a kind of silent witness here, a face that has looked down on the entirety of humanity's toil and trouble with nothing to say. In this sense, the moon represents a kind of meaningless life, as expressed in line 55: "The moon has lost her memory." Here, the moon has forgotten everything she has seen, questioning whether these events ever had any purpose at all. If identity is essentially the sum of a person's memories—those mental recordings of their experiences—then to lose one's memory is basically to lose one's identity. Despite seeming to assert control over the speaker, the moon itself is thus in a state of confusion and crisis.

Finally, the moon also functions as the opposite of the sun. If the sun is the celestial giver of life, the moon can only offer a pale imitation. Where sunlight would allow things like flowers to flourish, in the moonlight the "sunless" geraniums are dry and dead. The moonlit setting thus adds to the general sense of atrophy and mortality in the poem.

Where this symbol appears in the poem:

- **Lines 3-4:** "Held in a lunar synthesis, / Whispering lunar incantations"
- **Lines 50-61:** ""Regard the moon, / La lune ne garde aucune rancune, / She winks a feeble eye, / She smiles into corners. / She smoothes the hair of the grass. / The moon has lost her memory. / A washed-out smallpox cracks her face, / Her hand twists a paper rose, / That smells of dust and old Cologne, / She is alone / With all the old nocturnal smells / That cross and cross across her brain.""

POETIC DEVICES

ANAPHORA

"Rhapsody on a Windy Night" uses anaphora intermittently throughout. It occurs in lines 14, 15, 16, 47, 48, 52, 53, and 54 (and also in 66, 67 and 68, but these use polysyndeton specifically).

In the first half of the second stanza, the anaphora helps carve out the prominent role for the street lamp in the poem. Each line insists on the street lamp's existence and ability to talk, emphasizing its personification. It also creates a slightly sing-songy, nursery rhyme sound that is at odds with the actual content of the poem and is therefore quite unnerving. Lines 47 and 48 serve a similar function, bringing the "sputtering" and "muttering" back once more. This repetition of the repetition creates a sense of ritual, as though the street lamp *has* to sputter and mutter in order to take on the ability to communicate with the speaker (of course, the lamp can also be interpreted as an expression of the speaker's mind itself).

In the sixth stanza, the anaphora adds to the image of the moon's as a faded glory, both in terms of beauty and memory. The anaphora in lines 52, 53, 54—"she winks," "she smiles," "she smoothes"—creates a very simple grammatical structure as the lamp outlines the moon's actions. The moon is illuminating the world, but her light is "feeble" as she does so. The next line reveals that the moon has lost her memory, which casts these previous steps in an almost pathetic light—the pitiful attempts of the moon to illuminate the world even as she herself is lost in darkness. The anaphora helps create the sense that the moon is struggling even with her common actions—and this, in turn, foreshadows the speaker's struggle to go on with the mundanities of life in the poem's ending.

Where Anaphora appears in the poem:

- **Line 14:** “The street lamp”
- **Line 15:** “The street lamp”
- **Line 16:** “The street lamp”
- **Line 47:** “The lamp sputtered”
- **Line 48:** “The lamp muttered”
- **Line 52:** “She winks”
- **Line 53:** “She smiles”
- **Line 54:** “She smoothes”
- **Line 66:** “And female”
- **Line 67:** “And cigarettes”
- **Line 68:** “And cocktail”

APOSTROPHE

Apostrophe arguably happens once in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," in line 72. Here, the lamp calls out:

> Memory!

It's possible to read this as a call to a sort of personified Memory, which makes this a powerful moment. As suggested by line 5—when the night begins to "dissolve the floors of memory"—memory has been exerting a stronger and stronger control on both the poem and the speaker. The speaker's mind has been worn out by the barrage of memories that this night walk has conjured in his or her mind, and there is a real sense of exasperation in the way this single word is on a line all of its own. You can almost see the lamp (or speaker) shaking its figurative fist at the sky as it calls out to "Memory." And while the "key" in the next line could refer to the speaker's actual, physical key to get into his or her home, it could also be read as directed at memory itself. In other words, *memory* has the key, the answer, the solution to.... well, it's not clear what. Perhaps it's the key to the speaker's confusion, perhaps the key to unlock the purpose of life in general.

Furthermore, the fact that this line is spoken by the street lamp emphasizes the speaker's diminishing sense of agency and free will. The apostrophe also helps make it clear—in an otherwise difficult poem—just what it is that the poem is interested in: apostrophe sets memory apart on its own line, underscoring just how important and formative memory is.

Where Apostrophe appears in the poem:

- **Line 72:** “Memory!”

ALLITERATION

Alliteration is used relatively sparingly in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night," with the poem tending to employ consonance and assonance more frequently.

