

T.S. Eliot  
1888-1965

"*Animula*"

'Issues from the hand of God, the simple soul'  
To a flat world of changing lights and noise,  
To light, dark, dry or damp, chilly or warm;  
Moving between the legs of tables and of chairs,  
Rising or falling, grasping at kisses and toys,  
Advancing boldly, sudden to take alarm,  
Retreating to the corner of arm and knee,  
Eager to be reassured, taking pleasure  
In the fragrant brilliance of the Christmas tree,  
Pleasure in the wind, the sunlight and the sea;  
Studies the sunlit pattern on the floor  
And running stags around a silver tray;  
Confounds the actual and the fanciful,  
Content with playing-cards and kings and queens,  
What the fairies do and what the servants say.  
The heavy burden of the growing soul  
Perplexes and offends more, day by day;  
Week by week, offends and perplexes more  
With the imperatives of 'is and seems'  
And may and may not, desire and control.  
The pain of living and the drug of dreams  
Curl up the small soul in the window seat  
Behind the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.  
Issues from the hand of time the simple soul  
Irresolute and selfish, misshapen, lame,  
Unable to fare forward or retreat,  
Fearing the warm reality, the offered good,  
Denying the importunity of the blood,  
Shadow of its own shadows, spectre in its own gloom,  
Leaving disordered papers in a dusty room;  
Living first in the silence after the viaticum.

Pray for Guiterriez, avid of speed and power,  
For Boudin, blown to pieces,  
For this one who made a great fortune,  
And that one who went his own way.  
Pray for Floret, by the boarhound slain between the yew trees,  
Pray for us now and at the hour of our birth.