```
y a tribe, the mead-bench tore, awing the earls. Since erst he lay friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him: for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve, till before him the folk, both far and near, who house by the whale-path, heard his mandate, gave him gifts: a good king he! To h
m an heir was afterward born, a son in his halls, whom heaven sent to favor the folk, feeling their woe that erst they had lacked an earl for leader so long a while; the Lord endowed him, the Wielder of Wonder, with world's renown. Famed was this Beowulf: far flew the boast of him,
on of Scyld, in the Scandian lands. So becomes it a youth to quit him well with his father's friends, by fee and gift, that to aid him, aged, in after days, come warriors willing, should war draw nigh, liegemen loyal: by lauded deeds shall an earl have honor in every clan. Forth he fared
at the fated moment, sturdy Scyld to the shelter of God. Then they bore him over to ocean's billow, loving clansmen, as late he charged them, while wielded words the winsome Scyld, the leader beloved who long had ruled.... In the roadstead rocked a ring-dight vessel, ice-flecked,
utbound, atheling's barge: there laid they down their darling lord on the breast of the boat, the breaker-of-rings, by the mast the mighty one. Many a treasure fetched from far was freighted with him. No ship have I known so nobly dight with weapons of war and weeds of battle, with
breastplate and blade: on his bosom lay a heaped hoard that hence should go far o'er the flood with him floating away. No less these loaded the lordly gifts, thanes' huge treasure, than those had done who in former time forth had sent him sole on the seas, a suckling child. High o'
 his head they hoist the standard, a gold-wove banner; let billows take him, gave him to ocean. Grave were their spirits, mournful their mood. No man is able to say in sooth, no son of the halls, no hero 'neath heaven, -- who harbored that freight! I Now Beowulf bode in the burg of
              leader beloved, and long he ruled in fame with all folk, since his father had gone away from the world, till awoke an heir, haughty Healfdene, who held through life, sage and sturdy, the Scyldings glad. Then, one after one, there woke to him, to the chieftain of clansme
                                                                                                                                                                                            s enfolded by water, set, triumphant, sun and moon for a light to lighten the land-dwellers, and br
                                                                                                                                                                                           gan to fashion evils, that field of hell. Grendel this monster grim was called, march-riever mighty, in
moorland living, in fen and fastness; fief of the giants the hapless wight a while had kept since the Creator his exile doomed. On kin of Cain was the killing avenged by sovran
                                                                                                                                                                                          God for slaughtered Abel. Ill fared his feud, and far was he drīven, for the slaughter's sake, from sig
of men. Of Cain awoke all that woful breed, Etins and elves and evil-spirits, as well as the giants that warred with God weary while: but their wage was paid them! Il WENT he
                                                                                                                                                                                          forth to find at fall of night that haughty house, and heed wherever the Ring-Danes, outrevelled, to re
st had gone. Found within it the atheling band asleep after feasting and fearles 🛮 s of sorrow, of human hardship. Unhallowed wight, grim and greedy, he grasped betimes,
                                                                                                                                                                                        wrathful, reckless, from resting-places, thirty of the thanes, and thence he rushed fain of his fell spoil,
aring homeward, laden with slaughter, his lair to seek. Then at the dawning, as
                                                                                     day was breaking, the might of Grendel to men was known; then after wassail was wail
                                                                                                                                                                                        uplifted, loud moan in the morn. The mighty chief, atheling excellent, unblithe sat, labored in woe for th
loss of his thanes, when once had been traced the trail of the fiend, spirit accur
                                                                                       st: too cruel that sorrow, too long, too loathsome. Not late the respite; with night retu
                                                                                                                                                                                      rning, anew began ruthless murder; he recked no whit, firm in his guilt, of the feud and crime. They were
easy to find who elsewhere sought in room remote their rest at night, bed in the
                                                                                        bowers, when that bale was shown, was seen in sooth, with surest token, -- the ha
                                                                                                                                                                                     II-thane's hat e. Such held themselves far and fast who the fiend outran! Thus ruled unrighteous and rag
ed his fill one against all; until empty stood that lordly building, and long it bode s
                                                                                         o. Twelv e years' tide the trouble he bore, sovran of Scyldings, sorrows in plen
                                                                                                                                                                                                    ss cares. There came unhidden tidings true to the tribes of men, in sorrowful songs, how
                                                                                                                                                                                                   d's earls, make pact of peace, or compound for gold: still less did the wise men ween to get
easelessly Grendel harassed Hrothgar, what hate he bore him, what murder and m
                                                                                                    e, many a year, feud unfading, -- refused consent to deal with any o
great fee for the feud from his fiendish hands. But the evil one ambushed old and y
                                                                                                      death-shadow dark, and dogged them still, lured, or lurked in th
                                                                                                                                                                                                  g night of misty moorlands: men may say not where the haunts of these Hell-Runes be. Such
heaping of horrors the hater of men, lonely roamer, wrought unceasing, harassings
                                                                                                                                                                                                 could the prince approach his throne, -- 'twas judgment of God, -- or have joy in his hall. Sore
                                                                                                      vy. O'er Heorot he lorded, gold-bright hall, in gloomy nights; an
was the sorrow to Scyldings'-friend, heart-rending misery. Many nobles sat assemble
                                                                                                                                                                                               ainst harassing terror to try their hand. Whiles they vowed in their heathen fanes altar-offerings
                                                                                                      nd searched out counsel how it were best for bold-hearted m
                                                                                                                                                                               en ag
                                                                                                       ople. Their practice this, their heathen hope; 'twas Hell they
isked with words that the slayer-of-souls would succor give them for the pain of their
                                                                                                                                                                                             ught of in mood of their mind. Almighty they knew not, Doomsman of Deeds and dreadful Lord, no
Heaven's-Helmet heeded they ever, Wielder-of-Wonder. -- Woe for that man who in har
                                                                                                       m a nd hatred hales his soul to fiery embraces; -- nor fav
                                                                                                                                                                                           nor change awaits he ever. But well for him that after death-day may draw to his Lord, and friendship
