

A ts eliot's writing.
because ts eliot



**ASSIGN
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A Look Inside "The Hollow Men" Eliot, a master of the written craft, carefully thought out each aspect of his 1925 poem "The Hollow Men." Many differences in interpretation exist for Eliot's complex poetry. One issue never debated is the extensive range of things to consider in his TS Eliot's writing. Because TS Eliot often intertwined his writing by having one piece relate to another "The Hollow Men" is sometimes considered a mere appendage to The Waste Land.

"The Hollow Men," however, proves to have many offerings for a reader in and among itself. The epigraph contains two pertinent references (http). First, "Mistah Kurtz - he dead" is an allusion to Conrad's Heart of Darkness. In his novella, Conrad portrays the empty nature of men.

Mistah Kurtz is a character that lacks a soul, thus, a true "Hollow Man." In the second quotation the epigraph alludes to England's November 5 tradition of Guy Fawkes Day. In 1605, Guy Fawkes unsuccessfully tried to blow up the parliament building.

Eliot's quote "A penny for the old guy" is called out by children on this holiday who are attempting to buy fireworks in order to blow up straw figures of Fawkes. Within the first stanza Eliot establishes the speaker, setting, theme and begins a rhythmic pattern that will hold true for four of the five sections of the poem. The speaker in the poem is not human, or at least prefers to be thought of as a scarecrow over a "...lost / Violent soul..." (lines 15-16).

The powerful comparison between the worthlessness of "rats' feet over broken glass..." (line 9) to their "dry voices" (line 5) illustrates how

meaningless they (the Hollow Men) truly are. Two lines detached from the first stanza contain a series of paradoxes which further the idea of meaninglessness, " Shape without form, shade without color, / Paralyzed force, gesture without motion" (11-12). Although difficult to discern exactly what is going on and where in the poem, the reader easily perceives the overall feeling of the hopelessness in just the opening lines, " We are the hollow men / We are the stuffed men"(lines 1-2) establish a grim feeling of emptiness.

Images like " This is the dead land / This is cactus land...Under the twinkle of a fading star" (lines 39-44) create a bleak, dry, desert land setting. The theme of the poem parallels those of Conrad's Heart of Darkness (Smith). The degradation of ritual (religious or otherwise) and the emptiness or reduction of human to childish behavior is parallel concepts in both pieces. Part I of the poem describes the insignificance of the " hollow men.

" Part I gives the vague setting and shows the request of the hollow men to be viewed as empty; " Remember us...not as lost / Violent souls which Kurtz and Fawkes both were, but only / As the hollow men" (lines 15-18). It also introduces two motifs, that of eyes and kingdom. " Those who have crossed / With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom" (line 13-14) is an allusion to Dante's Paradiso (Bowler). Kingdom with a capitalized K may refer to Heaven (although all references to a " kingdom" do not), and those with " direct eyes" are allowed to go there and become blessed. " Eyes" in the poem refer to those of Charon in Dante's Inferno (Williamson, 157). With the line, " Eyes I dare not meet in dreams" (line 19) the speaker states that the " eyes" are a source of fear. Playing a connective role in the poem, the first two lines in

the first four sections have a specific rhythm. Section I's, " We are the hollow men / We are the stuffed men" (lines 1-2) is like II's " Eyes I dare not meet in dreams / In death's dream kingdom"(19-20), Part III's " This is the dead land / This is the cactus land" (39-40) and IV's " The eyes are not here / There are no eyes here.

" This language serves as a rhythmic refrain tying each section together while setting off the last. The use of literary devices in " The Hollow Men" is seemingly endless. Rhyme also plays an important role. In I, like all of the other parts (except the fifth) the final line of