Its first appearance, though, is highly significant. Across lines 11 and 12, /m/ sounds link "**m**idnight," "**m**emory" and "**m**adman" together. This helps establish the poem's premise: that time and memory (in this instance) work together to destabilize a person's mind (colloquially speaking, to drive a person "mad"). Madness, time, and memory are co-dependent, and this is reflected by their sonic similarity. Later in the poem, "**m**oon" alliterates with "**m**emory" as well in line 55; given the established connotation between memory and madness (and, to an extent, moonlight, given that "midnight" occurs after the sun has set), the moon itself becomes associated with a sort of confusion. (Not incidentally, the word "lunacy" has its roots in the word "lunar").

In line 25, alliteration brings "**b**ranch" and "**b**each" together. This emphasizes the way in which this memory is rooted (no pun intended) in a specific experience in a specific location (that is, a beach). Lines 28 and 29 have important alliteration as well (more specifically characterized here as sibilance), with the strong repetition of /s/ sounds in "**s**ecret," "**s**keleton," and "**s**tiff." The /s/ sounds create a whispered hissing, subtly reflecting the hushed and eerie quality of the content of the line.

The alliterative /s/ sounds continue in lines 65 through 68 ("**s**mells," "**s**treets," "**c**igarettes"), joined by the repetition of hard /c/ sounds ("**c**orridors" and "**c**ocktail"). These connected sounds helps conjure the sense of memories rushing by—things dimly felt at the time that have left a mark on the speaker's mind.

Where Alliteration appears in the poem:

- **Line 11:** “M,” “m”
- **Line 12:** “m,” “m”
- **Line 14:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 16:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 20:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 25:** “b,” “b”
- **Line 28:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 29:** “S”
- **Line 44:** “b,” “b”
- **Line 45:** “h,” “h”
- **Line 55:** “m,” “m”
- **Line 57:** “H,” “h”
- **Line 65:** “S,” “s”
- **Line 66:** “s”
- **Line 67:** “c,” “c”
- **Line 68:** “c,” “s”
- **Line 74:** “l,” “l”
- **Line 77:** “l”
- **Line 78:** “l”

ASSONANCE

Assonance is used throughout "Rhapsody on a Windy Night." Though the poem doesn't have a clear rhyme scheme, the frequent repetition of sounds draws various words and the concepts they suggest together. This is a poem in which one thought may quickly conjure another, even if it is only

tangentially related; a poem in which memories bubble to the surface unbidden. The use of assonance—as with the use of alliteration and consonance—helps capture the sense of association, sonically linking the speaker's various reminisces and observations.

In line 5, for example, long /o/ sounds create the sensation of something melting away, as the speaker describes how the "floors of memory" "dissolve." The assonance suggests a blurring of the boundaries between memory and lived experience in the present moment.

In lines 9 and 12, the /a/ vowel ties "fatalistic" together with "madman." That is, it creates a link between fate—a lack of free will—and insanity. Later, in lines 19 and 20, "border" is linked through assonance with "torn." This isn't coincidental: the tearing of the woman's dress implies a blurring of the boundaries between being clothed and being naked, hinting at sexual desire. More broadly, this assonance reflects the poem's general consideration of dissolving boundaries (indeed, of torn borders).

Line 22 establishes the short /i/ vowel as representative of the "twisting" motion. This is found in "twists," "pin" and in the following stanza, "twisted," "polished," "stiff," "spring," "clings." The visual narrowness of the letter seems to embody the action itself.

In lines 43 and 44, the /a/ sound established in "crab" repeats and directly links the crab with the "barnacles" on its "back."

In lines 50 and 51, the vowel sounds are mostly very similar and create a moment of internal rhyme. Line 51 is in French, and the effect of the vowels is to create a tongue-twister style phrase that almost feels nonsensical—or more accurately, governed by the association between the sounds rather than the literal meaning that they carry.

In the final two lines, the /i/ sound returns, this time as a long vowel. This time, it takes on a sinister new meaning—linking "life" with the violent threat of "knife."

Where Assonance appears in the poem:

- **Line 5:** "o," "oo," "o"
- **Line 9:** "a," "a"
- **Line 12:** "a," "a," "a"
- **Line 19:** "or"
- **Line 20:** "or"
- **Line 22:** "i," "i"
- **Line 23:** "i"
- **Line 24:** "i"
- **Line 25:** "i"
- **Line 26:** "i"
- **Line 27:** "i"
- **Line 29:** "i"
- **Line 30:** "i," "i"
- **Line 31:** "i"
- **Line 37:** "ou," "or"
- **Line 43:** "a"
- **Line 44:** "a," "a," "a," "a"
- **Line 50:** "oo"
- **Line 51:** "u," "au," "u," "u"
- **Line 58:** "o," "o," "o," "o"
- **Line 59:** "o"
- **Line 60:** "o"
- **Line 63:** "u," "u"
- **Line 64:** "u"
- **Line 65:** "e," "e"
- **Line 77:** "i"
- **Line 78:** "i"

PERSONIFICATION

Personification is an important part of "Rhapsody on a Windy Night." There are two main examples running throughout the poem: the street lamp and the moon.

