

HIKA Literary Magazine

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Fall 1963

**HIKA - Fall 1963**

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# HIKA





# HIKA

*The Undergraduate Literary  
Magazine of Kenyon College  
Volume XXVI, Number 1  
Fall, 1963*

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*Published six times yearly at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio. Single copy, 85¢. Subscription in Gambier, \$2.50; outside Gambier, \$3.50. All rights reserved by the Editor. Printed by The Antioch Press, Yellow Springs, Ohio.*

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CHARLES H. LYNCH

# Thoughts with a Childhood Sweetheart

Remember how we in our sun-youth galloped the festering alleys  
and staked our reputations on spurting agates and rumbling hudgets.  
You were indeed a hermaphrodite queen in your prophetic blue jeans  
and flapping shirts which never camouflaged the real you, physically  
or spiritually. I was a nocturnal visionary who cried when you left  
to sojourn on the cruel avenues of the maturing woman-waif.  
And you, uncognizant of my dreams and love, bumbled smiling  
encouragement with your bird-breasts, scared eyes, and defiant  
postures among the strange ones. Celebrated as smart, jive, cute,  
stacked—you emerged as the love goddess of your prurient cult.

I soon dismissed memory and longing in preparation for my  
coronation as the erotic potentate of the Clearasil set.  
Sorry to say I was purged, and made an ignominious descent  
to the realm of the braced tooth forgotten.  
In the interim your status quivered after many sacred goofs  
on your part, and you fled to I don't know where.

Now that we in years meet again I understand your flight;  
though I wish I didn't. Anyway, I'm frightened as hell,  
my original love, and why don't we in Morpich trepidation  
search for lost happiness in the fond warm alleys of remembrance.  
Take very warm clothes, for it will be one hundred times  
Popsicle cold when we awaken.



## Revelation

At times I've drifted down into the night  
With a fantasy in my skull and a curse searing at my rib.  
Then to ascend, unheralded, beyond the earth,  
After hovering to collect my remembrance, forever fleeing.  
Careless of my years out of the sacrificial womb, they,  
Sinning, gnaw at my suffering spirit.  
I could sound the times I've wound lazily to renunciation,  
Knowing I would return someway changed and repentant,  
Beyond all crazed possibility demented, to stand  
On pinioned soul within the fire of Heaven,  
Mouthing blessings with a decadent breath  
Of life, or something even more indigestible.  
What a weird festival to celebrate  
God's promised return in the guise of man.  
Temporal tomorrows are enshrined in sin and dust.  
Yet, I trust, I must again descend to my elementary home.  
Unheralded, unsought . . . . . unknown.

Book One of an Epical History of Our Age  
from Auschwitz to Ground Zero

dedicated to El Señor

THE ARGUMENT FOR BOOK ONE

The five smokestacks of the winter beast,  
A futuristic tree,  
Santa Claus,  
and ME,  
and all this took place  
in history.

BOOK ONE

auschwitz,  
the white dunes leveled,  
the five smokestacks of the winter beast  
wearing flesh backwards—

Inside his maw the murder was done,  
a sickly girl, the tree, Santa Claus and me,  
masticated together  
beneath the apricot air—  
(for what shall be said  
of the burning dead, except they did pollute  
and change the air?)

Never rained but it snowed  
over the paper windows, the towers, the rough stones, the  
clayey muck, the wire fence charged  
with electricity  
to prevent escape  
from history

ON THEM HARD, THIS TRUE WORD FROM ONE ONCE  
KNOWN AS  
THE FACELESS ONE

WHO NOW SUPPORTS THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT  
AS A COMMON SENSE IMPROVEMENT

"we fed the girl a bowl of hot broth. This she devoured, but sometimes  
stopping and looking around with large puzzled eyes as if she did  
not know where she was . . ."

THE TREE THE TREE! OH LITTLE GIRL,  
COME DANCE WITH SANTA CAUS AND ME  
AND THE GREEN AND REVOLVING CHRISTMAS TREE

COME dance with this old debauched  
silenius santa who doth shake his huge  
thing like a bowl full of jelly and  
everything will get better and  
everyone's belly will be full of the contents of steaming  
brass cauldron: noodles, fish,

cabbage, shoes, lice, certain dwarfs' bodies  
with amazing abnormalities, hair  
shall all be devoured with a runcible spoon  
beneath the apricot air and  
the turrets skull-capped with snow,  
November November  
and frozen mud pie and ditch water  
as a better elixir of life, drink it and die and go  
to a better place where people have forgotten you  
have not yet found your throats which you  
in simple friendship stretched out—they do not need  
the heavenly city

who have foredoomed all time with history,  
in november behind the rough slats of the KZ,  
and here in december, definitely, we  
will hold services in depth for their souls, except:

SASHAYING DOWN THE STREET  
THE SNATCH CALLED SANDRA WHO LIVES OFF OF MIRRORS  
BY WHICH I MEAN TO SAY SHE  
TEACHES PHILOSOPHY IN ONE OF OUR BETTER WOMAN'S  
COLLEGES:

A STERN AND DEMANDING BLONDE LINGUISTIC EXTERIOR  
CONCEALS THE WARM PLATONIC FORM  
THAT BEATS BENEATH HER WELL DEVELOPED SCHOLASTIC

## BREASTS

### AND SHE DANCES ON OBJECTIVE FEET HER UNIVERSAL RETREAT

and she sings,

"all jews are mortal" is a statement  
you cannot assert: the first term  
is not a proper subject, but a lament . . ."

