

# BEOWULF

Translated

By

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## Chapter 25

“UNDER HARNESS HIS HEART THEN IS HIT INDEED  
BY SHARPEST SHAFTS; AND NO SHELTER AVAILS  
FROM FOUL BEHEST OF THE HELLISH FIEND. [FOOTNOTE 1]  
HIM SEEMS TOO LITTLE WHAT LONG HE POSSESSED.  
GREEDY AND GRIM, NO GOLDEN RINGS  
HE GIVES FOR HIS PRIDE; THE PROMISED FUTURE  
FORGETS HE AND SPURNS, WITH ALL GOD HAS SENT HIM,  
WONDER-WIELDER, OF WEALTH AND FAME.  
YET IN THE END IT EVER COMES  
THAT THE FRAME OF THE BODY FRAGILE YIELDS,  
FATED FALLS; AND THERE FOLLOWS ANOTHER  
WHO JOYOUSLY THE JEWELS DIVIDES,  
THE ROYAL RICHES, NOR RECKS OF HIS FOREBEAR.  
BAN, THEN, SUCH BALEFUL THOUGHTS, BEOWULF DEAREST,  
BEST OF MEN, AND THE BETTER PART CHOOSE,  
PROFIT ETERNAL; AND TEMPER THY PRIDE,  
WARRIOR FAMOUS! THE FLOWER OF THY MIGHT  
LASTS NOW A WHILE: BUT ERELONG IT SHALL BE  
THAT SICKNESS OR SWORD THY STRENGTH SHALL MINISH,  
OR FANG OF FIRE, OR FLOODING BILLOW,  
OR BITE OF BLADE, OR BRANDISHED SPEAR,  
OR ODISIOUS AGE; OR THE EYES' CLEAR BEAM

WAX DULL AND DARKEN: DEATH EVEN THEE  
IN HASTE SHALL O'ERWHELM, THOU HERO OF WAR!  
SO THE RING-DANES THESE HALF-YEARS A HUNDRED I RULED,  
WIELDED 'NEATH WELKIN, AND WARDED THEM BRAVELY  
FROM MIGHTY-ONES MANY O'ER MIDDLE-EARTH,  
FROM SPEAR AND SWORD, TILL IT SEEMED FOR ME  
NO FOE COULD BE FOUND UNDER FOLD OF THE SKY.  
LO, SUDDEN THE SHIFT! TO ME SEATED SECURE  
CAME GRIEF FOR JOY WHEN GRENDEL BEGAN  
TO HARRY MY HOME, THE HELLISH FOE;  
FOR THOSE RUTHLESS RAIDS, UNRESTING I SUFFERED  
HEART-SORROW HEAVY. HEAVEN BE THANKED,  
LORD ETERNAL, FOR LIFE EXTENDED  
THAT I ON THIS HEAD ALL HEWN AND BLOODY,  
AFTER LONG EVIL, WITH EYES MAY GAZE!  
– GO TO THE BENCH NOW! BE GLAD AT BANQUET,  
WARRIOR WORTHY! A WEALTH OF TREASURE  
AT DAWN OF DAY, BE DEALT BETWEEN US!”

GLAD WAS THE GEATS' LORD, GOING BETIMES  
TO SEEK HIS SEAT, AS THE SAGE COMMANDED.  
AFRESH, AS BEFORE, FOR THE FAMED-IN-BATTLE,  
FOR THE BAND OF THE HALL, WAS A BANQUET DIGHT  
NOBLY ANEW. THE NIGHT-HELM DARKENED  
DUSK O'ER THE DRINKERS. THE DOUGHTY ONES ROSE:  
FOR THE HOARY-HEADED WOULD HASTEN TO REST,  
AGED SCYLDING; AND EAGER THE GEAT,  
SHIELD-FIGHTER STURDY, FOR SLEEPING YEARNED.  
HIM WANDER-WEARY, WARRIOR-GUEST  
FROM FAR, A HALL-THANE HERALDED FORTH,  
WHO BY CUSTOM COURTLY CARED FOR ALL  
NEEDS OF A THANE AS IN THOSE OLD DAYS  
WARRIOR-WANDERERS WONT TO HAVE.  
SO SLUMBERED THE STOUT-HEART. STATELY THE HALL  
ROSE GABLED AND GILT WHERE THE GUEST SLEPT ON  
TILL A RAVEN BLACK THE RAPTURE-OF-HEAVEN [FOOTNOTE 2]  
BLITHE-HEART BODED. BRIGHT CAME FLYING  
SHINE AFTER SHADOW. THE SWORDSMEN HASTENED,  
ATHELINGS ALL WERE EAGER HOMEWARD

FORTH TO FARE; AND FAR FROM THENCE  
THE GREAT-HEARTED GUEST WOULD GUIDE HIS KEEL.

BADE THEN THE HARDY-ONE HRUNTING BE BROUGHT  
TO THE SON OF ECGLAF, THE SWORD BADE HIM TAKE,  
EXCELLENT IRON, AND UTTERED HIS THANKS FOR IT,  
QUOTH THAT HE COUNTED IT KEEN IN BATTLE,  
“WAR-FRIEND” WINSOME: WITH WORDS HE SLANDERED NOT  
EDGE OF THE BLADE: ‘T WAS A BIG-HEARTED MAN!  
NOW EAGER FOR PARTING AND ARMED AT POINT  
WARRIORS WAITED, WHILE WENT TO HIS HOST  
THAT DARLING OF DANES. THE DOUGHTY ATHELING  
TO HIGH-SEAT HASTENED AND HROTHGAR GREETED.

### Footnotes

1. That is, he is now undefended by conscience from the temptations (shafts) of the devil.
2. Kenning for the sun. — This is a strange role for the raven. He is the warrior’s bird of battle, exults in slaughter and carnage; his joy here is a compliment to the sunrise.