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Pog the Pinder

Kevan Kenneth Bowkett

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Pog the Pinder

Pog the Pinder

(a song of Tauaklutai and the Islands)

by Kevan Kenneth Bowkett

A ring arose of sapphire dust,
It rolled up from Hell's throat,
When Pog the pinder'd just got in
And hung up his green coat.

Now Pog sat down at his sausage board
With his wife and son at his side:
While the City's knights charged the shambling wraith
And burned for their useless pride.

His green coat one, his green boots two
And his rod-and-nooses three
He'd tucked into the door-cupboard
When the hawks of Hell tore free.

The wraith drank up lord, lady, and child,
Devoured man, bird, and tree,
When a young scamp called outside Pog's door:
"Pog, one of the beasts got free!"

They rose in a gyre of gasping dust,
Their shrieks cracked wall and spire;
Cothirya's crown broke on the Empress's head
While Pog laid his feet by the fire.

"Got free!" Pog shouted. "Got free just now,
When I'm sat down at my dinner?
That creature, I'll tan its hide black and blue,
Or no one's ever a sinner!"

"Give us a kiss, good wife," said he,
"Give us a kiss and beer."
Then within the billows of biting dust
A writhing form upreared.

Pog out into the dooryard stepped,
And ambled out through his gate,
As the hell-fiend chewed up Cothirya's stones
And its eyes went dull with hate.

Its breath was the herald of ten years' drought,
Its claw arced from wall to wall:
The Empress that terrors could abide
With her nobles fell down all.

Then Pog cast forth his rod and noose
And said, "On this rascal I shan't dote."
And a ring fell down of heavenly gold
To close round the hell-wraith's throat.

Pog shook the beast, in wrath cried out,
“To be honest you’ve got to be thinner!
You’ve made me go without bread-and-milk,
So by God you’ll disgorge *your* dinner.”

The City rose up, its folk laughing once more,
The Empress smiled on her throne.
Of animal, vegetable, or mineral feast
The fiend kept nary a bone.

The demon was booted back under the Earth,
The sapphire dust fell as rain,
And Pog went back in to his board
To savour his mutton again.



“Round Barn.” Photograph by Janet Brennan Croft