

As the Purple Music of the Storm  
by Tui St. George Tucker

[Original in Tui's penciled hand on 18x24" construction paper, found tacked on the wall in the Mainhouse dining room at Catawba (where Tui died, April 21, 2004) in June 2005, and to be transferred to the Camp Catawba – Vera Lachmann Papers at Appalachian State University. The words, "two days, the Tuesday after Vera's burial," evidently refers to Tuesday, June 4, 1985. Vera's ashes were scattered at Catawba on Sunday, June 2, 1985; she had died in New York on January 18 of that year. Whether Tui wrote the poem in 1985 or later cannot be determined from the manuscript. The poem ends with "&". Parenthetical passages are Tui's. Brackets are mine; "in front of" and "before" are above each other on the paper, evidently Tui's alternatives for the beginning of the line. Spacing is conjectural. The paper is creased, slightly torn at the edges, and somewhat stained. CAM]

As the purple music of the storm  
– two days, the Tuesday  
after Vera's burial –

As the rich darkness of this music  
with its scary power thrilling booming close – dangerous

I turned out lights (it's afternoon but storm-dark)  
I write here by candle light  
& think as (an) Israelite(s) blinded by the nakedness of God

of my hearing destroyed by a too-close bang

As June Fourth greenery is rain-veiled

Curtain after curtain billow[ing] silverly

Graceful diamonds bedrip the brown porch eave

in front of]  
before] that intense poignant green, greener than May green-gold

& I think how, after struggling uphill through woods &