

= Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell =

Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell is a 1908 lyrical poem book written by Jean Louis De Esque . The publication includes a preface by the author with two poetic works , " When I am Gone " and " Betelguese . " The latter poem has been called a " classic " work that utilized off @-@ beat language , considered to be a delight to the philologist . It has been compared to the poetic works of George Sterling and Kenneth Patchen .

The book was published during the height of the nature fakers controversy , and it has been suggested that De Esque elected to release Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell while Theodore Roosevelt was on a trip to Africa in an effort to avoid potential conflict that might have resulted from Roosevelt 's awareness of its content .

= = Publication = =

Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell was published by Connoisseur 's Press in Jersey City , New Jersey on July 1 , 1908 . An application for copyright was submitted on September 28 , 1907 . Two copies were received by the Library of Congress on August 28 , 1909 . For the publishing company , Betelguese was considered its first work of distinction after several years of modest publications .

The book features a frontispiece by painter Nicholas Briganti , an illustration of Typhon the Greek " Father of all monsters . " Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell opens with a prefatory note by De Esque written on September 22 , 1907 , in which he reveals that the writing of the poem began when he was " up at [his] desk mauling and drubbing the English language with a vengeance for thirty @-@ six consecutive hours , and that [he] awoke at 12 @.@ 30 A.M , " and began writing the poem " Betelguese , " continuing to work on it until the early morning . The writer later explained that he repeated this process over the next fifteen nights , completing the work at a total of 8116 words . The preface is succeeded with a photograph of Jean Louis De Esque and a short poem entitled " When I Am Gone . " Finally , the publication concludes with the eponymous poetic work " Betelguese , " making the length of Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell in total 104 pages .

= = = Promotion = = =

To promote Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell , Connoisseur 's Press took out advertisements months before its release in various literary publications . This included Publishers Weekly , The Bookseller , and The Bookman , which showcased Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell alongside three other works by De Esque which were published in the same year : The Flight of a Soul , The Seasons and other poems , and Silence , the latter which was published under the pseudonym " Stewart . " In these advertisements , Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell was listed as being printed on fine , handmade rag paper . The hardcover book featured a gold @-@ stamped title on maroon cloth , with a height of 19 @.@ 5 centimetres (7 @.@ 7 in) . The book also included a color frontispiece and was printed in Cheltenham typeface . It sold for US \$ 1 @.@ 25 .

The advertisement also called Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell a unique work with " absolutely nothing like it written since Dante 's Inferno . "

= = " Betelguese " = =

Betelguese is one of a number of historical variant spellings of Betelgeuse , a red supergiant in the constellation of Orion .

By his own admission , De Esque chose to place hell on this star , over placing hell on Earth , the Moon or the Sun because it was " a celestial pariah , an outcast , the largest of all known comets or outlawed suns in the universe . " The latter three were rejected by De Esque : the Sun because it was uninhabitable for animal or vegetable life , and the Moon because it was once part of the Earth . De Esque also describes Betelguese on pg . 77 with :

In full , the poem is rife with descriptions of the terrifying aspects of hell , those that dwell there ,

and the actions thereof . Among those in De Esque 's hell are Thomas Fortune Ryan , John Pierpont Morgan , August Belmont , Jr. and John D. Rockefeller . Also appearing regularly throughout " Betelguese " are many Greek mythological figures , including the subject of the frontispiece , Typhon .

Similar to what would be a recurring double @-@ quatrain , the rhyme scheme of most of " Betelguese " has four lines to a stanza , wherein the two successive stanzas , line one rhymes with line five , line two with line six and so on ; or , " ABCD @-@ ABCD . " The following sets of two stanzas have their own rhyming words . Additionally , " Betelguese " was written in an octametric (8 @-@ syllable) meter , where De Esque contracts typically multi @-@ syllable words , such as " cavern 'd " to be read as two syllables , as opposed to " poisoned " to be read as three syllables .

= = = Reception = = =

The main work , " Betelguese " , has been called a " study in unconscious parody " by the Manchester Literary Club , a " classic " by Bookseller and Stationer , and a " frabjous poem " by the Saturday Review . It has also been called an " yrie poem " by Publishers Weekly .

Featured in the section " In the World of Books " of April 18 , 1909 edition of the Los Angeles Herald , Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell was likened to George Sterling 's poem " The Wine of Wizardry " . In comparing the two poetic works , the columnist felt that " Betelguese " had made " Mr. Sterling 's poor dragons look like small pink lizards , " stating that De Esque 's work had " immortalized the dreams of the opium eater . " In later years , it had also been compared to the poetic work of Kenneth Patchen .

On its verbose language , one editor at Manchester Literary Club felt that the " enthusiastic philologist " would " make heaven " of Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell . However , a review in March 28 , 1909 edition of the Salt Lake Tribune was mixed on De Esque 's off @-@ beat use of the English language , stating , " it is plentifully sprinkled with weird words without any particular meaning . " The Salt Lake Tribune columnist went on to say that " Betelguese was a " wild sort of rhapsody , which is less fierce than one might suppose from the subtitle . "

Betelguese , a Trip Through Hell was published during the nature fakers conflict ; the Los Angeles Herald columnist further suggests that the book was intentionally released during one of US President Theodore Roosevelt 's trips to Africa . According to them , lines such as " mildewed screes " and " poisoned skinks " would have shocked Roosevelt ; he goes on to say that he " hopes the poet will have ready an explanation before Colonel Roosevelt returns from Africa . "