"Even as we pondered how to keep her alive, Oberschaafführer Mussfeld  
came in and asked us what was going on. Even before we told him he  
had seen the girl stretched out on the bench."

white white white

flesh-blanche and bone-white

the faces I look at,

the faces I remember . . .

### OLD TREE DECK YOURSELF WITH FOLLY

the season of great cheer is here,

have some mimsy beer:

REET REET the tree lights up at this

and does proclaim, "I am the light,

the tinsel and the evergreen:

Poor girl, take my gifts,

I freely stretch them out to you,

give them to you down to the last green needle, evidence

that I and you and all life persists, in a vegetable sense."

### AND ALSO SANTA DID SCOUR AROUND IN HIS SACK

and found a funny toy, a rubber clown that squeaks

when struck and bows and fawns when struck millions of times

AND SANTA CLAUS WITH HIS CUPID BOW FIRE COLOR SMILE

PAINTED ON BOWS WITH HIS THREE ROLLS OF SIMULATED

### FAT

FALLING DOWN INTO DARKNESS THUS TO HUMANIZE HIS

FAITHFUL GRIN. and I too

gave her something.

a mud pie.

AND THE TREE AND SANTA CRY shame

But Comrades? what should I have given

her? my reptile name? my holy name statue that shines

in the darkness and does make it glow?

I gave her all the manna I could make,

save, borrow, beg, or take—

what should I have given her? a clock? an alarm clock?

“... seeing that she was too young to be able to keep to her self what had happened to her, Oberschaaführer Mussfeld detailed one of his men, who took her to the crematorium room and dispatched her with a small (.25) caliber bullet in the base of the skull . . .”  
REET REET REET THE SNOW FALLS FLEET

in a double fury,

once for the damned and once more for the merry.

AND THE TREE, SANTA CLAUS AND ME

pack up our gear and get away

from the clean teet of the beast, with his

gold and iron accumulation. And sing with Christmas joy,

we go forth thanking El Señor that in the winter of the Final Solution

we were not kike but goy.

“after their cremation, the ashes were shoveled into trucks and carried to the Vistula, where they were disposed of. Even for the dead there was no peace.”

Only for the living: SANTA CLAUS, THE TREE, AND ME,

trembling in the snow, in the apricot air,

trembling in the radiance that blasted us there,

witnessing in joy and simple placidity

the filigree of this crude nightmare.

HOSANNA HOSANNA REET REET FEET FEET SHOES SHOES

IS IT NOT BEST TO LOVE

TO MAKE IT OUR COMMON SENSE TASK

TO GO ABOUT AND ASK

FOR FORGETTING AND FORGIVING AND FOR LOVE

ON THOSE WHO, AFTER ALL, HAD ORDERS FROM ABOVE?

reet reet. On this happy night,

this silent silent silent night,

let us take one minute to endeavour

to forget, for the sorrow is great,

and it is forever.

SNOW COVERS THE IRON GATE

REET REET we're late,

We're late for a very important fate,

and let blessings on us fall,

from God, who made it all.

**NOTES:**

cyclon b quadrille—Cyclon b was the name of the gas that the Nazis used on the Jews.

"the concrete steps . . ."—All direct quotes are from *Auschwitz* by Niklos Nyiszli, a survivor. Here it refers to the steps that led down to Gas Chamber No. 1.

SHOES SHOES SHOES—The Nazis stripped the Jews of all their valuables and clothes; when the allies invaded Germany, they found warehouses at the camps filled with nothing but shoes.

masturbate together—One of the favorite punishments of the SS was to line a group of Jewish prisoners up outdoors and have them masturbate while shouting such phrases as, "We are race polluters!"

certain dwarfs' bodies—Refers to a case of cannibalism at Auschwitz, when some Polish prisoners, working in the crematorium yards, broke open a cask filled with bodies of Jewish dwarfs being boiled to separate the bones from the flesh, for shipment to Berlin as evidence of Jewish race degeneracy.

the iron gate—Entrance to Auschwitz was through an iron gate with the motto, "FREEDOM THROUGH WORK" on it in German.

**TERMS:**

KZ—Abbreviation used in German reports and in the camps for the German word for concentration camp.

Sonderkommando—A special work force recruited from the prisoners for work in and about the gas chambers and crematoriums. Each group was gassed after approximately four months and a new one recruited.

## I

The gentle rain  
 belongs to the night.  
 The falling wetness  
 and the engulfing blackness  
 are one.  
 The popping of raindrops  
 on a cement roadway  
 and  
 the tapping of a hitch-hiker's feet  
 provide a subtle background  
 for  
 the booming of thunder  
 and the occasional swish  
 of four flying tires  
 as they disappear.  
 The automobiles,  
 systematically  
 , swerve to the opposite side  
 of the road  
 to avoid the lone walker.  
 He might be  
 some sort of  
 deadly contagious disease  
 that would demolish  
 the speeding cars  
 and mutilate their inhabitants.  
 The hitch-hiker,  
 too  
 , belongs to the night.

## II

Lightning makes the landscape  
 assume the form  
 of a blind eye  
 with much dirt  
 accumulated in its  
 lower portions.