Arguably, the talking street lamp is the star of the poem, in that it occupies most of the speaker's—and the reader's—attention. It coughs itself awake in the second stanza, before speaking directly to the speaker. It speaks again in the fourth stanza, "sputters and mutters" in the fifth, and speaks most of the lines in the sixth and seventh stanzas.

The personification of the street lamp is in part a reflection of the speaker's troubled mind. It offers instructions to the speaker, telling the speaker where to look and what to notice, contributing to the idea the speaker has a diminishing sense of free will.

It's interesting to think about why Eliot chose to personify a street lamp specifically. A street lamps is a man-made source of light, which in this poem is contrasted with the presence of the moon. The specific time is also foregrounded in the poem throughout. Perhaps, then, this personification is saying something about humankind's ability to regulate its own experience—night in the modern world is not like it used to be, and neither is the passage of time. Both are regulated and controlled. Perhaps the personification of the street lamp is in part the speaker's mind rebelling against an over-standardized world.

The other key personification is that of the moon. It begins in the first stanza, when the speaker describes "whispering lunar incantations." This implies that the moon is casting a spell on the speaker (the link between magic, the moon, and mankind is an ancient one). Later, somewhat surreally, the already personified street lamp itself personifies the moon in sixth stanza, describing the moon's faded glory. This section play's on the visual resemblance of the moon to a person's face, and the overall effect is to further undermine the speaker's control over the surrounding world.

Where Personification appears in the poem:

- **Line 3:** "Held in a lunar synthesis,"
- **Lines 4-7:** "Whispering lunar incantations / Dissolve the floors of memory / And all its clear relations, / Its divisions and precisions,"
- **Lines 8-9:** "Every street lamp that I pass / Beats like a fatalistic drum,"
- **Lines 14-22:** "The street lamp sputtered, / The street lamp muttered, / The street lamp said, "Regard that woman / Who hesitates towards you in the light of the door / Which opens on her like a grin. / You see the border of her dress / Is torn and stained with sand, / And you see the corner of her eye / Twists like a crooked pin.""
- **Lines 33-37:** "Half-past two, / The street lamp said, / "Remark the cat which flattens itself in the gutter, / Slips out its tongue / And devours a morsel of rancid butter.""
- **Lines 46-61:** "Half-past three, / The lamp sputtered, / The lamp muttered in the dark. / The lamp hummed: / "Regard the moon, / La lune ne garde aucune rancune, / She winks a feeble eye, / She smiles into corners. / She smoothes the hair of the grass. / The moon has lost her memory. / A washed-out smallpox cracks her face, / Her hand twists a paper rose, / That smells of dust and old Cologne, / She is alone / With all the old nocturnal smells / That cross and cross across her brain.""
- **Lines 69-77:** "The lamp said, / "Four o'clock, / Here is the number on the door. / Memory! / You have the key, / The little lamp spreads a ring on the stair, / Mount. / The bed is open; the tooth-brush hangs on the wall, / Put your shoes at the door, sleep, prepare for life.""

SIMILE

In line 9, the speaker uses a simile to compare walking past street lamps to the beating of a drum, evoking a sense of regularity and uniformity. We can assume that the lamps are evenly spaced and occur at regular internals along the street, part of an overall plan for the city. This destabilizes the speaker's sense of agency; the speaker feels like he or she is being governed by something or someone else. Indeed, the drum beats are "fatalistic," reflecting the fact that events (for instance, when the next street lamp will appear) are predictable yet out of the speaker's hands.

Line 12 is a more complex simile. It likens the way in which midnight shakes "the memory"—that is, the effect that the late night has on the speaker's psyche—to a "madman" shaking a dead geranium. The reader must ask why the madman would be shaking the dead geranium—a misguided attempt to bring it back to life, possibly.

In any case, the comparison establishes the way in which the poem tries to undo the speaker's world, undermining its sense of meaning and purpose through a "madness" specifically linked to time and memory. In essence, the nocturnal setting of midnight puts the speaker's memory into overdrive, which in turn induces a kind of lunacy (a madness linked specifically to the moon).

Within the specific grammatical construction of the simile, nighttime corresponds to chaos or irrationality (represented by the madman), and it shakes forth the speaker's memories. These memories, in turn, correspond to the dead flower—perhaps reflecting the way that memory is inevitably a reminder that time has passed, and that the events being remembered are over (like the geranium, they are "dead").

