

ANONYMOUS (1100-1945)

Beowulf

1 Hwæt. We Gardena in geardagum,
LO, praise of the prowess of people-kings
2 þeodcyninga, þrym gefrunon,
of spear-armed Danes, in days long sped,
3 hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.
we have heard, and what honor the athelings won!
4 Oft Scyld Scefing sceaþena/ þreatum,
Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,
5 monegum mægþum, meodosetla ofteah,
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
6 egsode eorlas. Syððan ærest wearð/
awing the earls. Since erst he lay
7 feasceaft funden, he þæs frofre gebad,
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
8 weox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum þah,
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,
9 oðþæt him æghwylc þara ymsittendra
till before him the folk, both far and near,
10 ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
who house by the whale-path, heard his mandate,
11 gomban gyldan. þæt wæs god cyning.
gave him gifts: a good king he!
12 ðæm eafera wæs æfter cenned,
To him an heir was afterward born,
13 geong in geardum, þone god sende
a son in his halls, whom heaven sent
14 folce to frofre; fyrenðearfe ongeat
to favor the folk, feeling their woe
15 þe hie ær drugon aldrlease/
that erst they had lacked an earl for leader
16 lange hwile. Him þæs liffrea,
so long a while; the Lord endowed him,
17 wuldres wealdend, woroldare forgeaf;
the Wielder of Wonder, with world's renown.
18 Beowulf wæs breme blæd wide sprang/,
Famed was this Beowulf: far flew the boast of him,
19 Scyldes eafera Scedelandum in.
son of Scyld, in the Scandian lands.
20 Swa sceal geong/ guma/ gode gewyrcean,
So becomes it a youth to quit him well
21 fromum feohgiftum on fæder bearne/,
with his father's friends, by fee and gift,

22 þæt hine on ylde eft gewunigen
 that to aid him, aged, in after days,
 23 wilgesipas, þonne wig cume,
 come warriors willing, should war draw nigh,
 24 leode gelæsten; lofdædum sceal
 liegemen loyal: by lauded deeds
 25 in mægþa gehwære man geþeon.
 shall an earl have honor in every clan.
 26 Him ða Scyld gewat to gescæphwile
 Forth he fared at the fated moment,
 27 felahror feran on frean wære.
 sturdy Scyld to the shelter of God.
 28 Hi hýne þa ætbæron to brimes faroðe,
 Then they bore him over to ocean's billow,
 29 swæse gesipas, swa he selfa bæd,
 loving clansmen, as late he charged them,
 30 þenden wordum weold wine Scyldinga;
 while wielded words the winsome Scyld,
 31 leof landfruma lange ahte.
 the leader beloved who long had ruled...
 32 þær æt hyðe stod hringedstefna,
 In the roadstead rocked a ring-dight vessel,
 33 isig ond utfus, æþelinges fær.
 ice-flecked, outbound, atheling's barge:
 34 Aledon þa leofne þeoden,
 there laid they down their darling lord
 35 beaga bryttan, on bearm scipes,
 on the breast of the boat, the breaker-of-rings,
 36 mærne be mæste. þær wæs madma fela
 by the mast the mighty one. Many a treasure
 37 of feorwegum, frætwa, gelæded;
 fetched from far was freighted with him.
 38 ne hyrde ic cymlicor ceol gegyrwan
 No ship have I known so nobly dight
 39 hildewæpnum ond heaðowædum,
 with weapons of war and weeds of battle,
 40 billum ond byrnum; him on bearme læg
 with breastplate and blade: on his bosom lay
 41 madma mænigo, þa him mid scoldon
 a heaped hoard that hence should go
 42 on flodes æht feor gewitan.
 far o'er the flood with him floating away.
 43 Nalæs hi hine læssan lacum teodan,
 No less these loaded the lordly gifts,
 44 þeodgestreonium, þon þa dydon
 thanes' huge treasure, than those had done

45 þe hine æt frumsceafta forð onsendon
 who in former time forth had sent him
 46 ænne ofer yðe umborwesende.
 sole on the seas, a suckling child.
 47 þa gyt hie him asetton segen geldenne/
 High o'er his head they hoist the standard,
 48 heah ofer heafod, leton holm beran/
 a gold-wove banner; let billows take him,
 49 geafon on garsecg; him wæs geomor sefa,
 gave him to ocean. Grave were their spirits,
 50 murnende mod. Men ne cunnon
 mournful their mood. No man is able
 51 secgan to soðe, selerædende/
 to say in sooth, no son of the halls,
 52 hæleð under heofenum, hwa þæm hlæste onfeng.
 no hero 'neath heaven, -- who harbored that freight!

The Funeral

3137 Him ða gegiredan Geata leode
 THEN fashioned for him the folk of Geats
 3138 ad on eorðan unwaclicne,
 firm on the earth a funeral-pile,
 3139 helmum/ behongen, hildebordum,
 and hung it with helmets and harness of war
 3140 beorhtum byrnum, swa he bena wæs;
 and breastplates bright, as the boon he asked;
 3141 alegdon ða tomiddes mærne þeoden
 and they laid amid it the mighty chieftain,
 3142 hæleð hiofende, hlaford/ leofne.
 heroes mourning their master dear.

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