

THE FUEL OF HELL

In chains they dragged him down a trail
with scorching pits on either side
where captives raised their tortured wail
and endlessly for mercy cried.

“What have you brought?” a serpent hissed.
His captors laughed and made him kneel.
“Another fool who won’t be missed.”
He thought, *Wake up! This can’t be real!*

The snake called forth a giant beast
who grabbed the chain around his throat,
and yanked him close—as heat increased—
then stripped and ate his ragged coat.

Nine demons snatched his naked form;
he screamed as fangs and claws sank in.
But from the shredding by the swarm
no blood flowed out, just streams of sin.

Still agonizing in a heap,
he sloshed about in old misdeeds,
the laws and vows he failed to keep,
his skeptic mockery of creeds.

“Can I go now?” he dared to moan.
“Sure, any time,” the serpent said.
“But time is gone . . . can’t hear you groan,
as we ignite the pool you’ve bled.”

From snaky gaping orifice
shot forth a flashing ball of fire.
He sank engulfed in flame’s abyss—
his own inverted self-fed pyre.

As serpent coiled, the demons danced
and circled, jeering, round the pit,
where one more sinner’s soul enhanced
Hell’s vicious blaze by fueling it.

Dear reader, don’t procrastinate
or shrug this rhyme as tale untrue.
Get right with God . . . don’t hesitate!
Christ paid for sins to rescue you.

— David L. Hatton, 2/4/2020