

The Lightning Arrives

In T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* you perceive many images from the writing style he uses. In lines 386 - 399 he writes:

In this decayed hole among the mountains
In the faint moonlight, the grass is singing
Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel
There is the empty chapel, only the wind's home.
It has no windows, and the door swings,
Dry bones can harm no one.
Only a cock stood on the rooftree
Co co rico co co rico
In a flash of lightning. Then a damp gust
Bringing rain
Ganga was sunken, and the limp leaves
Waited for rain, while the black clouds
Gathered far distant, over Himavant.
The jungle crouched, humped in silence.

In these lines he seems to tell of a graveyard near a chapel in an upcoming storm. Different images can be seen from the decayed hole in the moonlight, the empty chapel without windows, and the rooster's crows as the lightning and black clouds arrive.

In line 386, "In this decayed hole among the mountains," probably refers to an empty grave that brings images of death and the end of life, or possibly the beginning of a new life to mind. The grave is lit by moonlight, possibly referring to the white light many people see when they have near-death experiences. You get a creepy feeling when the wind blows and makes the "grass sing" in line 387. In these first three lines it talks of tumbled graves, possibly disturbed by nature, which could tell of troubled lives, or a troubled second life.

The empty chapel without windows is nearby, as you perceive from lines 389 and 390:

There is the empty chapel, only the wind's home.
It has no windows, and the door swings

It's image makes you shiver. It could possibly represent itself, in the sense that many people die there, as in baptism, as well as dying, where this place may be the starting point for a second, never-ending life. The chapel has no windows, maybe so that the people inside would not lose focus from the sermon. The chapel could represent death as well, since you go in and cannot look back out.

The rooster in lines 392 and 393 may symbolize the beginning of another day, or another life. Roosters crow in the early morning to wake people up and to alert that a new day has begun. However, the rooster's crow, "Co co rico co co rico," in line 393 may just be here to foreshadow the upcoming weather. It has been said that certain animals can sense bad weather, and as the rooster crows, dark clouds and lightning arrive, which

may show that death is near.

This part of the poem seems to display rebirth. Many images, from the grave to the lightning, describe death as well as birth, possibly foreshadowing birth and rebirth. T. S. Eliot's writing style is very esoteric, having very hidden meanings in every single word.