find in the Father's arms! III THUS seethed unceasing the son of Healfdene with the woe
                                                                                                              these days; not wisest men assuaged his sorrow;
                                                                                                                                                                                         too sore the anguish, loathly and long, that lay on his folk, most baneful of burdens and bales of the
ht. This heard in his home Hygelac's thane, great among Geats, of Grendel's doings. He
                                                                                                              as the mightiest man of valor in that same day of
                                                                                                                                                                                        this our life, stalwart and stately. A stout wave-walker he bade make ready. Yon battle-king, said he, fa
  er the swan-road he fain would seek, the noble monarch who needed men! The prince's i
                                                                                                              urney by prudent folk was little blamed, though
                                                                                                                                                                                             oved him dear; they whetted the hero, and hailed good omens. And now the bold one from band
  Geats comrades chose, the keenest of warriors e'er he could find; with fourteen men the
                                                                                                               sea-wood he sought, and, sailor proved, led t
                                                                                                                                                                                             on to the land's confines. Time had now flown; afloat was the ship, boat under bluff. On board the
                                                                                                                of the bark their bright array, their mail an
                                                                                                                                                                                            eapons: the men pushed off, on its willing way, the well-braced craft. Then moved o'er the waters l
                                                                                                                ay, the curved prow such course had run
                                                                                                                                                                                          hat sailors now could see the land, sea-cliffs shining, steep high hills, headlands broad. Their haven
 ras found, their journey ended. Up then quickly the Weders' clansmen climbed ashore, anchor
                                                                                                                                                                                       and gear of battle: God they thanked or passing in peace o'er the paths of the sea. Now saw from the c
 a Scylding clansman, a warden that watched the water-side, how they bore o'er the gangway g
                                                                                                                                                                                     s; wonder seized him to know what manner of men they were. Straight to the strand his steed he rode, Hr
hgar's henchman; with hand of might he shook his spear, and spake in parley. "Who are
                                                                                                                    e armed men, mailed folk, that yo
                                                                                                                                                                                  n mighty vessel have urged thus over the ocean ways, here o'er the waters? A warden I, sentinel set o'er the
 ea-march here, lest any foe to the folk of Danes with harrying fleet should harm the land. No alien
                                                                                                                                                                                den-wielders: yet word-of-leave clearly ye lack from clansmen here, my folk's agreement. -- A greater ne'er sav
of warriors in world than is one of you, -- yon hero in harness! No henchman he worthied by weapo
                                                                                                                                                                              peerless presence! I pray you, though, tell your folk and home, lest hence ye fare suspect to wander your way as
  ies in Danish land. Now, dwellers afar, ocean-travellers, take from me simple advice: the sooner the
                                                                                                                                                                                  whence ye came." IV To him the stateliest spake in answer; the warriors' leader his word-hoard unlocked:
  Ve are by kin of the clan of Geats, and Hygelac's own hearth-fellows we. To folk afar was my father kn
                                                                                                                      own, noble atheling, Ecgthe
                                                                                                                                                                                 ow named. Full of winters, he fared away aged from earth; he is honored still through width of the world by w
se men all. To thy lord and liege in loyal mood we hasten hither, to Healfdene's son, people-protector: be
                                                                                                                       pleased to advise us! To
                                                                                                                                                                                 that mighty-one come we on mickle errand, to the lord of the Danes; nor deem I right that aught be hidden. W
  ar -- thou knowest if sooth it is -- the saying of men, that amid the Scyldings a scathing monster, dark ill
                                                                                                                        doer, in dusky nights
                                                                                                                                                                            shows terrific his rage unmatched, hatred and murder. To Hrothgar I in greatness of soul would succor bring, so t
 Wise-and-Brave may worst his foes, -- if ever the end of ills is fated, of cruel contest, if cure shall follow, a
                                                                                                                        nd the boiling care-w
                                                                                                                                                                          aves cooler grow; else ever afterward anguish-days he shall suffer in sorrow while stands in place high on its hill th
thouse unpeered!" Astride his steed, the strand-ward answered, clansman unquailing: "The keen-souled tha
                                                                                                                         ne must be skilled
                                                                                                                                                                         to sever and sunder duly words and works, if he well intends. I gather, this band is graciously bent to the Scyldings
master. March, then, bearing weapons and weeds the way I show you. I will bid my men your boat meanwhile t
                                                                                                                                                                        lest foemen come, -- your new-tarred ship by shore of ocean faithfully watching till once again it waft o'er the waters
                                                                                                                            o guard for feat
                                                                                                                              and save fr
ose well-loved thanes, -- winding-neck'd wood, -- to Weders' bounds, heroes such as the hest of fate shall succo
                                                                                                                                                                      om the shock of war." They bent them to march, -- the boat lay still, fettered by cable and fast at anchor, broad-bosomed
                                                                                                                                                                        as marched along heroes in haste, till the hall they saw, broad of gable and bright with gold: that was the fairest, 'mid
ship. -- Then shone the boars over the cheek-guard; chased with gold, keen and gleaming, guard it kept o'er the m
                                                                                                                                                                       an showed that bright burg-of-the-boldest; bade them go straightway thither; his steed then turned, hardy hero, and ha