Line 18 compares the light in doorway in which a woman stands (who is most likely a prostitute) to "a grin," which carries with it the suggestion of sordid sexual gratification. This adds to the eerie and unsettling nighttime atmosphere. Line 22 then compares her eye to a crooked pin and introduces the image of "twisting" that runs throughout the poem. Perhaps more important than the specific comparison here (that of the crooked pin) is this introduction: the idea of "twisting" will appear again and again in the poem, meaning that this external perception (of the woman in the doorway) sets in motion a chain of memories in the speaker's mind.

One of the bluntest similes comes in line 27, which likens the way a branch has been transformed over time to a kind of revelation in which the world shows "the secret of its skeleton." In other words, the speaker likens the branch to a bone—and in doing so suggests the connection between time and mortality, as well as the idea that death is contained in all things (again, the skeleton in the simile is that of the world itself).

Where Simile appears in the poem:

- **Line 9:** "like a fatalistic drum,"
- **Line 12:** "As a madman shakes a dead geranium."
- **Line 18:** "like a grin."
- **Line 22:** "like a crooked pin.""
- **Lines 27-29:** "As if the world gave up / The secret of its skeleton, / Stiff and white."

CONSONANCE

Consonance occurs throughout "Rhapsody on a Windy Night." Like alliteration and assonance, the consonance serves to connect various ideas (and perhaps also remind the reader that, despite not following a clear form or structure, this is still a carefully crafted poem). lines 3 and 4, the repetition of /n/ sounds helps create the feeling that a spell is being cast (the line sounds like an "incantation" itself)

> Held in a lunar synthesis,
> Whispering lunar incantations

Later, the use of "-ions" in "relations, / Its divisions and precisions" links these these three things together—each of

them is part of the way humans make sense of the world, and all are being cast away by the "lunar incantations."

The /n/ sounds in lines 16, 17, 18 and 20 link the woman with the suggestion of sexual desire, conceptually linking "woman" with "opens," "grin," "torn," "stained," and "sand."

Beyond linking various terms, consonance can also evoke certain sensory perceptions. In line 56, for example, the harsh, percussive consonance ties "smallpox" with "cracks," creating an ugly sound (arguably an example of cacophony) that fits with the description of the moon's faded glory.

In lines 62 to 68 there are numerous /m/, /n/, and /t/ sounds. This section is a rapid-fire recall of numerous memories associated by the sense of smell. Accordingly, the closeness of the sounds renders the way in which these memories are held close together in the speaker's mind.

> The reminiscence comes
> Of sunless dry geraniums
> And dust in crevices,
> Smells of chestnuts in the streets,
> And female smells in shuttered rooms,
> And cigarettes in corridors
> And cocktail smells in bars.

Where Consonance appears in the poem:

- **Line 3:** “n,” “n,” “s,” “n,” “s,” “s”
- **Line 4:** “s,” “n,” “n,” “n,” “n,” “n,” “s”
- **Line 5:** “ss,” “m,” “m”
- **Line 6:** “ions”
- **Line 7:** “s,” “ions,” “c,” “s,” “ions”
- **Line 10:** “d”
- **Line 11:** “M,” “d,” “n,” “m,” “m”
- **Line 12:** “m,” “dm,” “n,” “d,” “d,” “n,” “m”
- **Line 14:** “p,” “p”
- **Line 15:** “m,” “m”
- **Line 16:** “n”
- **Line 17:** “n”
- **Line 18:** “n,” “n,” “n”
- **Line 20:** “n,” “n,” “n”
- **Line 21:** “n”
- **Line 22:** “n”
- **Line 30:** “k,” “c”
- **Line 56:** “x,” “cks”
- **Line 62:** “m,” “n,” “n,” “m”
- **Line 63:** “n,” “n,” “m”
- **Line 64:** “n,” “n”
- **Line 65:** “m,” “t,” “n,” “t,” “n ,” “t,” “t”
- **Line 66:** “n,” “m,” “m,” “tt,” “m”
- **Line 67:** “n,” “tt”
- **Line 68:** “n,” “t,” “m”

SIBILANCE

Sibilance occurs quite frequently in the poem, which is fitting given the nighttime setting: the /s/ sound often creates a hushed, whispered, or sinister tone, which is in keeping with the general atmosphere of the poem.

Sibilance first appears prominently across lines 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Here, the poem is suggesting that the moon is casting spells—"incantations"—on the earth below (or specifically the speaker). The abundance of /s/ sounds gives the lines the "whispering" quality that line 4 alludes to, as though these incantations are spoken under the moon's breath.

The third stanza employs sibilance evocatively too, with "smooth," "secret," "skeleton," and "stiff." Here sibilance helps reflect idea of "smoothness," embodying the way the branch has been gradually changed over time by the sea and the sand. As in the first stanza, the sibilance here also suggests a hushed quality, in keeping with the fact that the "skeleton" is "secret."

