

THE WATER GATORS IN HELL
By Douglas Frederick MacKenzie
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For Millicent and Rabbit

According to the eighteenth-century lexicographer, wit, and tastemaker Dr. Samuel Johnson, a satire is a poem wherein “wickedness or folly is ensured”... and never better than in *The Water Gators in Hell*, which satirizes the Watergate principals in a boisterous, witty, scathing vision of their trip to and experiences in Hell.

In Canto One, the Water Gators are chained on the deck of Charon’s ghostly galleon as it crosses the fiery Styx bound for Hell. Richard Trixon pompously assumes he’s en route to Heaven where he’ll be crowned as the new archangel-elect. John Bean, however, has other ideas.

Canto Two finds the fractious tyrant and his bestial cohorts soldiering arduously through an infernal panorama only to end up as captives in Satan’s infamous Red Fort. It is here in a madcap armageddon that the seedy trickster and repellent Pignew teach the Devil the true meaning of Hell. *The Water Gators in Hell* is a brilliant, picaresque odyssey in rhyme and a modern satire at its very best.

Bertha: Out, hunchback!

Arnold: I was born so, Mother

Lord Byron
“The Deformed Transformed”

Absurdis Personae

CAPTAIN CLAES McCRAB	the narrator
RICHARD “THE TRICKSTER” TRIXON	a deposed despot
JOHN BEAN	a hipster
H. R. “BOB THE BRUSH” HUNK O’ MAN	a robot
JOHN “THE CURR” CURRLICKMAN	a mongrel
ROD ZIGGLER	a slug
ROCKY FELLER	a bee
GORGON LIDDY	a monster
SPYRO PIGNEW	a specter
JOHN TWITCHELL	a walrus
CHARON	captain of hell’s ferry
CERBERUS	hell’s watchdog
SATAN	the Devil himself
LUCAS	his elfish assistant
ETC.	

Canto the First

*While sauntering on a briny slab
And savoring the waves' bouquet,
I encountered a not so tiny crab
Attired in pixie pantaloons of gray.
Not wishing to initiate relations
With coarse and corneous crustaceans,
I turned from the path along the bay
Whistling and ambling in a merry way.
'Twas then the cheeky chap cried out:
"Be off then with an upturned snout.
Be smug and pompous you raffish lout.
With yer likes I'll ne'er tip a pint o' stout."
I had naught yet gained the prickly thistle
When startled and stupefied I turned about,
First disbelieving that disparaging shout,
Then distraught my fiery ire did quickly bristle.
Intolerant that my proud name be besmirched,
Exacerbated, down the sandy knoll I lurched.
Upon attaining that acrimonious beach,
A cordial atonement I did beseech.
"Sir," said I, "impudent denizen of the shore,
Your virulent epithets I'm unable to ignore.
Unmitigated invectives you would yourself deplore.
'Tis my tarnished honor I entreat thee to restore."*

*I'd hardly spoken when with a swagger and chuckle,
The swarthy swab drew a dagger from his buckle.
"Better batten down dat flappin' yapper landlubber
"For I carve yer flabby crapper to canned blubber."
His apology he endeavored to shirk
By brandishing this diminutive dirk.
"Brazen cad," I cried, "temerity alone
Won't save thee from a proximate stone."
Without further palaver I hoisted a bolder.
Taking aim, I poised it above my shoulder.
But before I could enact my lethal attack,
Crab's swift minions had cutlasses at my back.
I was further humiliated by myriad guffaws,
Pounded and pinioned by puissant little claws
Then brusquely chauffeured to a darkling savannah
For a sumptuous repast and cigars from Havana.
Following cognac, before we could yawn,
Six fiddlers appeared and fiddled 'til dawn.
Feeling rewarded that our row had ended,
We snorted and cavorted like foes befriended.
Methought I'd ne'er known so grand a bliss
As my host's Afghan cannabis,*

*Until I lay quite stoned, supine,
Straddled by his comely concubine.*

*'Til torpor brought that torrid maenad down
To dew damp berth on cold crowded ground
Fraught with frantic figures in a mound
Much like those Biblical cities of ill-renown.
Man becomes a beast at shameful orgies
Where gasping ladies flop about like porgies.
Man should lucubrate in quiet cloisters
I mused while wolfing a dozen oysters.
Just as I was about to take a fresh
Plunge into that fervid fountain of flesh,
Crab, who'd tired of his hermit crab houris
With their castanet claws and wiggling cowries,
Toked voraciously on a bamboo bong
And then smashed it to bits against a gong.
His tactless coup scared most revelers to death.
"Mateys," he whispered, still holding his breath,
"The devil of the sea is a hideous fish
Surely wrought by the evil hand of Baal.
I knew one such creature whose dying wish
Was I never repeat this ghastly tale:*

Old Charon drew the creaking anchor up
While the grim cook prepared a fetid stew.
The steaming entrails of a former crew
Comprised the repast the condemned would sup.