This illusion lasts  
only a small portion  
of a second  
before delivering  
the land  
back into the arms  
of the darkness.  
One might wish  
: to be able  
to wing one's way  
through that emptiness  
towards the unknown source  
of lightness  
: to have the desire  
to find the momentary  
whiteness  
in a black world  
: to die the instant  
one's dreams are fulfilled,  
never refinding  
lasting inner emptiness.

### III

And the hitch-hiker  
disappears  
a two-legged beetle,  
angry at the rain  
for wetting him,  
angry at anything  
for everything,  
—a pathetic  
member of the animal  
kingdom.



## A Work of Art for W. B. Yeats

I thought that I should make my room of shit  
from floor to ceiling and from wall to wall  
until I should have no place to sit  
and meditate upon the grotesque and tall  
soul of what it was I made;  
Week after week, month after month, until the old year waned,  
I labored until I had laid  
on every surface, another surface made of shit  
until it was finished; and finished, a work of art,  
for I now lived inside a model, exactly and beautifully maimed,  
of the human heart.

## Three Gods in Three Scenes

*Scene is in all time, all space, the regions of the mind and soul; scene is ever-changing with endless beginnings becoming beginningless endings and becoming becoming being. Scene is but the outcropping of the infinite place which is Divine Spirit, now manifested in the home of Mr. Carlyle in England, Earth, Solar System, Milky Way, Universe Delta Beta Sigma. With Mr. Carlyle is Mr. Emerson. They are in Mr. Carlyle's parlor. It is England and it is raining outside. And O is this not the same rain which has fallen outside of time for eternity and has refreshed the spirits of all men in history, infusing them with mercy and pity (who wear human faces and may be seen standing in endless light at the sides of the stage).*

CARLYLE: Well, it took you a bloody long time to get here. So you like Sartor, eh?

EMERSON: Yea!

CARLYLE: Well, I've got something better to show you. Would you like to see it?

EMERSON: Yea!

CARLYLE: All right, bring it in. And hurry up!

Mrs. Carlyle comes in toting a huge packing crate on her back. She sets it down in the middle of the room and leaves silently.

CARLYLE: Do you know where that comes from?

EMERSON: Nay!

CARLYLE: Germany, that's where it comes from, and let me tell you, that means it's the best. Here, help me open it. The crowbars are in that corner.

So they open it.

EMERSON: Unh. Unh. There. Let me see, let me see.

CARLYLE: Well, what do you think?

EMERSON: But, there's nothing there!

CARLYLE: There is too!

EMERSON: What?

CARLYLE: Transcendentalism, that's what.

EMERSON: Nay, I invented that. Or perhaps I should say "grew" considering

the wholeness and organic nature of the spirit.

CARLYLE: O that's bloody tommyrot. All you have is your own domestic brand. This is the real imported thing, straight from Germany, bottled by Kant, Schelling, and Schiller.

EMERSON: But there's nothing there!

CARLYLE: What is the central part of Transcendentalism?

EMERSON: "The Instinctive Intuition of the Divine."<sup>1</sup>

CARLYLE: Which is spirit, endless and everywhere. Yea?

EMERSON: Yea. I guess so.

CARLYLE: This is it, the essence of Transcendentalism, packed and ready for shipment to America.

EMERSON: Yes, America is ready for a long, deep draught of spirit. But it's bottled. You said it was bottled; where are the bottles? Where are they?

CARLYLE: Spiritual bottles. You see?

EMERSON: Yea! Yea! I see, brother; I see!

*Scene is where the Spirit is. The Spirit now manifests itself in Concord. We are outside standing in a crowd listening to a conversation among Emerson, Margaret Fuller, William Story, Sophia Ripley, and Ida Russell. There is a large packing crate on the platform with the conversationalists. We paid twenty dollars for a season ticket. This is New England, and Emerson is making a profit.*

EMERSON: Every man has probably met his Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Venus, or Ceres in society.

FULLER: I am sure I never have!

EMERSON: Not in this world, but each on his own platform.

STORY: I object. The life of an individual is not universal.

RIPLEY: The inner life.

EMERSON: We all do sundry graceful acts, in our caps and tunics, which we never could do again, which we never would want to do again.

FULLER: We have touched the point. Aesculapius bore two serpents on his staff, Mercury two on his divining rod, and the cock was also sacred to Aesculapius.

RUSSELL: When Mechanic Art is married to Beauty, it might charm even Wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Harold Clarke Goddard. *Studies in New England Transcendentalism* (New York: 1960), p. 89, in a quote from a letter by Theodore Parker.

<sup>2</sup> Goddard, p. 116, a slight adaptation (as to tenses) of a quotation of a real conversation that did take place. The dialogue beginning with "Questions?" is my own invention.

EMERSON: Questions?

A SMALL BOY: What's that you got there in that big crate?

EMERSON: I'm glad you asked that. I'll show you. There! See this; this is it, pure German Idealistic Transcendentalism.

CROWD: OOOOO.

EMERSON: This is the spiritual essence, good for man and boy.

CROWD: AAAAAAAH.

EMERSON: This is infinity; this is faith; this is hope; this is—

A SMALLER BOY: But there ain't nothing there at all!

EMERSON: What! Do you call infinity, nothing? And what about faith and hope? Did you ever see those? And yet they exist. Think of it this way, infinity is a transparent eyeball, and hope is a warm puppy, and faith is the "frolic architecture of the snow." That last is from a book of my poems, price one dollar.

