

Walker Probst

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Beowulf

In Europe, from Geatland to Denmark travels Beowulf, a larger than life hero in the poem, *Beowulf*, where he is challenged with many quests and different obstacles. Within these quests he uses his many strengths to fight and defeat many monsters who were terrorizing his companions. Beowulf's reign eventually comes to an end when he gives his life up killing a dragon to save his kingdom. Beowulf is an epic hero, who has many traits and abilities, fights many larger than life monsters, and is loved and respected by all people and kingdoms.

Beowulf has many traits and abilities that most humans do not have which allow him to gain fame among kingdoms. Beowulf's courage allows him to fight many monsters and helps him kill Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon. Beowulf shows his courage fighting Grendel when he says:

“My hands

Alone shall fight for me, struggle for life

Against the monster. God must decide

Who will be given to death's cold grip,” (147 - 150).

Beowulf uses his courage to fight the monster with his bare hands, the same style as Grendel uses when fighting. Similarly, Beowulf's superhuman strength helps and hurts him when

defeating all three of the monsters. Beowulf uses his strength to his advantage while fighting Grendel, defeating him by pulling his whole arm off with his bare hands. Beowulf's use of his strength helps him defeat Grendel in this situation. Beowulf's strength also hurts him in some situations, especially when he fights the dragon. According to the story:

“He raised his sword
And struck at the dragon's scaly hide.
The ancient blade broke, bit into
The monster's skin, drew blood, but cracked
And failed him before it went deep enough, helped him
Less than he needed,” (548 - 558).

Beowulf's strength in this situation hurts him and ultimately leads to his death. Additionally, Beowulf's comitatus with Hrothgar and his Geats allow him to save many people and achieve lof which will help his name live on forever. Beowulf defeats Grendel and is praised by the Danes. According to the story:

“The old and young rejoiced, turned back
From that happy pilgrimage, mounted their hard-hooved
Horses, high-spirited stallions, and rode them
Slowly toward Herot again, retelling
Beowulf's bravery as they jogged along,” (294 - 298).

Beowulf gains their comitatus which will lead to Beowulf helping them again in the future. Beowulf becomes the king of the Geats and already has comitatus and lof, but gives up his life to defeat the dragon and save his kingdom. When Beowulf does this they build a tower in his name

which will allow his kingdom to remember him forever. Beowulf's superhuman abilities allow him to help other kingdoms and his own from larger than life monsters.

Beowulf defeats many larger than life monsters which helps him save kingdoms from being destroyed and many people from being killed. Beowulf first travels to Denmark to fight Grendel, a monster who would not let the Danes enjoy their parties in Herot. Grendel had been terrorizing them for twelve years and would not let them enjoy their freedom, so Beowulf went to help Hrothgar. Along the way Beowulf sacrificed one of his men to learn how the monster fought. When his man died, Beowulf fought Grendel and killed the monster by ripping off his arm. Beowulf's killing of Grendel shows Beowulf's larger than life strength. As a result, Beowulf then fights Grendel's mother after she kills Hrothgar's closest friend, Aeschere, out of anger from her son's death. While fighting Beowulf grabs a giant sword and according to the story:

“Lifted it high over his head
 And struck with all the strength he had left,
 Caught her in the neck and cut it through,
 Broke bones and all. Her body fell
 To the floor, lifeless,” (436 - 440).

Beowulf shows his comitatus and strength by traveling to the monster's home and killing it after it took the life of one of Hrothgar's friends. Likewise, Beowulf's final battle is with the dragon who had started to terrorize people in his kingdom. Beowulf fights the dragon in its lair, but his sword breaks and he is pierced in the neck by the dragon's poison. Before the poison could kill Beowulf, his cousin, Wiglaf, comes to help him and they defeat the dragon together. Beowulf

defeats many larger than life monsters and dies in hero fashion, saving his kingdom. Defeating these monsters allows Beowulf to achieve comitatus with many different people.

Beowulf does many good things for people which leads him to be respected by all people and kingdoms who know and have heard of him. Beowulf has a great relationship with the Danes which only gets better throughout the story. Beowulf does not know the Danes before the story, but when he hears of Grendel he travels to Denmark where he defeats him. Beowulf is greatly praised by Hrothgar and his kingdom for saving Herot and its citizens from this monster. Moreover, Beowulf also has a very good relationship with Wiglaf, his cousin. When Beowulf was fighting the dragon Wiglaf came to help him even though there were many risks of him dying. The story says, “And then when Beowulf needed him most/ Wiglaf showed his courage, his strength/ And skill, and the boldness he was born with (617 - 619). By doing this Wiglaf shows his honor to Beowulf which leads to him becoming king. In a similar manner, Beowulf was a good leader for the Geats which led to them loving and respecting him. The Geats honored Beowulf’s death and according to the story:

The Geats built the tower, as Beowulf
Had asked, strong and tall, so sailors
Could find it from far and wide; working
For ten long days they made his monument,
Sealed his ashes in walls as straight
And high as wise and willing hands
could raise them, (732 - 738).

The Geats honor Beowulf in one of the greatest ways which will allow him to live on forever.

Beowulf becomes a hero for many people throughout the story, after he kills many larger than life monsters with the help of his superhuman abilities. Beowulf's strength helps him defeat many monsters that no other human could kill. While killing these monsters he creates many friendships with different people and kingdoms. Beowulf helps many people and these kingdoms wouldn't have survived without him.

Works Cited

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