In lines 35 to 37, the sibilance brings the cat's tongue to sonic life. There's a slightly gross sense of luxuriance to these lines, conjured by the sibilance of "morsel" and "rancid" in combination with the long, open vowel sounds throughout the line.

Sibilance is most prominent, however, in stanza 6. The street lamp's descriptions of the moon from lines 50 to 61 is brimming with /s/ sounds that then continue, even increasing in intensity, as the speaker recalls various memories related to smells. The strong presence of sibilance here might reflect the hush of the street lamp, which perhaps whispers as it effectively insults the moon overhead. At the same time, the sibilance creates a sonic connection between all the seemingly disparate thoughts and images—all the "nocturnal smells" that "cross and cross across" the moon's (and the speaker's) mind.

Where Sibilance appears in the poem:

- **Line 3:** “s,” “s,” “s”
- **Line 4:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 5:** “ss,” “s”
- **Line 6:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 7:** “s,” “s,” “c,” “s,” “s”
- **Line 14:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 16:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 17:** “s,” “s,” “s”
- **Line 19:** “s,” “ss”
- **Line 20:** “s,” “s,” “s”
- **Line 21:** “s”
- **Line 22:** “s,” “s”
- **Line 26:** “s”
- **Line 27:** “s”
- **Line 28:** “s,” “s,” “s”
- **Line 29:** “S”
- **Line 36:** “S,” “s,” “s”

- **Line 37:** "s," "s," "c"
- **Line 53:** "s," "s"
- **Line 54:** "s," "s," "ss"
- **Line 55:** "s," "s"
- **Line 56:** "s," "s," "x," "s," "c"
- **Line 57:** "s," "s," "s"
- **Line 58:** "s," "s," "s"
- **Line 59:** "S," "s"
- **Line 60:** "s," "s"
- **Line 61:** "ss," "ss ," "ss "
- **Line 62:** "sc," "c," "s"
- **Line 63:** "s," "ss," "s"
- **Line 64:** "s," "c," "s"
- **Line 65:** "S," "s," "s," "s," "s," "s"
- **Line 66:** "s," "s," "s"
- **Line 67:** "c," "s," "s"
- **Line 68:** "s," "s," "s"
- **Line 78:** "s," "s"

POLYSYNDETON

Polysyndeton occurs in lines 63, 66, 67, and 68. Its effect is quite subtle, but in essence it represents the acceleration of the speaker's memories. The speaker is losing control over his or her own mind, and the way in which each "and" "throws up" another memory, shows the way in which the rapid-fire associations between memories are taking over—this triggers that, *and* that, *and* that.

These memories are related only by the sense they concern—smell—and otherwise don't have an obvious link. At once, then, the use of polysyndeton both joins these memories together and questions how weak or strong that connection actually is.

Where Polysyndeton appears in the poem:

- **Line 64:** "And"
- **Line 66:** "And"
- **Line 67:** "And"
- **Line 68:** "And"

ENJAMBMENT

Enjambment occurs fairly often in the poem, which is perhaps expected given the poem's free flowing structure; the device doesn't always carry an obvious contribution to the meaning of the poem. Usually, it's part of the poem's way of varying the length of its sentences and clauses, in keeping with the generally "free verse" feel of the poem.

Of course, there are moments when the enjambment *does* add extra emphasis to the end lines. For example, the enjambment of line 4 is fitting for a line talking about "floors of memory" being "dissolved." It's as though the "incantations" of the moon have dissolved the pause/punctuation between these lines as well.

The enjambment at the end of line 23, meanwhile, creates a subtle moment of tension—the syntax hovers unresolved, waiting for the following line to explain exactly what the "memory throws up." In line 59, the phrase "she is alone" does indeed feel stark and isolated, yet there is no clear finality to it—the lack of end-stop implies that the thought continues onto the next line, and there we see that the moon is alone *with* something: namely, with "old nocturnal smells."

Overall, it could be argued that the enjambment reflects the speaker's deteriorating psyche and the way memories seem to pop up unbidden—without pause (or punctuation) to separate one thought from another even when they're not explicitly related.

Where Enjambment appears in the poem:

- **Lines 2-3:** "street / Held"
- **Lines 4-5:** "incantations / Dissolve "
- **Lines 5-6:** "memory / And"
- **Lines 8-9:** "pass / Beats"
- **Lines 10-11:** "dark / Midnight"
- **Lines 11-12:** "memory / As"
- **Lines 16-17:** "woman / Who"
- **Lines 17-18:** "door / Which"
- **Lines 19-20:** "dress / Is"
- **Lines 21-22:** "eye / Twists"
- **Lines 23-24:** "dry / A "
- **Lines 25-26:** "beach / Eaten"
- **Lines 26-27:** "polished / As"
- **Lines 27-28:** "up / The "
- **Lines 31-32:** "left / Hard"
- **Lines 36-37:** "tongue / And"
- **Lines 41-42:** "street / Trying "
- **Lines 59-60:** "alone / With"
- **Lines 60-61:** "smells / That"
- **Lines 62-63:** "comes / Of"
- **Lines 63-64:** "geraniums / And"
- **Lines 67-68:** "corridors / And"

VOCABULARY

Reaches (Line 2) - Across every part of the street.