CROWD: OOOOOO.

FULLER: But just what is this German brand, Waldo?

EMERSON: "The Instinctive Intuition of the Immortal, a consciousness that the Essential Element of man, the principle of Individuality, never dies."<sup>3</sup>

CROWD: AAAAAH.

EMERSON: Does that answer your questions?

A SMALLER BOY: Yeah.

*Scene is where Spirit is. Scene is in Concord jail. Henry David Thoreau is in there for refusing to pay taxes to support the Mexican War, supposedly fomented by slave-owners.*

THOREAU: I was trying to get some sleep. What do you want at this unnatural hour?

EMERSON: Here. Go on, take it.

THOREAU: Take what?

EMERSON: This.

THOREAU: This what? I can't see a darned thing!

EMERSON: Henry, don't swear. This is Transcendentalism, and you can't see it because it's spiritual.

THOREAU: Are you selling that old stuff again? You tried to sell me that years ago.

EMERSON: But this is different; this is the new, pure German brand. And besides, I'm giving it to you.

---

<sup>3</sup> Goddard, p. 89.

THOREAU: Look, Waldo, you've been out to Walden a few times, and did I ever urge you to throw a hook out for any invisible species of fish? You know I didn't. Now I figure you're trying to sell me on something that just isn't there any more than *perca invisibilis* is swimming around in Walden pond. Anyway, that's the way I see it.

EMERSON: Oh, all right.

He leaves.

THOREAU: Emerson's a talented individual, but sometimes I wonder what he's doing out there.

## TOM CARR

*(The following is an excerpt from a novella written in a serious vein in a fit of comic despair years ago. The entire work deals with the history of a town and area, and more particularly of a vain and stupid man who continually refused to accept the best of what was offered to him, on the assumption that somewhere there must be a better solution, a better understanding of our being. For him, life was non-existent, life was merely the progress of death.)*

Often woodsmen and third-generation Norwegians labelled the hills "God's Country," and that it is: acre upon acre, mile after mile of green forest stretching out of sight; crystal-blue lakes with huge bass and striped, quick-silver perch flitting in and out under a plate-glass surface. Disdaining to remain motionless, lusting to explore and discover, the water flows and tumbles down myriad hillsides, giving vent to the sounds of shattering glass, the moving sounds of youth, restless sounds. Deep below Franconia Notch, the Flume Gorge, split and cracked, obelisk, carved and destroyed by age, boulder-littered, is traversed by a desperate torrent; the harsh granite rocks maintain their cold, whittled beauty. Cascade, out of mossy-green gorges into the basin, catapults into deceptively deep waters, whirling around an old man's foot of rock. Convex and smooth like a balding pate, surrounded by green, the dull grey basin rock tints momentarily the blue torrent a sad color, only to see the water claim its joy and abandon again and leave forever, as I have done.

One can explore ice-blue caves lying near North Conway: squeeze through the Orange-Crusher, hold a guide's hand and leap the gurgling, underground flood, stand gazing at the water, indestructible, roaring through the confines of the earth, and spiral up and up and up through the Witch's Cauldron . . . find oneself out of the caverns, climb on, and stare at what appears the end but is only the beginning: the tumbling Falls of Paradise: Lost River. One can do many things: oh, the swirling swims of youth, drying toes on rocky crags, plunging into the tiny, furious Pemigewasset, into the frigid curlicues of Diana's Bath! Climb Cannon Mountain to gaze at Echo Lake, placid blue circle, the encompassing green somber-tinged autumn; down and around cloud, small red-roofed house, shuttered and desolate.

And there is the Old Man of the Mountains, ethereal in clouded moonlight, rustic and dry under the departing sun, his torn, cracked nose, down-

cast eyes, caved-in cheeks: he reigns imperious mocking the hills of vanished hope, where they came swarming to defile, and left.

To the third-generation Norwegian and the locked-lipped woodsmen accustomed to years alone, it is plain: this is God's Country.

Rain plunging leaves streets muddy and swollen; swirling, whirling, splashing puddles enlarge at the bases of innumerable downspouts as fall, 1884, fights its way towards winter. Cold death lurks howling in the air, in the streets, barren, crooked little pathways that they are: dust then, mud now; smooth then, rutted and gouged now; happy then, sad now. Grotesque images, the rust and grime of mining equipment dead and neglected swaying with the wind in the foothills: Paragon, ever grey as the evergreen.

Panorama of gloom, Paragon; sentinel in the hills, ever grey: Fornsby's Cartage, Sollem's Salves and Dairy Products, Quill's Hotel. Cartage, failing venture dealt death by mining equipment, dead and neglected swaying with the wind in the foothills; falling-off shutters, speckled, shattered glass clinging to window mortar. A beam leaning against the eaves, forced into the mire under the weight and snag: the prime-dried, cured, tautened boards of yesterday warp. Sollem's S. & D.P., Richard D. Sollem, Prop.; closed. Notice posted on the front window sill, "4/13/84: Due to Death in the Family, Closed for Day. Business as Usual, Tomorrow." Succinct. Door ajar, handle and lock pounded indistinguishable: beauty in fifteen pennies sprawled unwanted upon the harsh, slatted floor. The back door creaks on rusty hinges moved by the wind in the valley. Hollow, isolated rain sounds shift under the eaves; tiny drops wedge in between cracked, warped sidewalks, or run down two steps at the end and fall into place in a rut.

