



2003

Hell Is Other People

Jana Phipps

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/iowareview>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Phipps, Jana. "Hell Is Other People." *The Iowa Review* 33.3 (2003): 120-120. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.5753>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Review by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

JANA PHIPPS

Hell is other people

“Hell is other people!”—it is always so
that I can’t pretend that only I am real
And when I speak you hear something I don’t know

When I look in the mirror I see something—slow
and wounded hair and no face But I don’t need to be real
Hell is other people—it is always so

You only stare with your mouth’s rejecting twitch And I know
when you’ve run off *such a tease* And all I feel
is that when I speak you hear something I don’t know

And the mirror is busy with people and they would see me go
out down the sidewalk towards your little boy squeal
Hell is other people—it is always so

But I still see you I can’t stop Your hips stab and glow
and if I touched you maybe that would be real
And when I speak you hear something I don’t know

You are another person And don’t I know
it I can try to forgive you but I feel—
Hell is other people—it is always so
And when I speak you hear something I don’t know