olk of earth, of houses 'neath heaven, where Hrothgar lived, and the gleam of it lightened o'er lands afar. The sturdy
                                                                                                                                shieldsm
led them thus: -- "'Tis time that I fare from you. Father Almighty in grace and mercy guard you well, safe in your seek
                                                                                                                                                                      award I go, 'gainst hostile warriors hold my watch." V STONE-BRIGHT the street: it showed the way to the crowd of clar
                                                                                                                                ings. Se
 men. Corselets glistened hand-forged, hard; on their harness bright the steel ring sang, as they strode along in
                                                                                                                                                                      battle, and marched to the hall. There, weary of ocean, the wall along they set their bucklers, their broad shields, down, a
                                                                                                                                                                     farers stood together, gray-tipped ash: that iron band was worthily weaponed! -- A warrior proud asked of the heroes the
nd bowed them to bench: the breastplates clanged, war-gear of men; their weapons stacked, spears of the se
home and kin. "Whence, now, bear ye burnished shields, harness gray and helmets grim, spear
                                                                                                                                                                     multitude? Messenger, I, Hrothgar's herald! Heroes so many ne'er met I as strangers of mood so strong. 'Tis plain that fo
prowess, not plunged into exile, for high-hearted valor, Hrothgar ye seek!" Him the sturdy-in-war bespake
                                                                                                                                                                   with words, proud earl of the Weders answer made, hardy 'neath helmet: -- "Hygelac's, we, fellows at board; I am Beowulf
 med. I am seeking to say to the son of Healfdene this mission of mine, to thy master-lord, the doughty prin
                                                                                                                                                               ce, if he deign at all grace that we greet him, the good one, now." Wulfgar spake, the Wendles' chieftain, whose might of mind t
                                                                                                                                                              aker-of-Rings, as the boon thou askest, the famed prince, of thy faring hither, and, swiftly after, such answer bring as the dough
many was known, his courage and counsel: "The king of Danes, the Scyldings' friend, I fain will tell, the Br
  nonarch may deign to give." Hied then in haste to where Hrothgar sat white-haired and old, his earls ab
                                                                                                                                                            out him, till the stout thane stood at the shoulder there of the Danish king: good courtier he! Wulfgar spake to his winsome lord:
 Hither have fared to thee far-come men o'er the paths of ocean, people of Geatland; and the stateliest there l
 er to give them hearing, gracious Hrothgar! In weeds of the warrior worthy they, methinks, of our liking; their
  nis youthful days; his aged father was Ecgtheow named, to whom, at home, gave Hrethel the Geat his only da
ne Geatish court, thither for thanks, -- he has thirty men's heft of grasp in the gripe of his hand, the bold-in-battle
 he good youth gold for his gallant thought. Be thou in haste, and bid them hither, clan of kinsmen, to come before me
    To you this message my master sends, East-Danes' king, that your kin he knows, hardy heroes, and hails you all welc
                                                                                                                                                                           her o'er waves of the sea! Ye may wend your way in war-attire, and under helmets Hrothgar greet; but let here the l
                                                                                                                                                                              of thanes: some bode without, battle-gear guarding, as bade the chief. Then hied that troop where the herald lec
 ttle-shields bide your parley, and wooden war-shafts wait its end." Uprose the mighty one, ringed with his men, brave band
em, under Heorot's roof: [the hero strode,] hardy 'neath helm, till the hearth he neared. Beowulf spake, -- his breastplate glea
                                                                                                                                                                  best, for your band of thanes empty and idle, when evening sun in the harbor of heaven is hidden away. So my vassals adv
gained in youth! These Grendel-deeds I heard in my home-land heralded clear. Seafarers say how stands this hall, of building
            -- brave and wise, the best of men, -- O sovran Hrothgar, to seek thee here, for my nerve and my might they knew full wel
                                                                                                                                                          l. Themselves had seen me from slaughter come blood-flecked from foes, where five I bound, and that wild brood worsted. I' the way
  slew nicors by night, in need and peril avenging the Weders, whose woe they sought, -- crushing the grim ones. Grendel now, monst
d-of-the-folk, refúse it not, O Warriors'-shield, now I've wandered far, -- that I alone with my liegemen here, this hardy band, may Heorot pu
                                                                                                                                                     rge! More I hear, that the monster dire, in his wanton mood, of weapons recks not; hence shall I scorn -- so Hygelac stay, king of my kind
ed, kind to me! -- brand or buckler to bear in the fight, gold-colored targe: but with gripe alone must I front the fiend and fight for life, foe ag ain
nd will he fearless eat, -- as oft before, -- my noblest thanes. Nor need'st thou then to hide my head; for his shall I be, dyed in gore, if death must
                                                                                                                                                      take me; and my blood-covered body he'll bear as prey, ruthless devour it, the roamer-lonely, with my life-blood redden his lair in the fe
n: no further for me need'st food prepare! To Hygelac send, if Hild should take me, best of war-weeds, warding my breast, armor excellent, he
                                                                                                                                                    irloom of Hrethel and work of Wayland. Fares Wyrd as she must." VII HROTHGAR spake, the Scyldings'-helmet: -- "For fight defensive, F
 end my Beowulf, to succor and save, thou hast sought us here. Thy father's combat a feud enkindled when Heatholaf with hand he slew a
                                                                                                                                                   ong the Wylfings; his Weder kin for horror of fighting feared to hold him. Fleeing, he sought our South-Dane folk, over surge of ocean the
lonor-Scyldings, when first I was ruling the folk of Ďanes, wielded, youthful, this widespread realm, this hoard-hold of heroes. Heorogar
                                                                                                                                                       was dead, my elder brother, had breathed his last, Healfdene's bairn: he was better than I! Straightway the feud with fee I settled, to th
Wylfings sent, o'er watery ridges, treasures olden: oaths he swore me. Sore is my soul to say to any of the race of man what ruth for m
                                                                                                                                                        n Heorot Grendel with hate hath wrought, what sudden harryings. Hall-folk fail me, my warriors wane; for Wyrd hath swept them into
rendel's grasp. But God is able this deadly foe from his deeds to turn! Boasted full oft, as my beer they drank, earls o'er the ale-cup, ar
                                                                                                                                                        ed men, that they would bide in the beer-hall here, Grendel's attack with terror of blades. Then was this mead-house at morning tide
         gore, when the daylight broke, all the boards of the benches blood-besprinkled, gory the hall. I had heroes the less, doughty d
                                                                                                                                                        ear-ones that death had reft. -- But sit to the banquet, unbind thy words, hardy hero, as heart shall prompt thee." Gathered together
  Geatish men in the banquet-hall on bench assigned, sturdy-spirited, sat them down, hardy-hearted. A henchman attended, carried the carven cup in hand, served the clear mead. Oft minstrels sang blithe in Heorot. Heroes revelled, no dearth of warriors, Weder and Dane.