And wistful ruminating. Of a time gone . . . of a time here . . . of a time coming . . . no matter, Paragon: you alone stand grey, wet, saturated withal under the clouds, in the wind. House upon house, twelve remain; harboring yet twenty-three in a darkening evening, the human fantasia: seldom to come forth, these few, and then, but for the youth, to the confines of Franklin Hope's Castle of Drink and Song, and procrastination yesterday, today, tomorrow: the winds blow cold.

Four generations of the Hope family had inhabited and developed (William, Charles, Robert), then Franklin Hope's Castle of Drink and Song. The structure, huge in proportion to all save Quill's Place, towered two-and-a-half stories overhead. Originally a boarding house, now it's a saloon, with rooms to rent—many "vacated for repairs"—above. Coming in out of the wind and rain, you pass through archaic swinging doors, into a lantern-lit gloom; see freshly-painted bannister a brash yellow: it was quite a Castle, quite a barn.

Off-center in the mirror on the west wall are the swinging doors, silent.

Several tables, thirteen in all, face each other starkly, while dozens of partner chairs stand scattered and separated from their tables, people naked. Yesterday's burly, tough miners, boys, not yet men, turned old: all slouch, gazing before them, with spatters of conversation addressed to blank, dirty tables. . . . "Yes, ten years ago today, Benny, ten goddamn years, it closed and . . . the wife? Yah, she's there, grinding me to work the harvest; tomorrow, I says, tomorrow." . . . "Look-it Jake spout about the harvest! Tomorrow, he says, tomorrow: there shan't be none for those who imbibe; please, just one more: put it on my bill—the credit's good, ain't it?" Howie Burnett, this last.

Burnett, too old to start again tomorrow. His youth, in Maine, was pleasant and carefree, he a strangely intelligent and literate child. Came home one day in the '50's only to say good-bye. Child of the air, swift-winged fledgling flying west to his fortune: only after a tortuous winter crossing to follow the Ammonoosuc to Paragon, follow the wind to death. Hey! One for Howie! Great credit, twenty-four years for Howie, large bill: an i.o.u. he dolefully asserts is Hope's "u.o. Me" one life. Burnett, slouched in his chair.

Yesterday, today, tomorrow; identical in the Castle. Along the north wall the bar, buffed and shiny here, wet and stained there. On a plaque above the register, flung out to all, the inspiring words, altered by Howie Burnett: "Paragon Is An Iland, Intire Of It Selfe." The register sat majestically amidst half-filled sherry bottles, capped bottles of beer: closed, empty, locked, with "No Sale" rung up. Eight stools line the bar, seven empty stools and one with an unconscious inhabitant. A smaller mirror hung crookedly to the left of the cash register, brightly, mistily reflecting the yellow banister stretching up and across the south wall. A magnificent piece of carving, that. No imperfect craftsman, the builder of yellow banisters; however, Benny's foot had made indentations over the years and these showed clearly to the meticulous eye of Franklin: the only reason Benny rarely drank, but just sat there, talking or being talked through, was Franklin's scoldings and rantings when Benny, drunk, would pelter the pillars with short, swift boots, crying that he would get out of Paragon and go on down the river "to a good job, a good home, a decent saloon, no goddamn converted boarding house, no goddamn miser's place with a beast more interested in his damn banister than in the welfare of his customers."

The yellow banister bordered the stairway to the second floor. Under the stair stoop were the two curios of the Hope Place—a honky-tonk piano, and a wind-up record player, Franklin's pride and joy. The latter rarely worked, though; often in his drunkenness Jake tried to twist off its crank. The piano, a Bailley and Hadson monster, was played only by Eric, an examiner yearning for a hand's touch, something warm and tender he could never retrieve. Nor did he in the throes of drink make bones about this, but



said "Cut it out, damn it! I'll go back, wait and see! I'll go back, soon!" Benny quietly speculated on what Eric sought playing the piano. Tall and greying, Eric at the age of forty-five was sadly handsome: beautiful as rain, his face smooth as tree-whistling wind, and compelling as the beckoning finger of a girl in love.

Yesterday, today, tomorrow: identical in the Castle, for Franklin Hope's clock, a splendid structure, did everything but keep time. Resting atop the piano, its top scraping the backside of the stairway, the cuckoo clock led a life of unparalleled unpredictability, striking nine at one, seven, four or three at eleven, nothing at midnight. Although it never worked, winding the clock for a ritual for Hope: he donned a special yellow vest, downed a shot of whisky, rudely shoved Eric away from the piano, and preceded. Three keys were turned, the first to the right, the second to the left, and the last however he pleased; the clock would then erupt in frenetic cuckoos, stutter, and cease. When he wound the clock at night, Hope smiled and set up a round of drinks without i.o.u.'s for everyone. A rare Castle, a rare barn, Franklin's Castle of Drink and Song, Paragon's oasis.

Rain pounding, hitting on the four front windows, blurring the world: they assembled to quicken the night, prevent tomorrow, let flow words touching on this, striking that, avoiding everything. Eric, forlorn and wandering, punched his little tune,

From this valley they say you are going,  
We will miss your bright eyes and sweet smile,  
For they say you are taking the sunshine,  
That brightens our pathway a while.