Perched atop the stove, a gawking pup
Of a vulture squawked for flesh to chew.
The swab caught its yellow puke in a cup
And cackled as he stirred it in his brew.
Churning across the Styx, the burning wake
Quells hope; the lost fall under its spell
As though it were some miraculous snake
Writhing in blackness, journeying to Hell.
Yet wassails were made- the drinking hearty.
'Twas the last campaign of the Trixon party.
"Stonewall the jib, men. Heist the Watergate.
I'll make St. Peter cross you off the slate.
Just one more round," shouted Richard Trixon,
Sprawled by the leaning mast with his mate
John Bean. "I'll play no more tricks on
You, Johnny, me word it's not too late.
It'll be Twitchell St. Peter picks on
When they play 'Hail to the Chief' at the gate.
You'll just pull me red carpet from its crate
And ensure no adoring angel licks on

Me heavenly blue suede shoes. Have no qualms,
John, about your high office of flunkey.
Remember, greasing an archangel's palms
Is a job for a master grease monkey."

"Don't lay that rap on me," said John, "no fool
Falls for that trap twice. I ain't no monkey
Just a scared ole' pigeon. Fetch me my stool.
I'll outtattle any sissy in school.
We can't go to heaven. That's a lotta
Bull jive. Why, we can't hide out in Kabul.
Even there you're persona non grata.
Besides, heaven's a drag – so unfunky.
It's a bad scene, man. Dig, like you oughta
Kick that holy trip you're on. You gotta
Swing, baby, *groove*. Kick out the jams. Be cool.
Cop some far-out threads. Act like a junkie.
We got bread. Hush funds fresh from the slush.
If the pigs try to bust, we'll give 'em the 'brush.'"
"You're not giving them me," piped H. R. Bob
Hunk O'Man, taking a shoe from his head
Which was stained with polish black, brown, n' red.
"I'm a Nazi- no patsy for a fall job.
You guys don't play fair," he started to sob.
"I think I'll play with Sam Ervin instead.
He's a country boy who eats corn on the cob.
Perhaps he is a bit of a deep-fried slob
Quoting the Bible. It's all that he's read.
But he's so quaint and humble. He's no snob
Like you sots always boozing in bed
And offering me drink. I'd rather be dead."
Thus spake H. R. Bob in defiance.
(The White House's white man of Christian Science.)

Quoth the Trickster, "That can be arranged."
Fleabitis had made him somewhat deranged.
At the mention of *The Post* or Dan Rather
He'd howl 'til his foul mouth would lather.
"Call the CIA. Get Gorgon Liddy.
We need a man without any scruples,
Who loves to kill and never feels giddy.
He'd gladly poison his hometown city
Or himself for a small bag of rubles.
He's as good a man as Goering or Goebbels.
If the Fourth Reich loses him, what a pity.
I am the Coach!" He continued to blather
On into the night and his beard glistened
Blue in the moonlight. As usual no one listened.
"I am still the President," he bleated,

“Your good ol’ Uncle Sap-er-I mean Sam
Who brought you peace with honor in Vietnam
And kept our proud country undefeated.
We had the Reds, Japs and Krauts on the ropes.
We’ll bury the Boofers, the Mikes, the Slopes,
Wops, Hippies, the press-those kikes, the goddam
Subversive Catholics and their popes.
We’ll give Amerika the enema she’s needed
And butcher those perverts and fakirs,
The Democrats-a sacrificial lamb
To Richard I-king of the fighting Quakers.
Should Heaven refute my historical version,
They’ll submit after a B-52 incursion.”

As the madman plotted Heaven’s destruction
And blacklisted celestial foes,
He was handed the cook’s vile concoction
Which he sniffed with his gargantuan nose.
After wolfing down his portion with relish.
He smacked, “M-m-m good. Meat and potatoes,
Like Pit and I enjoyed at the Berozo’s”
“*Brrrup . . .*,” he belched. “When’s this hellish
Boat ride gonna end? Perhaps if I pose
Like Washington crossing the Delaware. . . .
I’ll stand on the bow and remove my clothes
Until some sculptor decides to embellish
My head on Mount Rushmore with tapes for hair.
Pilgrims will flock for photos and prayer
And skiers can jump from my nose when it snows.”