Lunar (Line 3, Line 4) - Relating to the moon.

Synthesis (Line 3) - The combination of different elements into a whole; the phrase "lunar synthesis" suggests that all the parts of the street come together as one in the moonlight.

Incantations (Line 4) - Magic spells or charms.

Fatalistic (Line 9) - The adjective form of "fatalism," which is the idea that events are inevitable or predetermined and as such

out of people's control.

Geranium (Line 12, Line 63) - A type of flower.

Morsel (Line 37) - A small piece of something.

Quay (Line 39) - A waterside platform for loading and unloading ships.

Barnacles (Line 44) - Small shelled creatures that attach themselves to other marine life.

La lune ne garde rancune aucune (Line 51) - A French phrase that roughly translates as: the moon holds no grudges.

Smallpox (Line 56) - An often fatal virus that causes skin lesions and scarring. Vaccines have made it much less common in modern times.

Reminiscence (Line 62) - A memory or recollection.

Crevices (Line 64) - A narrow opening in rock or wall.

FORM, METER, & RHYME

FORM

A rhapsody is a long, highly emotional, irregular (and perhaps meandering) written or spoken work. It's thus an appropriate title for this poem! The form of "Rhapsody on A Windy Night" is highly irregular, mimicking the poem's sense of instability and the speaker's lack of control. Though the form may appear rather random, a close look reveals it to subtly mirror the poem's content throughout.

On the broadest level, there are eight stanzas that, in order from first to last, consist of twelve, nine, nine, twelve, three, nineteen, eight, or just one line. This irregular stanza length reflects the strains and shifts in the speaker's mind. The form embodies the way that, as line 23 says, "the memory throws up [thoughts] high and dry" throughout the poem; the speaker doesn't stick to a standard length because whenever a memory is "thrown up," the stanza expands to accommodate it.

Despite their varying lengths, many of the stanzas are connected by their mention of time. In particular, stanzas 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7 all start by stating what time it is. The attention to the constant passage of time heightens the anxiety of the poem (the night keeps marching on, towards morning and, it's implied, eventual death) while also adding a clear marker to the speaker's increasingly agitated state of mind. Of course, the poem unfolds in real-time much more quickly than the amount of time that passes within the poem might suggest (i.e. you can read the poem in a minute or two, yet four hours pass in the world of the poem itself)—which perhaps adds to the overall sense of instability, or of memory collapsing and dissolving.

Again, a close reading of the poem reveals the specific content of the stanzas to be complemented by their form. Take stanza 4: this is a combination of speech by the street lamp and the speaker's own internal monologue, which together create a link between the movement of the cat's tongue and a childhood memory. The fact these moments—the lamp's direction to look at the cat, and the speaker's subsequent memory spurred by that cat—*aren't* split by a stanza break shows the increasingly blurry boundary between perception and memory.

The shortness of stanza 5, meanwhile, can be thought of as emphasizing the lateness of the hour. It's as though there are no other sounds apart from the speaking street lamp, the isolation of the three lines hinting at the speaker's inability to bring his mind to rest.

Stanza 6 is by far the longest of the bunch, facilitating a quick-fire list of descriptions of the moon and smell-based memories. The speaker's mind almost has no filter here, and the length of the stanza lends the lines a frantic quality as thoughts ping off one another and bring disparate memories to the surface in a frenzy of thought before the speaker returns home.

Of course, the most dramatic moment form-wise arguably comes at the very end of the poem. The stanza break before the final line heightens the sense of drama, introducing a violent conclusion that leaves the poem on a harrowing and mysterious note. The isolation of line 78 underscores its finality—that there is nothing more to say, that there is nothing else for the speaker to do. This reflects the poem's general sense of fatalism—that life is outside of the speaker's control.

METER

"Rhapsody on a Windy Night" is written in free verse, and so has no overall regular meter. This helps the reader get a sense of the speaker's unstable mind. As the night draws later and later, the speaker suffers at the whims of perceptions and memories, seemingly losing control. If the poem were in, say, iambic pentameter, the reader might not get that same feeling of a loss of agency because the rhythm of the poem would be so tightly controlled.

That isn't to say, though, that Eliot as a poet isn't in full control of the meter in this poem. A regular metrical scheme would be too ordered and controlled, but the poem still makes use of metrical effects.

