

EPIC OF GILGAMESH

CHARACTERS

GILGAMESH: The hero and king of Uruk.

ENKIDU: His new friend.

NINSUN: Wise goddess and mother of Gilgamesh

SHAMHAT: Sacred temple girl who brought the two friends together.

ANNU: Father of the Gods and patron of Uruk.

HUMBABA: Monster god who must be killed.

ISHTAR: The King's spurned and vengeful suitor, and goddess.

ENTI: The god who unleashes the great flood.

SIDUR: The bar maid with worldly advice.

URHANIBAI: The boatman who gives passage to paradise.

UPNAPISHTIM: Who holds the secret of eternal life.

Tablet I

Gilgamesh, the King

When a man is stalked by terror; when the man turns and stalks the terror
When that man lives to tell the tale over and over
That man becomes a hero.

Gilgamesh, he the hero who saw all [Sha nagba imuru]

Gilgamesh who carved his story in stone for all

Gilgamesh, the one who knew all.

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He saw the great Mystery, he knew the Hidden:

He recovered the knowledge of all the times before the Flood.

He journeyed beyond the merely distant; he struggled beyond mere exhaustion,
And then he carved his story on stone.

He walked on the sacred ground of Eanna,

He walked on the sacred walls of Eanna,

Holy Eanna's sacred city of Uruk.

Touch the wall as crying women touch them

They touch the walls as they once touched their soldiers now all dead, every one

No one has ever built walls like these.

Stand on these walls and feel the wind in the darkest night

Feel the wind leap away to the heavens above from the walls below.

Feel the straining muscles, paining tendons, and aching joints of those who built this wall.

In this wall is hidden a story of Gilgamesh

Gilgamesh who ordered these walls raised by labouring hands

Gilgamesh who walked these walls

Gilgamesh who touched these walls

Gilgamesh who stood on these walls as the cold night wind shied from it

In this story learn what fear taught him, what sorrow taught him,

what friendship taught him

Learn how fame came to him, he who wanted no fame

Learn how wisdom came to him, he who never sought it
 Learn how he reached divinity, him humbly born

Child of Lugalbanda's wife and a divine force
 Gilgamesh is a living force of nature
 Child of Ninsun, Lady Wild Cow, she who no man touched,
 She so pure, so divine, so without sin.

Child who grew to lead the army and protect it's stragglers.
 Child who knew the land all about, from the deepest well to the highest eagle crusted mountain
 Child who knew how a smithy worked and how irrigation worked from the daughters of the Great
 Abyss, Abzu
 Child who sailed the seas to the land of the dead near Utnapishtim
 Child who came from the dead bringing life to the flooded earth.

Is there anywhere a greater king who can say, as Gilgamesh may?
 "I am the greatest king in this world!?"

Column II

Most of him was forged above, the rest was forged below.
 She-who-must-be-obeyed fashioned his body.
 She endowed him with wit and wisdom.
 Like a shepherd Gilgamesh watches the flocks of Uruk himself
 Like a bull of heaven, snorting nose, pawing ground,
 No one else yelled his challenges, fought his battles.
 Howling dreams rouses his clan.

But in his passion he goes howling through sacred temples.
 But in his passion he has ravished others?

The people of Uruk did lament:
 "Is this shepherd of Uruk's flocks protecting the women of other men by himself laying with them?"

This lament did go on high to pass into Aruru's ear, great goddess of creation that she is:
 "I created humans.
 I shall create again the image of Gilgamesh
 This creation now shall be as quick in heart and as strong in arm
 This creation will speak word to word, blow to blow, so Uruk's children will live in peace."

With this thought She did bend and scoop and spit and fling, with flick of wrist, mud
 Mud that fell deep into the woods below.
 Thus did Enkidu come about.
 Thus did Enkidu, wild man, hairy man, forest man, come about.
 Thus did Enkidu with golden sun dazzled locks of hair growing like the goddess-of-grain, come about.
 Thus did Enkidu, with body clothed like Sumuqu with only his own hide, come about.

