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Charles H. Howell

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THE HERO

Charles H. Howell

From the field of crimson earth,
came the hero of mortal birth.

No Zeus of Hercules, this man of arms,
but a pathetic mass, fleeing from inner harm.

Tests of nerve, guts and spine,
failures; tragically vilified.

Hell hath no equal to terrors endured,
shattered mind, no remedy, no cure.

For he ran and hid from ghostly stares,
torment and suffering uncomparad.

Never to return to that wretched dirt,
where death arrived in firey spasms and spirts.

To survive, his only goal became,
much better to exist than die in flame.

Transversed seas, Eastern delays,
provided time for cowardice assayed.

Recalled vivid dreams of flight,
dark land of Ares, blind of night.

He looked homeward in fear of curse,
never suspecting fate's recourse.

Yet, hometown hordes, bodies and bands,
welcomed a hero; hallowed man!

Banquets, feasts, printed acclaim,
local boy, sacrosanct fame.

A few ribbons and medals of bronze and gold,
stars, leaves and wings; so bold.

Repeated tales of strife, fire and din
adored gazes from friends and kin.

Though strength and numbers favored them,
definitely no match for their hero then.

But dreams of glory must fade away,
onslaught of shame, worry and dismay.

Comrades faces and bloody grins,
uncovers secrets hidden within.

Frail, ignoble creature such error chose,
infinite damage, heart and soul.

Surely time will truth repay,
annals of destiny, facts displayed.

Oh! He cannot suffer the expose,
once again hero, run, and hide your face.

instinct urged me to flee in hysteria

Convention ruled, and properly shocked,

I entreated chivalry to aid my vulnerable virtue

Lately, I hate my act of cowardice

he did me no harm - that black snake