 RTH spake, the son of Ecglaf, who sat at the feet of the Scyldings' lord, unbound the battle-runes. - Beowulf's quest, sturdy seafarer's, sor
                                                                                                                                                      galled him; ever he envied that other men should more achieve in middle-earth of fame under heaven than he himself. -- "Art thou that B
       Breca's rival, who emulous swam on the open sea, when for pride the pair of you proved the floods, and wantonly dared in waters de
                                                                                                                                                   ep to risk your lives? No living man, or lief or loath, from your labor dire could you dissuade, from swimming the main. Ocean-tides with yo
           covered, with strenuous hands the sea-streets measured, swam o'er the waters. Winter's storm rolled the rough waves. In realm
ce he hied to his home so dear beloved of his liegemen, to land of Brondings, fastness fair, where his folk he ruled, town and treasure. In tri
 in struggle grim, -- if Grendel's approach thou darst await through the watch of night!" Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: -- "What a deal h
                                                                                                                                                      uttered, dear my Unferth, drunken with beer, of Breca now, told of his triumph! Truth I claim it, that I had more of might in the sea than
           e, more ocean-endurance. We twain had talked, in time of youth, and made our boast, -- we were merely boys, striplings still, -- to
                                                                                                                                                    stake our lives far at sea: and so we performed it. Naked swords, as we swam along, we held in hand, with hope to guard us against the
   es. Not a whit from me could he float afar o'er the flood of waves, haste o'er the billows; nor him I abandoned. Together we twain on the t
                                                                                                                                                      es abode five nights full till the flood divided us, churning waves and chillest weather, darkling night, and the northern wind ruthless ru
                                                                                                                                                     whelmed by the hurly through hand of mine. IX ME thus often the evil monsters thronging threatened. With thrust of my sword, the darli
                                                                                                                                                   m of sea, but at break of day, by my brand sore hurt, on the edge of ocean up they lay, put to sleep by the sword. And since, by them on t
                                                                                                                                                             h, windy walls. For Wyrd oft saveth earl undoomed if he doughty be! And so it came that I killed with my sword nine of the nicors
                                                                                                                                                              lle clutch, though spent with swimming. The sea upbore me, flood of the tide, on Finnish land, the welling waters. No wise of th
  have I heard men tell such terror of falchions, bitter battle. Breca ne'er yet, not one of you pair, in the play of war such daring deed has do
                                                                                                                                                     ie at all with bloody brand, 🛶 I boast not of it! -- though thou wast the bane of thy brethren dear, thy closest kin, whence curse of hell awa
                                                                                                                                                   aster dear, in Heorot such havoc, if heart of thine were as battle-bold as thy boast is loud! But he has found no feud will happen; from sword
  ash dread of your Danish clan he vaunts him safe, from the Victor-Scyldings. He forces pledges, favors none of the land of Danes, but lustily murders, fi
                                                                                                                                                                ghts and feasts, nor feud he dreads from Spear-Dane men. But speedily now shall I prove him the prowess and pride of the Ge
  shall bid him battle. Blithe to mead go he that listeth, when light of dawn this morrow morning o'er men of earth, ether-robed su
                                                                                                                                                                 om the south shall beam!" Joyous then was the Jewel-giver, hoar-haired, war-brave; help awaited the Bright-Danes' prince, fr
  Beowulf hearing, folk's good shepherd, such firm resolve. Then was laughter of liegemen loud resounding with winsome words. Came Wealhtheow forth, queen of Hrothgar, heedful of courtesy, gold-decked, greeting the quests in hall; and the high-born lady handed the cup first
 the East-Danes' heir and warden, bade him be blithe at the beer-carouse, the land's beloved one. Lustily took he banquet and beaker, battle-famed king. Through the hall then went the Helmings' Lady, to younger and older everywhere carried the cup, till come the moment when the
                                                                                                                                                         ds, that her will was granted, that at last on a hero her hope could lean for comfort in terrors. The cup he took, hardy-in-war, from We
e ring-graced queen, the royal-hearted, to Beowulf bore the beaker of mead. She greeted the Geats' lord, God she thanked, in wisdom's
alhtheow's hand, and answer uttered the eager-for-combat. Beowulf spake, bairn of Ecgtheow: -- "This was my thought, when my thane
                                                                                                                                                        nd I bent to the ocean and entered our boat, that I would work the will of your people fully, or fighting fall in death, in fiend's gripe fas
I am firm to do an earl's brave deed, or end the days of this life of mine in the mead-hall here." Well these words to the woman seemed
                                                                                                                                                         eowulf's battle-boast. -- Bright with gold the stately dame by her spouse sat down. Again, as erst, began in hall warriors' wassail and
  ords of power, the proud-band's revel, till presently the son of Healfdene hastened to seek rest for the night; he knew there waited fig
                                                                                                                                                         or the fiend in that festal hall, when the sheen of the sun they saw no more, and dusk of night sank darkling nigh, and shadowy s
                                                                                                                                                          the wine hall: a word he added: -- "Never to any man erst I trusted, since I could heave up hand and shield, this noble Dane-Hall, till
s came striding on, wan under welkin. The warriors rose. Man to man, he made harangue, Hrothgar to Beowulf, bade him hail, let him w
                                                                                                                                                         ou bidest the battle with bold-won life." X THEN Hrothgar went with his hero-train, defence-of-Scyldings, forth from hall; fain would the
now to thee. Have now and hold this house unpeered; remember thy glory; thy might declare; watch for the foe! No wish shall fail thee i
                                                                                                                                                f th
                                                                                                                                                          who warded the monarch and watched for the monster. In truth, the Geats' prince gladly trusted his mettle, his might, the mercy of G
e war-lord Wealhtheow seek, couch of his queen. The King-of-Glory against this Grendel a guard had set, so heroes heard, a hall-defen
od! Cast off then his corselet of iron, helmet from head; to his henchman gave, -- choicest of weapons, -- the well-chased sword, biddin
                                                                                                                                                g hi
