

ADDICTION

It was harmless at first, while your friends hung around,
And the craving and hunger were not even near . . .
Every bite was all atmosphere, almost all taste!
So that now, when the belt is pulled tight at the waist,
When those friends stay as loyal as laughter to fear,
It's like trying to satisfy thirst with a sound.

There was music to sip, when your friends paid the bill.
There were feelings of closeness to faces unknown.
It was fresh on your lips, it was sweet to your tongue!
But, as everyone scattered, just echoes were sung.
Now the beat is impelling, its rhythm has grown,
Till the dance holds your feet like the urge holds your will.

Is it smokers who smoke or the smoke that sucks in?
Is the wine being drunk or the drinker drunk down?
All the friends and frivolity soon fade away
Into endless consumption each day after day,
So that now, when the grin is pulled tight to a frown,
It's the itch that wakes up and the scratch that tucks in.

—*David L. Hatton, 5/16/1996*