Come and sit by my side if you love me,

\* \* \* \* \*

I have promised you, darling, that never  
Will a word from my lips cause you pain.

The cool rain of evening, effervescent dew of autumn, quilting its splashings rut upon rut, ceased. In its stead crept forth a dreary blanket of mist, tear-laden scourager of the soil. Great rolling patches of fog, hiding every house, distending the flickering lamps of Quill's Place. Fog common in the hills, fog for the children to play and scamper in, fog looked to in anticipaion at Hope's Place, fog in the chimerical joy of old men: the valley ceased to exist when the fog rolled off the mountain, when the pummelling broom wind forced it downward to the depths of the valley. As men are old the land is old; no longer do we gaze upon the brilliant flowers of youth, but only upon wilting daisies in the waning autumn light. The cool rain of eve-

ning, effervescent dew of autumn ceased, but it would continue, begin again to flow into the river.

Benny, drunk because the clock had been set and he had pilfered several bottles as Hope slept, scrutinized Eric solemnly, spat, and nonchalantly cursed. His unusual girth chained in by an old stained dickie, folded arms covered by the sleeves of a red and black checkered shirt too small for his six-foot, collapsed frame, Benny sat with his chair tilted back on one leg, leaning precariously against a round table in the center of the room, gazing at the stairway, the piano, the victrola: watching and listening to Eric, to "never will a word from my lips cause you pain," and finally, after a long pull on the third of his many bottles, gathering nerve to speak, he screamed "Hey, Boy! Damn noise irritates my bones. More and I shall 'cause you pain.' Be nice and sit and drink with Benny. Come over and listen to my plan to leave this goddamn dump. Tomorrow, boy, tomorrow! Come on, this'll be your last chance!"

"Someone speaks to me, interrupting my practice schedule, threatening me, and pleads for my company! Boasts emphatic dreams, announces false truths, as if I wanted or needed company," Eric said, addressing from his position on the piano bench, back curved, head upraised, the blank face of the music bar. His voice conveyed a sonority in its muttering strong as an eager girl's "don't!" It came out of his deep-set face, out of the gaunt, powerful cheeks and mouth, terse in its mimicry. Howie, Benny, and the others differed about Eric's incessant mimicry; Howie, intelligent and glum, liked the quality, for it picked him up. Benny, sulky and sullen, normally resented its implications when addressed towards him; however, now because he was drunk the voice merely infuriated him. His anger subsided when he saw Eric stir. For he had won; he would have someone to talk to!

Eric shifted his entire body around to face the lounging Benny, to stare through him past and out the doors at the mist. After a few seconds, he arose and crossed fifteen feet to where Benny's chair tilted. He had a wan smile as he sat opposite him and muttered, "Hi, Benny."

"Rye? Bourbon? Gin? Or just a bottle of old, stale beer? Don't answer, boy. Yer playing gets worse every night. Here."

"Thanks, Benny."

"Stingy bastard Hope'll croak when he comes-to and takes a gander at this table! Hah, hah! Six full bottles left, and me drunker than the devil. Right, boy?"

"Yeh, Benny. Yer right."

"He was spouting off about closing up the old place tomorrow, about getting the Hell out of here in the morning and leaving us to fend for ourselves. That'll be the day! This goddamn town hasn't been without a Hope for generations. Why, the Hopes and the Wrights, they built this town,

them's the one's that's to be forever. Paragon wouldn't be the same without Franklin Hope." Benny, his preparatory soliloquy concluded, sat quiet, poured another drink, raised his glass, and downed it in one gulp. His chest heaved, as little droplets of bourbon dripped down his shirt to mingle with dried sweat and grime. An obsession, life: once gained, held onto tightly, selfishly. Who cares what happens to the guy next door? The fall should end it, but here sit derelicts of the past, on borrowed time, Eric and Benny. To indulge in a practice of the Castle of Drink and Song, a recitation Howie drunkenly labels "Our Floor Show: A Spontaneous Comedy Fluent of Verse and Gay of Wit." The rainy evenings of four years had been spent in a like manner, wasted, tortured, spun around Stephen Wright and scores of years of Wrights. Eric and Benny knew first-hand only one of the events, yet, having aged in Paragon they were cognizant of all; the tree, the fall, the aftermath: the one memorial and inspired, the next, tragic, the last, yet continuing. And this time, this evening but a sequel to hundreds, this rain and fog and wind! Spent and sustained by six bottles, endured but not effective. A rumbling stone rolling downward over rock-hard clouds, a jagged flash peering, searching inward from the street, from the mountains made this night ordinary for a recitation: the wind in the foothills, the valley wind ceased, and the rain began silently to fall.

"Hey, Benny, Hope ran out of paper for Howie's i.o.u.'s How about, before the elderly one awakens, inviting Mr. Burnett over to our table. You've still three bottles, Benny, and Howie's so sober he's sad. Hey, how about it, Benny?" Benny, doubled over in thought, didn't hear Eric right-off. Suddenly his eyes flinched, his fingers drummed patterns on the table top, and he nodded his broad jaw in rapid assent.

"Perhaps it would be in our best interests to interject some culture into our discussion, damn it!" Benny's filthy, cracked teeth showed reluctantly in a thin smile. Soon, however, perceiving Howie asleep and not heeding their unspoken invitation, Benny's face grew long and mellow and then harsh and bitter. "Goddamn rabble! Too good for mere friendly talk, huh? Crap! Can't you listen, when spoken about? Hey! I say, Hey! Burnett! Must I scream? Answer me! You're not dead yet, old man, damned rabble. Say—"

"He's sleeping, Benny," interrupted Eric, quietly.