Line 8, for example, starts to establish a sense of trochaic rhythm that is disrupted by the start of line 9—adding a violent heaviness to the word "beats" that emphasizes the way the street lamps make the speaker feel as though he or she has no control over the surrounding world.

> Every street lamp that I pass
> Beats like a fatalistic drum,

The reader might expect an unstressed syllable after "pass" to continue the pattern of trochees, but "beats" completely upends this expectation.

In line 12, the total absence of metrical regularity embodies the

idea of insanity that the poem suggests throughout:

> As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

Yes, you can break this down into various metrical feet, but there's no discernible pattern to them. Here the metrical sense of the line is itself shaken, mimicking the action of the madman. The randomness here is crafted to reflect the meaninglessness of the madman's behavior.

Meanwhile, lines 14 and 15 have the same pattern of stressed/unstressed syllables, which helps create the sound of a nursery-rhyme. There is something unsettlingly childlike about the da-DUM rhythm of these lines, that is perhaps suggestive of the warped imagination of the speaker as fantastical elements take hold over his interior state.

> The street lamp sputtered,
> The street lamp muttered,

This is true of lines 47 and 48, too, when these lines are repeated.

Line 39 is the poem's longest, and its length visually evokes the memory described. The speaker remembers seeing a boy run the full length of the quay, and the delay in line break creates this sense of someone running a horizontal distance.

Overall, then, despite the irregularity, Eliot still clearly knows what he's doing metrically; as with form, he uses irregular meter in a deliberate way to reflect the poem's thematic content.

RHYME SCHEME

"A Rhapsody on a Windy Night" does not have a defined rhyme scheme. However, it does make occasional use of rhyme.

In lines 4-7, for example, there are four word that end in "-ions": incantations, relations, divisions, and precisions. As this section discusses "incantations"—spells—the effect of the rhyme here is to make the lines sound like they are casting magic.

There is a rhyme between line 9 and line 12, with "drum" and "geranium." Given that the drum beat is "fatalistic" and a "madman" is shaking the geranium, the rhyme between these words links the idea of madness with the idea of fate, hinting at the increasingly tortured state of the speaker's mind as the poem progresses.

As one of the most obvious rhymes in the poem, "sputtered" and "muttered" in lines 14 and 15 (and again in lines 47 and 48) create a couplet that feels almost childlike. As they essentially signal an imaginative act—the street lamp coming to life and talking—the rhyme helps to mark these lines out as something fantastical, akin to the kind of language that might be found in a fairy tale or nursery rhyme.

Lines 35 and 37 also rhyme explicitly with "butter" and "gutter." They help to conjure the image of the low-lying cat, searching along the floor of the urban environment for anything to eat.

Lines 50 and 51 also rhyme. These lines are both part of a speech by the street lamp. The speaker's mind is unstable by this point, and the rhyme here is almost arbitrary, rhyming "moon" with the French "aucune rancune" (essentially translating to "no grudge"). The triple rhyme featuring words likely unfamiliar to English-speaking readers contributes to an atmosphere of nonsense that helps create the feeling that the speaker is losing his or her mind.

The most dramatic rhyme of all comes in the last two lines of the poem, lines 77 and 78. Across the tense pause of the stanza break, "life" is rhymed with "knife." Conceptually, this links life with violence and death. The preceding lines describe the small, menial actions that the speaker will need to go through to continue living from moment—but the suddenness of the last line casts doubt on whether this will ever happen. The rhyme helps the poem end on a dramatic twist, with no indication as to whether this is a literal or imaginative action, and what its implications for the speaker actually are.

SPEAKER

It's difficult to pin down who the speaker is in "Rhapsody on a Windy Night." Sometimes the voice has a detached quality, as though it is merely reporting on the events within the poem. Elsewhere, the first person pronoun crops up, suggesting that the poem *does* have a single, unified voice. But that in turn is also disrupted—primarily because the street lamp speaks too. Indeed, by the end of the poem it feels as if the "I" has become distanced from any particular identity, overruled by the speaker's imagination, sensory impressions, and memories.

The first-person perspective is first introduced in line 8 as the speaker discusses walking by street lamps that beat like "fatalistic drums." This introduction helps establish the main preoccupations of the speaker's mind: time, fate, and memory. The speaker's mention of madness just a few lines later hints at the way his or her mind becomes seems to become increasingly unstable as the poem progresses.

The star of the show, though, is undoubtedly the street lamp. It coughs into action as the clock strikes half-past one at the start of the second stanza. Generally, the street lamp offers the main speaker of the poem instructions, pushing him or her to make particular associations (e.g. between the woman's eyes and the twist of pins in the second stanza). The prominence of the street lamp's voice helps to cast doubt on the speaker's internal state. The talking street lamp might well be the product of the speaker's overactive—or overanxious—mind. And by the end of the poem, the street lamp has become increasingly authoritative. Here, it dictates instructions to the speaker for the smallest (and easiest) of actions—where to find the

toothbrush, for example. This underscores the sense that the speaker is in the process of losing control.

