



**7th ANNUAL
POEM
TOWN
BRADFORD**

**Kohoutek (k-WHO-tek) 1973
Comet of the Century**

Comets are masses of radiant rock,
so I have read, so I've been told,
and ice and dust.
And I've heard talk they bring us luck,
Good or bad.
They must.

Once when the Turks took Constantinople,
and there appeared in the sky a like interloper,
star dusting over the blood of the battle,
Pope Callitus the Third nearly went mad.
How sad.

Instead of damning the Turkish nation,
he issued a bull of excommunication
against that comet we now call Halley.

This he wrote in his papal vanity:
"To rid mankind of its calamity."
But nothing has changed for all his railing.

Kohoutek sails round the winter sun.
I'm not a pope, but I think it's fun
to wonder what luck it might bring me.

I don't think a comet is something malicious.
I'm not so superstitious.
I look at that sailor and here's what I see:
I see a dove's tail in the wind of our star
elliptically arching,
It doesn't seem far
and I think how I'm turning, too.

An old circle ending, a new one begun
Kohoutuk sails from behind the sun.
The old trail curls around to the new.

I'm hardly afraid as I look to new skies:
the stars in my sweetheart's
infinite eyes.
They give me new dreams and courage and hope.

And it seems that Kohoutek with its tail of sweet light
Brings me to myself

This cold winter night.
I think that's more luck than was granted the pope.
That's what I hope.

And I thank my lucky stars.

**TOM KIDDER
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