

# Hell-Hound in the High Hall

Madoc's word-child // chosen high-Father,  
Mountain-born // of mountain kin-folk,  
Son of Gwynedd // gathers word-fame,  
Fierce pen-wielder // potent scyld-craft,  
Heroes' tales no // shield, no solace,  
As the hell-hound // hazards malice.

Comes he now // 'neath cloud and glower,  
Stalking darkness // death his mistress,  
Ebon claws scrape // silent forests,  
Ever closer to // the tilting.  
Night-bound breath // of bane and sorrow,  
Closer, ever closer // climbing frayward.

Now the battle closes // clawing at the man-house,  
Pointed fang and fire // flail at fragile chest-wall,  
In the cold and darkness // doom assails the valiant,  
Heart besieged, in frenzy // falls the harper,  
Pen and craft no match // for malice hell-spawned,  
Yet the gate endures // in place on rusty hinges.

The hound persists // the prey must yield the day,  
A fresh assault // assails the weakened fence,  
And yet a hundred more // make defenders quail,  
Still yet the portal stands // shaken, but intact,  
Another entry sought // beyond the sally port,  
And still the hound // harries foe, seeking life-price.

Raging on, the fight // fills hearts with woe,  
The dread hound bites // beyond the postern gate,  
To hope to gain ground // 'gainst a weakened foe,  
Hate-spawned death // deliverer, yet besieging,  
So the battle raged // rang days and fortnights,  
Still, the heart-wall // wounded, stands unvanquished.

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*Written with love to a brother, as he continues the fight,*

*Ædwardus fecit*

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