                                                                                                                                                        m guard the gear of battle. Spake then his Vaunt the valiant man, Beowulf Geat, ere the bed be sought: -- "Of force in fight no feebler
                                                                                                                                                         er. No skill is his to strike against me, my shield to hew though he hardy be, bold in battle; we both, this night, shall spurn the sword,
count me, in grim war-deeds, than Grendel deems him. Not with the sword, then, to sleep of death his life will I give, though it lie in my
                                                                                                                                                pow
                                                                                                                                                         hen the chieftain, and cheek-pillows held the head of the earl, while all about him seamen hardy on hall-beds sank. None of them thou
if he seek me here, unweaponed, for war. Let wisest God, sacred Lord, on which side soever doom decree as he deemeth right." Reclin
                                                                                                                                                ed t
                                                                                                                                                         t on warriors many battle-death seized, in the banquet-hall, of Danish clan. But comfort and heĺp, war-weal weaving, to Weder folk the
ght that thence their steps to the folk and fastness that fostered them, to the land they loved, would lead them back! Full well they wist
Master gave, that, by might of one, over their enemy all prevailed, by single strength. In sooth 'tis told that highest God o'er human kin
                                                                                                                                                         th wielded ever! -- Thro' wan night striding, came the walker-in-shadow. Warriors slept whose hest was to guard the gabled hall, -- all
save one. 'Twas widely known that against God's will the ghostly ravager him could not hurl to haunts of darkness; wakeful, ready, with
                                                                                                                                                         rrior's wrath, bold he bided the battle's issue. XI THEN from the moorland, by misty crags, with God's wrath laden, Grendel came. The
monster was minded of mankind now sundry to seize in the stately house. Under welkin he walked, till the wine-palace there, gold-hall
                                                                                                                                                         en, he gladly discerned, flashing with fretwork. Not first time, this, that he the home of Hrothgar sought, -- yet ne'er in his life-day, late
or early, such hardy heroes, such hall-thanes, found! To the house the warrior walked apace, parted from peace; the portal opended, th
                                                                                                                                                         h with forged bolts fast, when his fists had struck it, and baleful he burst in his blatant rage, the house's mouth. All hastily, then, o'er
                                                                                                                                                oug
                                                                                                                                                         and, kin and clansmen clustered asleep, hardy liegemen. Then laughed his heart; for the monster was minded, ere morn should dawn rth after that evening. Eagerly watched Hygelac's kinsman his cursed foe, how he would fare in fell attack. Not that the monster was
fair-paved floor the fiend trod on, ireful he strode; there streamed from his eyes fearful flashes, like flame to see. He spied in hall the he
                                                                                                                                                ro-b
savage, to sever the soul of each, life from body, since lusty banquet waited his will! But Wyrd forbade him to seize any more of men o
                                                                                                                                                n ea
minded to pause! Straightway he seized a sleeping warrior for the first, and tore him fiercely asunder, the bone-frame bit, drank blood i
                                                                                                                                                         reams, swallowed him piecemeal: swiftly thus the lifeless corse was clear devoured, e'en feet and hands. Then farther he hied; for the
e hardy hero with hand he grasped, felt for the foe with fiendish claw, for the hero reclining, -- who clutched it boldly, prompt to answer
                                                                                                                                                         opped on his arm. Soon then saw that shepherd-of-evils that never he met in this middle-world, in the ways of earth, another wight w
th heavier hand-gripe; at heart he feared, sorrowed in soul, -- none the sooner escaped! Fain would he flee, his fastness seek, the den o
                                                                                                                                                         vils: no doings now such as oft he had done in days of old! Then bethought him the hardy Hygelac-thane of his boast at evening: up
he bounded, grasped firm his foe, whose fingers cracked. The fiend made off, but the earl close followed. The monster meant -- if he mi
                                                                                                                                                         at all -- to fling himself free, and far away fly to the fens, -- knew his fingers' power in the gripe of the grim one. Gruesome march to H
                                                                                                                                                ght
eorot this monster of harm had made! Din filled the room; the Danes were bereft, castle-dwellers and clansmen all, earls, of their ale. An
                                                                                                                                                        were both those savage hall-guards: the house resounded. Wonder it was the wine-hall firm in the strain of their struggle stood, to ea
                                                                                                                                                gry
ead
rth the fair house fell not; too fast it was within and without by its iron bands craftily clamped; though there crashed from sill many a m
                                                                                                                                                         -bench -- men have told me -- gay with gold, where the grim foes wrestled. So well had weened the wisest Scyldings that not ever at a
Il might any man that bone-decked, brave house break asunder, crush by craft, -- unless clasp of fire in smoke engulfed it. -- Again upro
                                                                                                                                                         din redoubled. Danes of the North with fear and frenzy were filled, each one, who from the wall that wailing heard, God's foe sounding
his grisly song, cry of the conquered, clamorous pain from captive of hell. Too closely held him he who of men in might was strongest
                                                                                                                                                         hat same day of this our life. XII NOT in any wise would the earls'-defence suffer that slaughterous stranger to live, useless deeming Ì
is days and years to men on earth. Now many an earl of Beowulf brandished blade ancestral, fain the life of their lord to shield, their pra
                                                                                                                                                         d prince, if power were theirs; never they knew, -- as they neared the foe, hardy-hearted heroes of war, aiming their swords on every
                                                                                                                                                ise
ide the accursed to kill, -- no keenest blade, no farest of falchions fashioned on earth, could harm or hurt that hideous fiend! He was sa
