

AN INSPIRED SOLUTION

By Danny Fekete

*Good morning, boys and girls. I'm glad to see
That everyone's arrived on time today;
Indeed, such diligence reveals to me
A marked improvement. Thus, without delay
I think it best I now return the work
To which, alas, your industry has not
Extended. Students, now's the time to shirk
Your dangerous proclivity to blot
The virtues of a sane and structured life,
And make these negligent assignments but
The ultimate and terminating strife
Within careers otherwise pristine of smut.*

Our lesson for today recalls a man
With whom I doubt my students are unversed,
A man who, much like them, his life began
Immersed in books. With academic thirst
He swiftly drank his way to wisdom through
A sea of youthful ignorance, and earned
Scholastic accolades and retinue,
For little in his time he had not learned.

*Yes, Mr. Perkins, I have surely seen
Your pale complexion, you and Miss Sylvest
(Whose listlessness demands I intervene)
May hurry home and take an evening's rest.*

Now, where was I? Ah, yes, our hero, then,
With massive feats of effort came to know
The bulk of human knowledge. This was when
Much like your teacher, *he* designed to show
The students of his time their wond'rous world,
And toiled a sum of years toward that aim.
Indeed, he trained so long that, freshly hurled
Into his new vocation, it became
Unpleasantly apparent that, with all
His time devoted to that noble trade,
He had neglected *his* scholastic thrall
And was eclipsed—his knowledge progress frayed.
The brilliant scholar swam, defamed and lost,
Again in unenlightened seas submersed,
For progress cruelly claims its quiet cost
From him whose *altruism* slakes his thirst.

*I'm sorry? Yes, this will be on the test,
And while we're interrupted, I think I'll
Avail myself, at hygiene's mute behest*

*To comment on your cleanliness and style.
I am aware such things are often far
Removed from an instructor's place to say,
But truly, such a stink as this will mar
Your quality of learning. Do not stray,
My class, when you are home tonight,
Far from your baths and brushes, soaps and combs,
That on the morrow, you, O acolytes,
Might freshly learn from freshly dusted tomes.*

Our time, I fear, is quickly drawing short,
And brevity, unhappy though it be,
Will prove a far superior resort
To rude truncation: onwards, history!

Abandoned to his misery and loss,
The fallen man reflected on his fate:
His exploits obsolete, and rendered dross;
So, struck upon a plan to inundate
The academic nation once again
With torrents of his genius. He devised
(For *backward* though he was, his mighty brain
Could still exceed most folk's) and realized
A fine contraption, fashioned as to rain
A storm of tiny creatures he'd construct
Upon the Mother Earth and all her spawn.
A microbe, ably rendered, wrought, and drawn
Despite his *antiquated* skill, a pawn
With which to deftly stalemate Pallas' brawn!

You see, my pupils, knowledge runs apace
With all the work and studies that pursue
It. Hence our Teacher: doomed to fail his race
'Gainst obsolescence while another's new
Research protracts his purpose. To recite
Your lesson's moral: we must strictly note
Our model's perfect answer to his plight.
Addressing "progress" as his foe, he smote
Its manifold foundations.

*Now, requite
My labours here today and kindly bloat
Your heads with these essential, gleaming pearls
(Despite your pallor, pose, and awful smell).
I see our time's expired; boys and girls,
Go free, and hark the tolling of the bell—
Stay not on my account, for I insist
We'll reconvene tomorrow. Class dismissed.*