"—something, idiot! You, running away! Going west, going for your fortune. You got your damn fortune, and then some, or at least more than you deserved. Above women, above friendliness, scorning me because I ain't educated, because I ain't got a job! Let me tell you this: Tomorrow, yes, tomorrow I go, I go out to that river and leave for my next job . . . I've no need for education!" Stammering, nearly choking, exerting all his power

to chastise and insult and condemn, Benny took a quick swig and prepared for his finale. "You listen to me, Mr. Burnett! A curse, I say, a pox, a thousand curses on your goddamned Harvard! You can take it and go—"

Howie, slumped prone on the table nearest the huge mirror, opened first one and then the other and stared myopically at each eye's reflection in the mirror, at each eye's reflection of itself in the mirror. His scruffy eyebrows underlined long, deep furrows on his brow: pensive and brooding, Howie. His spindly frame suffered in the cold, covered as it was scantily by shrunken trousers, a faded wool shirt, and a glassy leather jacket, ripped from the waist to the shoulder. Howie remained motionless, thinking about the room, the others, Eric's dire tune, duplicate doors quiet. A searching arm trying to scratch an itch and a sudden swaying, turning of Howie's head to a position such that Howie stared directly at him indicated to Benny that he had heard his remarks. Benny, in his drunken hilarity, sought placation for his barbs.

"Why, Howie! You're awake? I was just kidding here with Eric about the benefit of being an educated man, yessir, an educated man, one—" Benny, droll and sour, was surprised. In fact, Benny didn't know what to do: here was Howie, here, Benny, the latter shouting down at the former, the one listening quietly, secretively to drunken ramblings. Howie had had quite enough, and when Benny's apologies were done, he spoke.

"Benny." Howie's voice compelled people to listen: they had no choice, for it was intelligent, it was commanding, it was bitter and prophetic. Not exactly the voice of doom, yet far from the voice of life. "Benny, in the years I've spent in this Black Hole, I must have told you thousands of times about the need for and virtues of a decent education. Man can do nothing without it, man can do everything with it! Benny, you're filthy, ragged, and decrepit: in your whole damn life, or at least in the time I've been mixed up in it, you haven't ever read, haven't ever written. You're drunk. You're old. You've no relatives. Why aren't you dead? Don't ask me." Howie spoke slowly, words drawn out and rapidly elongated, twisting like snakes through the air, poignant and chilling. Eric knew what he would say next, about education, about himself, but he didn't tell him to shut-up. He just waited patiently.

"A simple combination of bad breaks. Why, Hell, Benny, you know that as well as I do. Why, back in Maine, we all knew those words on the value of education. Why, on one occasion, Aristotle was asked how much educated men were superior to the stupid. What'd he say?' as much,' said he, 'as the living are to the dead.' Me, I feel education teaches a man to do the things he has to do. If I didn't believe this, why, I wouldn't be here, I wouldn't be stopping in Paragon on my way west.

"Education teaches a man that others are worthy of pity and deserve consideration. You sit there telling me I'm 'above women, above friend-

liness,' but you don't realize that while I'm here I want to help you. I want to apply my education for your benefit. My attitude, unlike yours, is completely altruistic, and affectionate. For a brother seeks to help a brother, keeps his weaker brother. You and I, we aren't much for church-going, but you know, I'm sure, that 'now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but,' Benny, 'the greatest of these is charity.' Yes, love, brotherhood, is the greatest of all things, but it only serves to transmit education. Paragon is but a brief encounter on my trip west, Benny, but it is an island in the sun. There is always something just unseen, a bit over the next hill, beckoning to me, and if it weren't for these damn bad breaks, I'd been west already! An educated man has to climb over the next rise. This is what he is taught to do: he must set a goal, and then he must pursue his goal. Benny, you too, Eric, how did Paragon get here?"

"William Hope, Sr.!"

"The Rt. Rev. Stephen Jacob Wright, Esq.," corrected Benny. Dignity demanded that Benny sit straight in his chair. He even went so far as to place all its legs on the floor. He crossed his legs in a vain attempt to hide the patches on his knees, and only succeeded in showing off two worn, cracked shoes, victims of the mines and of years in Hope's Place.

"Sure, Eric. I'm sad. I'm sober. Yeh, I'll come over and drink with you. I'll get stone drunk, I'll go out of my mind, I'll drink myself dead. Even death, though, is no panacea for us: we've practically got it now, and look where we are!" Howie had moved slightly. He faced the other two directly, and suddenly rose on stiff legs. He called them arthritic, and said it was the damp air. He thought this evening with its rain would make him unable to move, but with concentration he rose. He talked to Benny, while gazing fixedly out the window where the rain fell and the fog which had lifted left still the lights distended at Quill's Place. Flickering bursts of lightning silhouetted flyings, wind-torn branches on the rutted road. Howie didn't feel alive, only educated.

"Benny, Paragon got here because an educated man had a dream. An educated man left his home one day (always he feels hampered and constrained in familiar surroundings) and set out over the mountains, down the foot hills and into the valley to start a civilization.

