

<p>And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully! Smoothed by long fingers, Asleep ... tired ... or it malingers, Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me. Should I, after tea and cakes and ices, Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis? But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed, Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter, I am no prophet — and here's no great matter; I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker, And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker, And in short, I was afraid.</p>	Stanza 12:
<p>And would it have been worth it, after all, After the cups, the marmalade, the tea, Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me, Would it have been worth while, To have bitten off the matter with a smile, To have squeezed the universe into a ball To roll it towards some overwhelming question, To say: "I am Lazarus, come from the dead, Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"— If one, settling a pillow by her head Should say: "That is not what I meant at all; That is not it, at all."</p>	Stanza 13:
<p>And would it have been worth it, after all, Would it have been worth while, After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets, After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor— And this, and so much more?— It is impossible to say just what I mean! But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen: Would it have been worth while If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl, And turning toward the window, should say: "That is not it at all, That is not what I meant, at all." </p>	Stanza 14:
<p>No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be; Am an attendant lord, one that will do To swell a progress, start a scene or two, Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool, Deferential, glad to be of use, Politic, cautious, and meticulous; Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;</p>	Stanza 15:

At times, indeed, almost ridiculous— Almost, at times, the Fool.	Stanza 15 (continued):
I grow old ... I grow old ... I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.	Stanza 16:
Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach? I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach. I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.	Stanza 17:
I do not think that they will sing to me.	Stanza 18:
I have seen them riding seaward on the waves Combing the white hair of the waves blown back When the wind blows the water white and black.	Stanza 19:
We have lingered in the chambers of the sea By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown Till human voices wake us, and we drown.	Stanza 20: