

5-1-2016

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Recommended Citation

Glick, Lindsay (2016) "The Author: A Commentary," *Hieroglyphics: the NSU University School Literary Magazine*: Vol. 22 , Article 53.
Available at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/uschool_litmag/vol22/iss1/53

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The Author: A Commentary

Lindsay Glick

ONE //

We have found an author, shiny and new, his work not yet soiled by a civilization attracted to brevity. In an era of dull musings by bright screens and acronyms, such an author is rare. Nevertheless, we have found one, and he is here with us today.

The author is the antithesis to our concrete world. His writing carries us away from the gum-shellacked sidewalks of our urban dwellings into a realm where only words exist.

We lead the author to his room. He is ecstatic to be here, and we feel the same. As we round the corners of the compound, we can see the author's elation in the glow of the fluorescent lights.

When we discovered the author, he was writing novels for himself, the contents of which he had previously never shared. If we hadn't found him, he enthuses, he'd go on like this for the rest of his life. We must say that we agree. It would be a shame for such talent to go to waste.

The author is beaming.

Now, he has decided to stay with us forever.

TWO //

As we open the sleek metal door to the author's chambers, his smile seems to waver ever so slightly. Without a doubt, the author was not expecting such quaint and lackluster quarters. But the author catches himself. After all, few get the opportunity to do what they love for the rest of their lives.

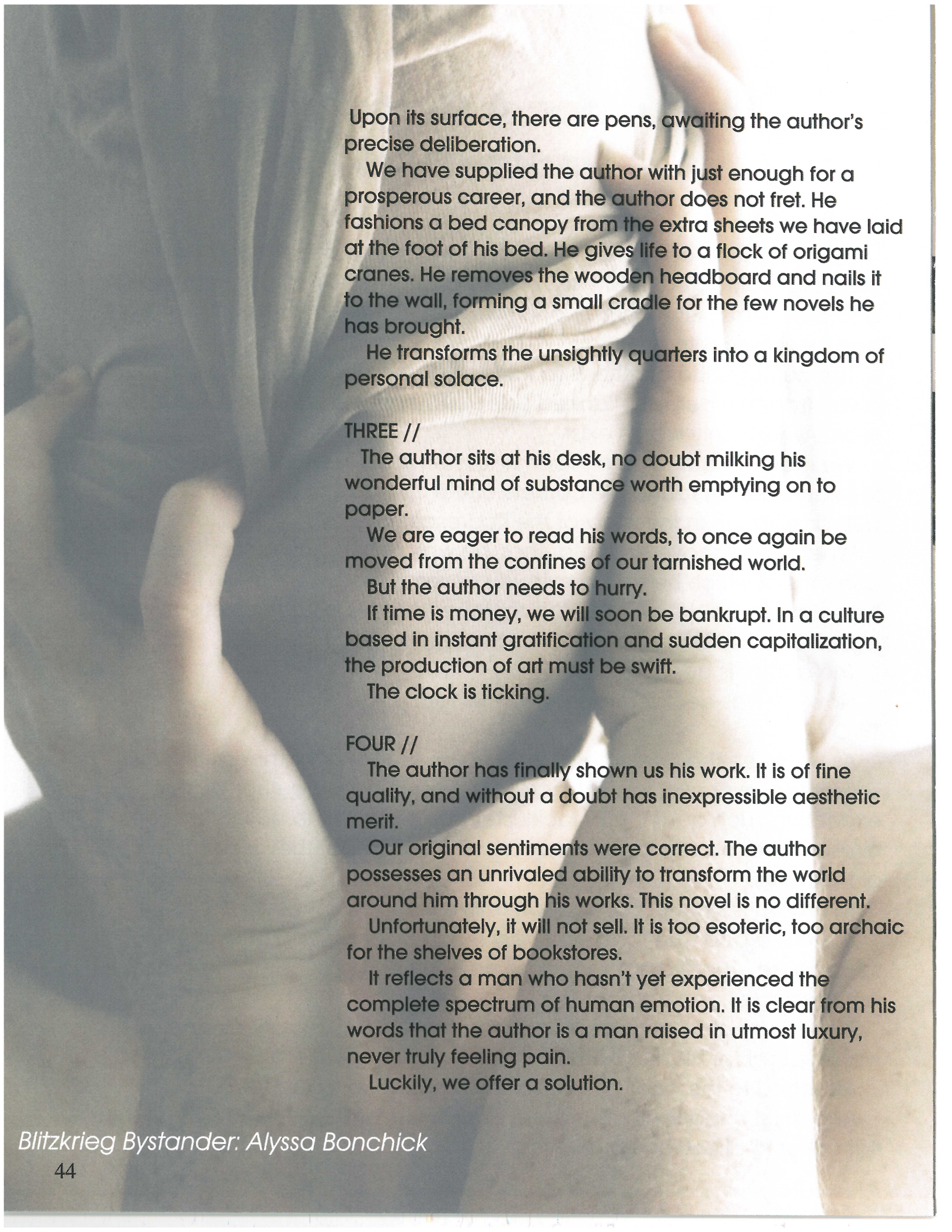
The room is simple, but enough to live on.

