*“The Hollow Men”*

*T.S. Eliot*

*Mistah Kurtz—he dead.*

*A penny for the Old Guy*

**I**

We are the hollow men

We are the stuffed men

Leaning together

Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!

Our dried voices, when

We whisper together

Are quiet and meaningless

As wind in dry grass

Or rats’ feet over broken glass

In our dry cellar

Shape without form, shade without colour,

Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

Those who have crossed

With direct eyes, to death’s other Kingdom

Remember us—if at all—not as lost

Violent souls, but only

As the hollow men

The stuffed men.

**II**

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams

In death’s dream kingdom

These do not appear:

There, the eyes are

Sunlight on a broken column

There, is a tree swinging

And voices are

In the wind’s singing

More distant and more solemn

Than a fading star.

Let me be no nearer

In death’s dream kingdom

Let me also wear

Such deliberate disguises

Rat’s coat, crowskin, crossed staves

In a field

Behaving as the wind behaves

No nearer—

Not that final meeting

In the twilight kingdom

**III**

This is the dead land

This is cactus land

Here the stone images

Are raised, here they receive

The supplication of a dead man’s hand

Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Is it like this

In death’s other kingdom

Waking alone

At the hour when we are

Trembling with tenderness

Lips that would kiss

Form prayers to broken stone.

**IV**

The eyes are not here

There are no eyes here

In this valley of dying stars

In this hollow valley

This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

In this last of meeting places

We grope together

And avoid speech

Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless

The eyes reappear

As the perpetual star

Multifoliate rose

Of death’s twilight kingdom

The hope only

Of empty men.

**V**

*Here we go round the prickly pear*

*Prickly pear prickly pear*

*Here we go round the prickly pear*

*At five o’clock in the morning.*

Between the idea

And the reality

Between the motion

And the act

Falls the Shadow

*For Thine is the Kingdom*

Between the conception

And the creation

Between the emotion

And the response

Falls the Shadow

*Life is very long*

Between the desire

And the spasm

Between the potency

And the existence

Between the essence

And the descent

Falls the Shadow

*For Thine is the Kingdom*

For Thine is

Life is

For Thine is the

*This is the way the world ends*

*This is the way the world ends*

*This is the way the world ends*

*Not with a bang but a whimper.*

“The Second Coming”

William Butler Yeats

Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned;

The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;

Surely the Second Coming is at hand.

The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out

When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi

Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert

A shape with lion body and the head of a man,

A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,

Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it

Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again; but now I know

That twenty centuries of stony sleep

Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,

And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,

Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

The End and the Beginning

BY [WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/wisaawa-szymborska)

TRANSLATED BY [JOANNA TRZECIAK](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/joanna-trzeciak)

After every war

someone has to clean up.

Things won’t

straighten themselves up, after all.

Someone has to push the rubble

to the side of the road,

so the corpse-filled wagons

can pass.

Someone has to get mired

in scum and ashes,

sofa springs,

splintered glass,

and bloody rags.

Someone has to drag in a girder

to prop up a wall.

Someone has to glaze a window,

rehang a door.

Photogenic it’s not,

and takes years.

All the cameras have left

for another war.

We’ll need the bridges back,

and new railway stations.

Sleeves will go ragged

from rolling them up.

Someone, broom in hand,

still recalls the way it was.

Someone else listens

and nods with unsevered head.

But already there are those nearby

starting to mill about

who will find it dull.

From out of the bushes

sometimes someone still unearths

rusted-out arguments

and carries them to the garbage pile.

Those who knew

what was going on here

must make way for

those who know little.

And less than little.

And finally as little as nothing.

In the grass that has overgrown

causes and effects,

someone must be stretched out

blade of grass in his mouth

gazing at the clouds.