

Variety of hells

by [Jill Alexander Essbaum](#) in the [July 12, 2005](#) issue

*Hell: the inescapable presence of God
endured in the permanent absence of him.*

A hell where your name is forgotten.
Worse, the hell that remembers you.
Every rotten scheme your hands laid plan to.

Then, a hell for omissive sins.
All what you meant to do though couldn't.
How you intended to love, but didn't.

A hell for revenge songs and ridicule.
A hell where despair is winnowed by fire.
A hell that burns away desire.

Hell of all hells: I harrow for your ghost.
But we abide eternities apart.
That's the hell of the heart.