

ATTIC (OCTOBER 1, 1981)

The diary begins on October 13, 1958, when she's fourteen,

"Dear Diary,

Moma gave you to me today. I love her so much, she's the best person in the world..."

ends Saturday, November 1, 1958,

"... I'm watching Lawrence Welk now. Mom and I've cleaned upstairs today and I meant (sic) cleaned. It was filthy because of their putting in the furnace. See you tomorrow.

Love,

Nona,"

23 years later.

LANDSMANN

Isaac Stern playing a Brahms trio ... then 40th between 7th and 8th Avenues that same face with the same sensitivity, responsiveness, pathos, long-suffering, braininess, on-top-of-it dimension of humor (distancing), sense of "this is all the divinity there will ever be," "even though I'm not you, I'm you,"

selling you ("I'll give it to you for four") four and a half yards of printed red chiffon.

LINDA DOG

It was about 12 years ago, Nona gave me Linda-Dog, I took her home, the kids didn't want to mess around with her so I ended up putting her in the garage in a box, she cried and squealed until about 3 AM I came out and threw her up against the wall, nothing broken, immediate remorse,

I gave her back to Nona who gave her to Martha, her sister,

twelve years later, Gardner, Kansas, I get out of the car, Linda's half blind, half dead with a tumor someplace in her back, another in her uterus, mange all over her underside,

she growls at me, then sniffs, knows me,

"Hey Linda," the barn, the countryside, the years,
the two marriages, the two sets of three kids each,
suddenly twisting, going soft, away from me, "I'm
sorry"

-- Hugh Fox

East Lansing MI

RETREAT

well
you didn't call for an enema
and this isn't
the A train to Norwalk,
and
the troops
will be brisking through here
soon
and you know
they ain't going to
leave the tits on a rat.

Thompson killed himself
last night
in his shining brass room
he drank silver paint
until his belly
came
out of his eyes.

remember the rule:
everything starts at
each moment
and all that's past
is more useless
than what is
present.

we've raped
all the girls
40 times over.
we've left nothing
for the enemy except
the residue
of our cowardice.

no matter
cowardice is the aftermath
of imagination
heroes are the aftermath
of thoughtlessness ...

shit, it's cold, though
you know
I imagine
death is not so bad
if the temperature
is decent.
no, that's not
true.

but pain wearies me
I get it
on and on.
I think I've built
little methods
to escape it
and then it
shows me
the same thing
in a different
form.

hell,
I talk too much
we should
really
move out.
I see the flares
dropping now,
there's no use
having another
conference
of minds
there's nothing
left to solve