

T.S. Eliot:

Now, I want to read "Triumphal March," but it's one of the most difficult of my poems for me or anyone else to read aloud. But for that reason, if for that reason only, I think one of those best worth trying to read.

It is, of course, complete in itself, but it was to have been part of a much longer poem in which the character persisting throughout was a certain Cyril Parker.

"Triumphal March."

Stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oakleaves, horses' heels over the paving. And the flags. And the trumpets. And so many eagles. How many? Count them. And such a press of people. We hardly knew ourselves that day, or knew the City. This is the way to the temple, and we so many crowding the way. So many waiting, how many waiting? what did it matter, on such a day? Are they coming? No, not yet. You can see some eagles. And hear the trumpets. Here they come. Is he coming? The natural wakeful life of our Ego is a perceiving. We can wait with our stools and our sausages. What comes first? Can you see? Tell us. It is 5,800,000 rifles and carbines, 102,000 machine guns, 28,000 trench mortars, 53,000 field and heavy guns, I cannot tell how many projectiles, mines, and fuses, 13,000 aeroplanes, 24,000 aeroplane engines, 50,000 ammunition waggons, now 55,000 army waggons, 11,000 field kitchens, 1,150 field bakeries.

What a time that took. Will it be he now? No, those are the golf club Captains, these the Scouts, and now the societe gymnastique de Poissy and now come the Mayor and the Liveryman.

Look there he is now, look-- there is no interrogation in his eyes or in the hands, quiet over the horse's neck, and the eyes watchful, waiting, perceiving, indifferent. O hidden under the dove's wing, hidden in the turtle's breast, under the palmtree at noon, under the running water at the still point of the turning world. O hidden.

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

That is all we could see. But how many eagles! and how many trumpets! And Easter Day, we didn't get to the country, so we took young Cyril to church. And they rang a bell and he said right out loud, crumpets.

Don't throw away that sausage, it'll come in handy. He's artful. Please, will you give us a light? Light light et les soldats faisaient la haie? Ils la faisaient?