



The first sentence of *A Season in Hell*

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Abstract: This article proposes a new reading of the first sentence of *Une saison en enfer*. Rimbaud applies the cliché of the banquet of life to a happier period of his existence. The rejection of Charity as "the key to the banquet of old" suggests a non-spiritual interpretation of the image. This banquet of love and drunkenness recalls the famous duet in the first act of Verdi's opera *La Traviata*, adapted from *La Dame aux Camélias*.

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