There is a bed. The foam mattress is thin as paper, and the sheets threadbare. There are a few loose nails jutting from the oak headboard, but nothing of concern.

There is a pot in the corner for the author's daily excretions and a small water spigot for his hydration.

Attached to the door, there is a small flap for passing food.

And most importantly, there is a desk. It is crafted of wood, with a shiny flat cover to allow for easy writing.



Upon its surface, there are pens, awaiting the author's precise deliberation.

We have supplied the author with just enough for a prosperous career, and the author does not fret. He fashions a bed canopy from the extra sheets we have laid at the foot of his bed. He gives life to a flock of origami cranes. He removes the wooden headboard and nails it to the wall, forming a small cradle for the few novels he has brought.

He transforms the unsightly quarters into a kingdom of personal solace.

THREE //

The author sits at his desk, no doubt milking his wonderful mind of substance worth emptying on to paper.

We are eager to read his words, to once again be moved from the confines of our tarnished world.

But the author needs to hurry.

If time is money, we will soon be bankrupt. In a culture based in instant gratification and sudden capitalization, the production of art must be swift.

The clock is ticking.

FOUR //

The author has finally shown us his work. It is of fine quality, and without a doubt has inexpressible aesthetic merit.

Our original sentiments were correct. The author possesses an unrivaled ability to transform the world around him through his works. This novel is no different.

Unfortunately, it will not sell. It is too esoteric, too archaic for the shelves of bookstores.

It reflects a man who hasn't yet experienced the complete spectrum of human emotion. It is clear from his words that the author is a man raised in utmost luxury, never truly feeling pain.

Luckily, we offer a solution.

FIVE //

The author complains of his condition. He no longer wishes to write. He is uninspired. Couldn't we at least give him more time? His ankles have nearly been rubbed raw. Could we be so kind as to loosen the fetters?

We do not agree. After all, it is agony that makes a true author.

The author should be well on his way.

SIX //

Today we have decided to remove the author's extremities. It is an unfortunate decision, but he will no longer be needing them, and we cannot afford superfluous limbs.

We, of course, leave his right arm intact, for it is his only asset except for his wonderful brain.

To accurately craft tales of sorrow, an author must permanently mourn the loss of something once his own.

SEVEN //

We have decided to get rid of the author. In the middle of the night, we sneak into his chamber with a knife. As he sleeps, we plunge the blade into his chest, letting it sink below his ribs. He sputters, coughing up blood.

Why are you doing this? he stammers.

We do not answer; we do not feel guilt. The author knew what his job would entail.

We pile his decaying body on top of the others'. The room reeks of stories never told. Some flies buzz around, clinging to the brains and entrails of decaying words.

We return to the author's chambers, pocketing the author's pages. We shall alter them just enough to make them our own.

It is now time to find ourselves a new author.