                                                                                                                                                         by his spells, from sword of battle, from edge of iron. Yet his end and parting on that same day of this our life woful should be, and hi
                                                                                                                                                fe,
s wandering soul far off flit to the fiends' domain. Soon he found, who in former days, harmful in heart and hated of God, on many a ma
                                                                                                                                                         uch murder wrought, that the frame of his body failed him now. For him the keen-souled kinsman of Hygelac held in hand; hateful aliv
                                                                                                                                                n s
e was each to other. The outlaw dire took mortal hurt; a mighty wound showed on his shoulder, and sinews cracked, and the bone-fram
                                                                                                                                                         urst. To Beowulf now the glory was given, and Grendel thence death-sick his den in the dark moor sought, noisome abode: he knew t
                                                                                                                                                e b
oo well that here was the last of life, an end of his days on earth. -- To all the Danes by that bloody battle the boon had come. From rava
                                                                                                                                                         had rescued the roving stranger Hrothgar's hall; the hardy and wise one had purged it anew. His night-work pleased him, his deed an
d its honor. To Eastern Danes had the valiant Geat his vaunt made good, all their sorrow and ills assuaged, their bale of battle borne so
                                                                                                                                                         ng, and all the dole they erst endured pain a-plenty. -- 'Twas proof of this, when the hardy-in-fight a hand laid down, arm and shoulder
, -- all, indeed, of Grendel's gripe, -- 'neath the gabled roof. XIII MANY at morning, as men have told me, warriors gathered the gift-hall ro
                                                                                                                                                          , folk-leaders faring from far and near, o'er wide-stretched ways, the wonder to view, trace of the traitor. Not troublous seemed the en
                                                                                                                                                und
emy's end to any man who saw by the gait of the graceless foe how the weary-hearted, away from thence, baffled in battle and banned,
                                                                                                                                                         steps death-marked dragged to the devils' mere. Bloody the billows were boiling there, turbid the tide of tumbling waves horribly seet
hing, with sword-blood hot, by thát doomed one dyed, who in den of the moor laid forlorn hأs life adown, his heathen soul, and hell rec
                                                                                                                                                         ed it. Home then rode the hoary clansmen from that merry journey, and many a youth, on horses white, the hardy warriors, back from
the mere. Then Beowulf's glory eager they echoed, and all averred that from sea to sea, or south or north, there was no other in earth's
                                                                                                                                                        main, under vault of heaven, more valiant found, of warriors none more worthy to rule! (On their lord beloved they laid no slight, grace
                                                                                                                                                do
ous Hrothgar: a good king he!) From time to time, the tried-in-battle their gray steeds set to gallop amain, and ran a race when the road
                                                                                                                                                see
                                                                                                                                                        med fair. From time to time, a thane of the king, who had made many vaunts, and was mindful of verses, stored with sagas and songs
of old, bound word to word in well-knit rime, welded his lay; this warrior soon of Beowulf's quest right cleverly sang, and artfully added
                                                                                                                                                          excellent tale, in well-ranged words, of the warlike deeds he had heard in saga of Sigemund. Strange the story: he said it all, -- the W
aelsing's wanderings wide, his struggles, which never were told to tribes of men, the feuds and the frauds, save to Fitela only, when of
                                                                                                                                                         se doings he deigned to speak, uncle to nephew; as ever the twain stood side by side in stress of war, and multitude of the monster l
ind they had felled with their swords. Of Sigemund grew, when he passed from life, no little praise; for the doughty-in-combat a dragon
                                                                                                                                                         ed that herded the hoard: under hoary rock the atheling dared the deed alone fearful quest, nor was Fitela there. Yet so it befell, his fa
lchion pierced that wondrous worm, -- on the wall it struck, best blade; the dragon died in its blood. Thus had the dread-one by daring a
                                                                                                                                                         eved over the ring-hoard to rule at will, himself to pleasure; a sea-boat he loaded, and bore on its bosom the beaming gold, son of Wa
els; the worm was consumed. He had of all heroes the highest renown among races of men, this refuge-of-warriors, for deeds of daring
                                                                                                                                                         at decked his name since the hand and heart of Heremod grew slack in battle. He, swiftly banished to mingle with monsters at mercy
of foes, to death was betrayed; for torrents of sorrow had lamed him too long; a load of care to earls and athelings all he proved. Oft ind
                                                                                                                                                         , in earlier days, for the warrior's wayfaring wise men mourned, who had hoped of him help from harm and bale, and had thought the
                                                                                                                                                eed
r sovran's son would thrive, follow his father, his folk protect, the hoard and the stronghold, heroes' land, home of Scyldings. -- But her
                                                                                                                                                         hanes said, the kinsman of Hygelac kinder seemed to all: the other was urged to crime! And afresh to the race, the fallow roads by sw
                                                                                                                                                e, t
                                                                                                                                                        witness. Warden of treasure, crowned with glory, the king himself, with stately band from the bride-bower strode; and with him the qu
the steep roof saw, garnished with gold, and Grendel's hand: -- "For the sight I see to the Sovran Ruler be speedy thanks! A throng o
ift steeds measured! The morning sun was climbing higher. Clansmen hastened to the high-built hall, those hardy-minded, the wonder
                                                                                                                                                to
een and her crowd of maidens measured the path to the mead-house fair. XIV HROTHGAR spake, -- to the hall he went, stood by the ste
                                                                                                                                                ps.
