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Mrs. Graning

English 11

27 september 2024

Beowulf

Beowulf, an epic poem composed in old English, stands as one of the most important works in anglo saxon literature. This timeless tale of heroism and adventure chronicles the feats of its titular hero, Beowulf as he battles formidable monsters and dragons. Through its rich narrative and vivid imagery the poem explores themes of bravery, loyalty and the struggle between good and evil offering profound insights into the values and culture of the time. Beowulf is an epic hero because he is very powerful and has faced many challenges and battles, he has many soldiers loyal by his side, and when his life comes to an end, he is very well respected.

Hrothgar created a mead hall that was made for himself and his warriors. This hall was called Heorot. This is where the warriors came together to eat and drink and celebrate. On page 27 it states that “he thought of greatness and resolved to build a hall that would hold his mighty band and reach higher toward Heaven than anything that had ever been known to the sons of men.” as each day went by that the danes party in the hall, that monster that lived down in the darkness became more and more angry with the loud music. “A powerful monster, living down in the darkness, growled in pain, impatient as day after day the music rang loud in that hall”(page 28). The monster that haunted the hall was named Grendal; he hated being disturbed by the noises of the Danise because it represented joy and happiness. Grendal lived in a place that was described as being hell. “And made his home in a hell not hell but earth”(page 28). The hrothgar and his

warriors tried to make a plan to get rid of Grendel but nothing seemed to work. It shows here “Hrothgar and his councilors seek a plan to rid themselves of Grendel, but to no avail”(page 29). So Grendel waited until everyone was asleep to sneak into the house and kill thirty men by smashing them in their beds and leaving with their bodies. “ he slipped through the door and there in the silence snatched up thirty men, smashed them unknowing in their beds and ran out with their bodies”(page 29). The next morning there was no partying, only sadness and tears for the ones that they lost. When they started to fear that that wouldn't be the end of it. “He wept, fearing the beginning might not be the end.”(page 29). Grendel came back the next night wanting to kill more, but the warriors were prepared this time and tried to escape him by sleeping in different beds. The only survivors were the ones that ran from him. “Then each warrior tried to escape him, searching for rest in different beds. The only survivors were those who fled him.”(page 29). Herot stayed by himself for years, there were twelve winters of sadness for the loss of all the warriors.

Beowulf hears about the things Grendel has done. So Beowulf asked to go to see Hrothgar, Hrothgar remembers Beowulf from him being a child. “Beowulf asks to be taken to see Hrothgar”(page 30). When Beowulf gets there he is greeted by Wulfgar and is told “ Now go to him as you are, in your armor and helmets, but leave your battle-shields here, and your spears, let them lie waiting for the promises your words may make.”(page 30).Beowulf came leaving his weapons but telling some of his warriors to keep their weapons, Beowulf fought without his weapons because it was a question of honor. Beowulf goes off to talk about how powerful he is and the battles that he has faced. “ five great giants into chains. I swam in the blackness of the night, hunting monsters out of the ocean, and killing them one by one.”(page 30-31). “ Beowulf plans to confront Grendel in the hall. He asks Hrothgar to return his armor to Beowulf’s king,

Higlac, if he dies in the confrontation.”(page 31). One of Hrothgar's warriors challenges Beowulf that he wasn't going to be able to beat Grendel. “One of Hrothgar’s thanes, or pledged warriors, named Unferth challenges Beowulf, doubting that he can best Grendal.” (page 31). The next night Grendel came into the house ready to kill anyone. “Grendel came, hoping to kill anyone he could trap on this trip to high Herot”.(page 32). After killing another warrior he steps to Beowulf surprised and seizes himself, Grendel was scared of Beowulf. “Grendel’s one thought was to run from Beowulf.”(page 33). The Danes were scared when Grendel and Beowulf started to battle. “the high hall rang, its roof boards swayed, and Danes shook with terror.” (page 33). The Danes became even more terrified from the noises of Beowulf defeating Grendel. “The terrible screams of the almighty’s enemy sang in the darkness, the horrible shrieks of pain and defeat.” (page 33). Beowulf tore off Grendel's arm with his bare hands, Grendel escaped to his swamp to die. After Beowulf’s battle he hung Grendel's arm from the rafters. “From the rafters where Beowulf had hung it, was the monster’s arm, claw and shoulder and all.”(page 35).

People gathered to congratulate Beowulf. “ people gather from far and wide to praise Beowulf’s mighty deed.” (page 35). Everything was good until Beowulf found out that Grendel's mother was still in the swamp. “Grendel's mother is hidden in her terrible home, in a place you’ve never seen.” (page 37). As Beowulf got back on his feet from the battle with Grendel's mother he saw a sword hanging on the wall hammered by giants. “ then saw, hanging on the wall ,a heavy sword, hammered by giants.” (page 40). Beowulf picked up the heavy sword and cut her in the neck with all of his strength. “ lifted it high over his head and struck with all the strength he had left, caught her in the neck and cut it through, broken bones and all.” (page 40). Beowulf ruled in Geatland, and took the throne. Then when a dragon with ancient treasure comes out from its tower. Beowulf says farewell to his followers as he goes to his last

and final battle, Beowulf uses no weapons to defeat the dragon. "I'd use no sword, no weapon, if this beast could be killed without it, crushed to death like Grendel, gripped in my hands and torn limb from limb." (page 42). As Beowulf enters to battle the dragon the breath of the dragon was so hot that no one could stand, and smoke. The dragon came to Beowulf with fire and smoke. "The dragon's breath, flooding down through the hidden entrance, too hot for anyone to stand. The monster came quickly toward him, pouring out fire and smoke, hurrying to its fate." (page 43). The dragon's breath started to melt Beowulf sword so Beowulf strikes the dragon but as he does the sword breaks. " but he raised his sword and struck at the dragon's hide. The ancient blade broke, bit into the monster's skin." (page 43). Wiglaf just helped Beowulf because he saw how powerful the dragon is. "Wiglaf jumped behind the Beowulf shield; his own was burned to ashes." (page 44-45). The dragon bit into Beowulf neck, Wiglaf knew this was the time that Beowulf needed him the most so he stabbed the dragon leading to death. "Watching for its chance it drove its tusk into Beowulf's neck; he staggered, the blood came flooding forth, fell like rain." "And die away." (page 45). Beowulf couldn't feel anything his neck started to swell from the venom. "My days have gone by as fate willed" (page 46). Wiglaf found the ancient treasure to bring to Beowulf before he died. "Wiglaf, go, quickly, find the dragon's treasure: we've taken its life, but its gold is ours, too. hurry , bring me ancient silver, precious jewels, shining armor and gems, before i die." (page 46). As Beowulf is dying he asks Wiglaf to lead his people. When Beowulf dies they burn his body, and build a tower with Beowulf's ashes in it to remember him And ride their horses around his tower. "Then the Geats built the tower, as Beowulf had asked." (page 48). Beowulf died as a brave and nobly person who was very respected, and died for his warriors.

Work cited

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