The dramatic last line is very ambiguous in terms of its speaker. It could be the lamp having the last word, or the main speaker. It could even be *another* voice. The line feels disembodied, ensuring that the poem ends on a tense and mysterious note.

SETTING

"Rhapsody on a Windy Night" is set between the hours of midnight and around 4 a.m. on a dark city street largely devoid of anyone other than the speaker. There are regular street lamps and the odd stray cat, but otherwise the speaker is alone. The speaker walks through this quiet nocturnal environment, which is teeming with a vague sense of threat. The sense of time *and* the sense of place are both vital to the poem's overall setting.

The announcement of the time in the first line establishes the possibility of the supernatural. It's midnight, a time traditionally associated with magic and the temporary loss of individual control, perhaps through being under a spell. Line 4 then foregrounds this link between the time of the poem and magic through the phrase "lunar incantations." It's quickly becoming clear that the familiar world is quite different during the night, in the light of the moon.

The urban environment exerts a strong hold over the speaker's mind, as stated in lines 8 and 9. The regularity of the streets and the way they are lit starts to undermine the speaker's sense of agency—the speaker feels as if each street light is a "fatalistic drum," a reminder as the speaker walks past that he or she is being governed by something external. This intensifies as the poem goes on, with sensory impressions from the street provoking memories in his or her mind.

The poem, then, also takes places within the speaker's mind. Things the speaker notices—or is *made* to notice—in the present call memories to mind, situating the reader within both the speaker's present and past. This adds to the sense that the speaker's reality is being held together by a very fine thread, and that this walk home might be the process of that thread unravelling. By the end of the poem, the speaker makes it home—but the last line indicates that the quiet threat of violence continues.

CONTEXT

LITERARY CONTEXT

T.S. Eliot is one of the 20th century's foremost literary figures, central to the Modernist movement. "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" is one of his earliest poems, first published in the short-lived literary magazine *Blast* (1915). It was then included in his first collection, *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917). But its beginnings can be traced to Eliot's time at Paris's prestigious university, the Sorbonne. There, Eliot attended the philosopher Henri Bergson's infamous lectures, which questioned the relationship between the human experience of time and the way in which time is measured (a theme explored in this poem).

Eliot was well read, and some of the formative influences on his poetry include the French Symbolists (such as Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Mallarmé), Dante, W.B. Yeats, and the Metaphysical poets such as John Donne. The poem also bears many of the hallmarks of Modernist literature—a rejection of strict form, an emphasis on subjective experience, and an unreliable/irrational narrator.

In 1981, the poem was adapted for the stage as part of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical, *Cats*—specifically the famous number "Memory."

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

"Rhapsody on a Windy Night" is an anxious poem firmly situated in the early 20th century. In its preoccupation with the way clock time measures and influences human experience, the poem is indebted not just to the influential philosophy of Henri Bergson but also the industrialist ideas of Frederick Winslow Taylor, an American mechanical engineer.

Taylor's aims were to maximize efficiency from people in the work environment, and Eliot's poem shows a clear concern with the passing of time and how that time is *used*. The image of the rusted spring in the third stanza foregrounds the industrial city environment that the poem inhabits. The poem was written shortly before the First World War, which was to have a devastating effect on the entire world. The war threw into question generally-believed ideas about the progress of humankind—anxieties which are arguably in the atmosphere of Eliot's poem.

MORE RESOURCES

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- An Animation of the Poem — A quirky and interesting visual interpretation of Eliot's poem. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CeHUun8SlHU)
- Blast 2 — A PDF copy of the short-lived but influential Blast magazine, in which the poem first appeared. (https://library.brown.edu/pdfs/1144603354174257.pdf)
- "Memory" in Cats — A clip from the Andrew Lloyd-Webber musical, Cats, in which the poem is reinterpreted as a song. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-L6rEm0rnY)
- Other Poems and Related Essays — A wide range of resources, featuring work by and about T.S. Eliot.

(https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/t-s-eliot)

- A Reading by Jeremy Irons — A reading of the poem by Jeremy Irons, set to music as part of as BBC series. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEok6la74XA)

LITCHARTS ON OTHER T. S. ELIOT POEMS

- Journey of the Magi
- Preludes
- The Hollow Men
- The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

HOW TO CITE

MLA

Howard, James. "*Rhapsody on a Windy Night*." *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 23 Jan 2019. Web. 22 Apr 2020.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Howard, James. "*Rhapsody on a Windy Night*." LitCharts LLC, January 23, 2019. Retrieved April 22, 2020. https://www.litcharts.com/poetry/t-s-eliot/rhapsody-on-a-windy-night.