f sorrows I have borne from Grendel; but God still works wonder on wonder, the Warden-of-Glory. It was but now that I never more for
                                                                                                                                                        es that weighed on me waited help long as I lived, when, laved in blood, stood sword-gore-stained this stateliest house, -- widespread
                                                                                                                                                wo
woe for wise men all, who had no hope to hinder ever foes infernal and fiendish sprites from havoc in hall. This hero now, by the Wield
                                                                                                                                                         s might, a work has done that not all of us erst could ever do by wile and wisdom. Lo, well can she say whoso of women this warrior
bore among sons of men, if still she liveth, that the God of the ages was good to her in the birth of her bairn. Now, Beowulf, thee, of her
                                                                                                                                                         best, I shall heartily love as mine own, my son; preserve thou ever this kinship new; thou shalt never lack wealth of the world that I v
ield as mine! Full oft for less have I largess showered, my precious hoard, on a punier man, less stout in struggle. Thyself hast now fulf
                                                                                                                                                         d such deeds, that thy fame shall endure through all the ages. As ever he did, well may the Wielder reward thee still!" Beowulf spake,
bairn of Ecgtheow: -- "This work of war most willingly we have fought, this fight, and fearlessly dared force of the foe. Fain, too, were I h
                                                                                                                                                         st thou but seen himself, what time the fiend in his trappings tottered to fall! Swiftly, I thought, in strongest gripe on his bed of death
                                                                                                                                                ad
o bind him down, that he in the hent of this hand of mine should breathe his last: but he broke away. Him I might not -- the Maker willed
                                                                                                                                                         ot -- hinder from flight, and firm enough hold the life-destroyer: too sturdy was he, the ruthless, in running! For rescue, however, he le
                                                                                                                                                n
                                                                                                                                                         oathsome fiend, sunk in his sins, but sorrow holds him tightly grasped in gripe of anguish, in baleful bonds, where bide he must, evil
ft behind him his hand in pledge, arm and shoulder; nor aught of help could the cursed one thus procure at all. None the longer liveth h
                                                                                                                                                e, |
outlaw, such awful doom as the Mighty Maker shall mete him out." More silent seemed the son of Ecglaf in boastful speech of his battle
                                                                                                                                                 -d
                                                                                                                                                         eeds, since athelings all, through the earl's great prowess, beheld that hand, on the high roof gazing, foeman's fingers, -- the forepart
of each of the sturdy nails to steel was likest, -- heathen's "hand-spear," hostile warrior's claw uncanny. 'Twas clear, they said, that him
                                                                                                                                                         o blade of the brave could touch, how keen soever, or cut away that battle-hand bloody from baneful foe. XV THERE was hurry and h
                                                                                                                                                 n
                                                                                                                                                         h. Gold-gay shone the hangings that were wove on the wall, and wonders many to delight each mortal that looks upon them. Though
est in Heorot now for hands to bedeck it, and dense was the throng of men and women the wine-hall to cleanse, the guest-room to garn
                                                                                                                                                         d with crime, the fiendish foe his flight essayed, of life despairing. -- No light thing that, the flight for safety, -- essay it who will! Force
braced within by iron bands, that building bright was broken sorely; rent were its hinges; the roof alone held safe and sound, when, sea
                                                                                                                                                re
d of fate, he shall find his way to the refuge ready for race of man, for soul-possessors, and sons of earth; and there his body on bed of
                                                                                                                                                         eath shall rest after revel. Arrived was the hour when to hall proceeded Healfdene's son: the king himself would sit to banquet. Ne'er
heard I of host in haughtier throng more graciously gathered round giver-of-rings! Bowed then to bench those bearers-of-glory, fain of
                                                                                                                                                        e feasting. Featly received many a mead-cup the mighty-in-spirit, kinsmen who sat in the sumptuous hall, Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heo
ot now was filled with friends; the folk of Scyldings ne'er yet had tried the traitor's deed. To Beowulf gave the bairn of Healfdene a gold-
                                                                                                                                                         ve banner, guerdon of triumph, broidered battle-flag, breastplate and helmet; and a splendid sword was seen of many borne to the bi
                                                                                                                                                wo
ave one. Beowulf took cup in hall: for such costly gifts he suffered no shame in that soldier throng. For I heard of few heroes, in heartie
                                                                                                                                                        mood, with four such gifts, so fashioned with gold, on the ale-bench honoring others thus! O'er the roof of the helmet high, a ridge, w
