

# 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.