"Stephen Wright was a builder, all right." Howie had strode over so he towered over Benny, and spoke to him looking over the doors at the rain, with a vengeance. "Even if he was a minister, he had originality. He had a creative flair that is stifled by organization and detail, nurtured by independence and loneliness. He—"

"So look where it got him, damn it!"

"He came here and with William Hope built Paragon. He set up his

home, and he—”

“Hell. Look where it got him!”

“He married well and raised a wholesome family. He triumphed over hardship, fought down misery, and he—”

“Goddamn you, goddamn you, goddamn you! Look where it got him! ‘He married well’ my eye—he had his bad break and married his cousin. Look what that did! His education turned on him, and it undid all its lessons, it made him bitter, Howie!” Benny pitched his strength into nervous, brutal screams. He shook with agitation, his eyes flashed and burned holes in his head. “You and your screwy ethics!”

Howie dropped into a chair Eric had placed at the table. He was tired and groggy and cold. His quivering hand searched for the bottle and he rapidly poured and swallowed a drink. Within moments it had affected him. Eric knew Howie now would apply his theory about the Wrights, and that Benny would refute it, neither of them realizing the lesson that had burrowed itself unseen into the tragedy, the tragedies. Materialism, love: two poles. Howie would drink a little, find a pencil stub, and scrawl on the table in large, black block letters, “A Spontaneous Comedy Fluent of Verse and Gay of Wit.”

## To a Fatherless Child

Dance not on your father's grave  
Though heavy his rest may be,  
For likewise shall your flippant skirts  
Turn moist and cling to thee,

But run away to an unkempt field  
Unplanted with granite stones  
And sing of all he left behind  
To hide his driftwood bones.

# A Falling Time

Hair dark,  
 And tumbling out around  
 Her head that is lowered;  
 She waits  
 With hands upon her knees,  
 Sitting, and legs enfolding,  
 Each under each,  
 The softness of white.

I will touch upon her sadly, sadly together from the  
 splashing high water, fan-tailing into silver and the  
 smell of lime rocks, beyond the ledge and beyond the  
 swept moss, and through the last light of the lightless  
 orange sun, and I go falling headward where the bottom  
 waters leap to hold me as I rush, as I rush upon the  
 spume, upon her dark hair tumbling down around and  
 spreading from her shoulder height:

Yes, and the sweet good smell  
 Of dark fallen hair,  
 Hair that immures  
 Her unenvisaged face,  
 Then winds farther down,  
 As she bends forth in waiting.

The sun weighs warmly on my closing eyes,  
 And through the eyelid light that fixes me  
 The flat rocks shine, then merge into the gloom  
 To mark for shadow length the sunless side,  
 Beyond the day; and running through the rocks,  
 Around upon the grasses and the sand,  
 Then angling off to disappear, the creek  
 Spreads swift and silent on the limerock ledge;  
 Spreads cleanly on the swept moss shelf above,  
 And hushes down to meet the basin rocks:



Waterfall hair,  
Flowing on the lines,  
Where her breasts begin  
And disappear;  
Blanketing hair,  
Tracing lower lines,  
Meets the basin of her lap,  
Darker there.

So soft across her breast to touch so soft across the  
rock whiteness headward down my lips will running touch  
within the darkly tighter hair the liquid press of thighs  
and her, even nearer darkly there:

The sadness of touch,  
Deep birth and long decay,  
As of a star.

## FRANKLIN PINE

Near my house there hang some long straight willow branches.  
They were hung there two years ago last spring;  
They are still green and straight.  
I understand that Macy's has a sale on them:  
One dozen extra-longs for \$2.00.

I don't have any willows in my backyard, only a few honey locusts.  
They've been there for twenty years.  
They look a bit scraggly in the fall,  
But they smell lovely every spring.

My neighbor has gay-colored flowers in her house.  
They look as if they really were alive.  
They're guaranteed, too, for three years.

I don't have any flowers in my house,  
And only a few at a time in my garden.  
They don't bloom all year round,  
And sometimes not at all.

My neighbor asked me why I didn't like flowers all year round.  
And I told her that I did.  
She said, You can't get assurance; can you? Perhaps at Lloyds?  
And I said yes, but not at Lloyds.  
I have my guarantee, in her and in my heart;  
Not from year to year, but from spring to spring,  
For a lifetime.

So I said good-day to my neighbor,  
And she went back to hang some vines she had bought at a discount.

# Contributors

CHARLES H. LYNCH, a senior English major, makes a regrettably overdue first appearance in *Hika*.

AMON LINER, '63, whose *Babe Ruth Apocalypse* first appeared in these pages, contributed the present works to the ill-fated issue of last spring.

PAUL BATES is a freshman.

WILLIAM H. SCHUBART is too.

TOM CARR, a sophomore, recently returned from America.

DAVE NEWCOMB finished his *Wanderjahr* in only six months.

FRANKLIN PINE is a Biology major!

DAVID DIAO, winner of last year's Fine Arts Purchase Prize, paints.

## STAFF

JEFFREY "STUDS" FISHER has everything but the motorcycle and the bragga-doccio.

JOHN WILLETT has these, but nothing else.

PETER SCARLET,

EDGAR MCGUIRE—"The mouth of the wolf and the hand of the business manager: never satisfied." (Old Russian Proverb)

JOSEPH SLATE, Kenyon's Art Department, is this year's *Hika* advisor. He has a dog named Toto.

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