ound with wires, kept ward o'er the head, lest the relict-of-files should fierce invade, sharp in the strife, when that shielded hero should
                                                                                                                                                          to grapple against his foes. Then the earls'-defence on the floor bade lead coursers eight, with carven head-gear, adown the hall: on
                                                                                                                                                go
e horse was decked with a saddle all shining and set in jewels; 'twas the battle-seat of the best of kings, when to play of swords the son
                                                                                                                                                         f Healfdene was fain to fare. Ne'er failed his valor in the crush of combat when corpses fell. To Beowulf over them both then gave the
refuge-of-Ingwines right and power, o'er war-steeds and weapons: wished him joy of them. Manfully thus the mighty prince, hoard-guar
                                                                                                                                                        or heroes, that hard fight repaid with steeds and treasures contemned by none who is willing to say the sooth aright. XVI AND the lord
of earls, to each that came with Beowulf over the briny ways, an heirloom there at the ale-bench gave, precious gift; and the price bade
                                                                                                                                                        y in gold for him whom Grendel erst murdered, -- and fain of them more had killed, had not wisest God their Wyrd averted, and the ma
n's brave mood. The Maker then ruled human kind, as here and now. Therefore is insight always best, and forethought of mind. How muc
                                                                                                                                                        awaits him of lief and of loath, who long time here, through days of warfare this world endures! Then song and music mingled sounds
in the presence of Healfdene's head-of-armies and harping was heard with the hero-lay as Hrothgar's singer the hall-joy woke along the
                                                                                                                                                      mead-seats, making his song of that sudden raid on the sons of Finn. Healfdene's hero, Hnaef the Scylding, was fated to fall in the Fris
                                                                                                                                                      and brother, they bowed to fate, stricken by spears; 'twas a sorrowful woman! None doubted why the daughter of Hoc bewailed her doo
an slaughter. Hildeburh needed not hold in value her enemies' honor! Innocent both were the loved ones she lost at the linden-play, bairn
                                                                                                                                                      By war were swept, too, Finn's own liegemen, and few were left; in the parleying-place he could ply no longer weapon, nor war could he
m when dawning came, and under the sky she saw them lying, kinsmen murdered, where most she had kenned of the sweets of the world!
wage on Hengest, and rescue his remnant by right of arms from the prince's thane. A pact he offered: another dwelling the Danes should ha
                                                                                                                                                     ve, hall and high-seat, and half the power should fall to them in Frisian land; and at the fee-gifts, Folcwald's son day by day the Danes sh
ould honor, the folk of Hengest favor with rings, even as truly, with treasure and jewels, with fretted gold, as his Frisian kin he meant to hono
                                                                                                                                                   r in ale-hall there. Pact of peace they plighted further on both sides firmly. Finn to Hengest with oath, upon honor, openly promised that w
oful remnant, with wise-men's aid, nobly to govern, so none of the guests by word or work should warp the treaty, or with malice of mind bem oan themselves as forced to follow their fee-giver's slayer, lordless men, as their lot ordained. Should Frisian, moreover, with foeman's tau
nt, that murderous hatred to mind recall, then edge of the sword must seal his doom. Oaths were given, and ancient gold heaped from hoard. -- The hardy Scylding, battle-thane best, on his balefire lay. All on the pyre were plain to see the gory sark, the gilded swine-crest, boar of ha rolling, battle-thane best, on his balefire lay. All on the pyre were plain to see the gory sark, the gilded swine-crest, boar of ha rolling, and athelings many slain by the sword: at the slaughter they fell. It was Hildeburh's hest, at Hnaef's own pyre the bairn of her body on brands to lay, his bones to burn, on the balefire placed, at his uncle's side. In sorrowful dirges bewept them the woman: great wailing ascen
ded. Then wound up to welkin the wildest of death-fires, roared o'er the hillock: heads all were melted, gashes burst, and blood gushed out from bites of the body. Balefire devoured, greediest spirit, those spared not by war out of either folk: their flower was gone. XVII THEN hasten
ed those heroes their home to see, friendless, to find the Frisian land, houses and high burg. Hengest still through the death-dyed winter dwelt with Finn, holding pact, yet of home he minded, though powerless his ring-decked prow to drive over the waters, now waves rolled fierce
ashed by the winds, or winter locked them in icy fetters. Then fared another year to men's dwellings, as yet they do, the sunbright skies, that their season ever duly await. Far off winter was driven; fair lay earth's breast; and fain was the rover, the guest, to depart, though more glad ye pondered on wreaking his vengeance than roaming the deep, and how to hasten the hot encounter where sons of the Frisians were sure to be. So he escaped not the common doom, when Hun with "Lafing," the light-of-battle, best of blades, his bosom pierced: its edge was fa
med with the Frisian earls. On fierce-heart Finn there fell likewise, on himself at home, the horrid sword-death; for Guthlaf and Oslaf of grim attack had sorrowing told, from sea-ways landed, mourning their woes. Finn's wavering spirit bode not in breast. The burg was reddened with
blood of foemen, and Finn was slain, king amid clansmen; the queen was taken. To their ship the Scylding warriors bore all the chattels the chieftain owned, whatever they found in Finn's domain of gems and jewels. The gentle wife o'er paths of the deep to the Danes they bore, led
to her land. The lay was finished, the gleeman's song. Then glad rose the revel; bench-joy brightened. Bearers draw from their "wonder-vats" wine. Comes Wealhtheow forth, under gold-crown goes where the good pair sit, uncle and nephew, true each to the other one, kindred in a
mity. Unferth the spokesman at the Scylding lord's feet sat: men had faith in his spirit, his keenness of courage, though kinsmen had found him unsure at the sword-play. The Scylding queen spoke: "Quaff of this cup, my king and lord, breaker of rings, and blithe be thou, gold-frien
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