

Compare "Memories" from *Cats* with the original TS Eliot Poem

*Rhapsody on a Windy Night*

BY T. S. ELIOT

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."

The last twist of the knife.