Thus Enkidu, man in no family, man in no village, came about
 eating the food of grass,
 drinking from the water hole

Thus Enkidu, who ran like the wind, like running water, came about
 and racing swift as wind or silent water.
 Thus Enkidu, who ran with herds of gazelle, who ate grass, came about
 Thus Enkidu, who ate grass with the herd, came about
 Thus Enkidu, wild man, pure man, met the hunter.
 Thus did the hunter tremble in fear
 Thus did the hunter show everlasting fear

Column III

To his father the hunter wailed:
 "Father-mine, a man-beast has come to my hunting lands
 He is big and powerful.
 He is implacable like a heavenly star
 He roams and roams without tiring.
 He is a beast.
 He comes and goes at his will
 He eats fruit, and nuts and drinks from my water hole.
 He destroys my snares, destroys my pits, frees my game."

The father told the hunter his reply with anger:
 "First son mine, go to Uruk
 There strides a man of endless strength named Gilgamesh.
 He is big and powerful.
 His is implacable like a heavenly star.
 He runs and runs without tiring.
 Go to his palace and tell your tale to Gilgamesh.
 In tell you what to do

The hunter heard his father.
 To Uruk that night did the hunter run and this to Gilgamesh:
 "There is someone in my hunting lands who is untamed, unlearned in civilized ways.
 He is big and powerful.
 He is implacable like a heavenly star
 He roams and roams without tiring.
 He is a beast.
 He comes and goes at his will
 He eats fruit, and nuts and drinks from my water hole.
 He destroys my snares, destroys my pits, frees my game."

Gilgamesh leaped up and in his great voice cried:
 "Set this trap.
 Take back with you the sacred temple girl, Shamhat.
 Shamhat has civilizing charm.
 Shamhat has civilizing skills.
 When this man-beast comes to your water hole,
 Shamhat will show him civilizing charm, her civilizing skills.
 Shamhat will use all her grace, all her power.
 When he in lust like any beast leaves the herd to come to her,
 Then his wildness will leave him.
 Then his beasts on high will leave him then behind."

The hunter returned to his hunting lands,
 The hunter swiftly came with the sacred temple girl Shamhat,
 In three days they set their trap for Enkidu at the hunter's water hole.
 For two days they lay mute waiting.
 Then slowly the herd came in to drink

Column IV

Beasts stirred then, stretching and shaking their heads.
 The man-beast stirred then, stretching and shaking his head.

Shamhat looked at him and smiled.
 Shamhat smiled as a smithy smiles at the finest tools
 Shamhat, sacred temple girl, smiled at the raw material for her civilizing art.
 Shamhat spoke in a passionate whisper:
 "Here is he, wild in form, a form needing my fire to make it a civilized form.
 I shall show him my body.
 I shall let him smell my exciting musk.
 I shall cover his body with my body.
 I will heat his hammer with my burning bush.
 I will rise his trembling hammer.
 I will let it beat my anvil-womb and show him my civilizing force.
 I will change his scent from wild to tame, and his herd will flee."

Shamhat threw her cloak aside and he saw her body.
 Shamhat walk close up to him and he smelled her charming scent.
 Shamhat leaped on Enkidu and wrapped her legs about his groin.
 Shamhat pressed her mouth on Enkidu's mouth, her tongue parting his lips
 Shamhat heating mound expanded his trembling cock
 Shamhat beat her cunt on his stiffened cock until breathless they collapsed.
 Shamhat showed him her civilizing force for seven nights.
 Shamhat changed his scent so the herds stampeded from him in terror.

Enkidu now could no longer run and run.
 Enkidu now was no longer wild.
 Enkidu now was no longer virgin.
 Enkidu now returned to Shamhat to learn more of civilizing ways.

And Shamhat said:

"Now that you have learned one civilizing way, I will teach you others."
 Shamhat taught Enkidu how to dress.
 Shamhat taught Enkidu how to eat.
 Shamhat taught Enkidu how to speak fine and clear.
 Shamhat taught Enkidu how to listen when someone speaks.
 Enkidu during the day did learn these civilizing ways.
 Enkidu during the night did continue to practice the civilizing ways.
 And while Enkidu nestled in civilizing Shamhat's warming lap,
 Shamhat said this to Enkidu:
 "Now you need a man-friend to teach you manly grace.
 Please come with me to fair Eanna's Holy Ground, Uruk, and meet Gilgamesh, powerful king who
 runs before his herd of people in Uruk."
 And Enkidu said "Yes", and then he proclaimed:

Column V

"Uruk will hear me say, 'Wild I was, and my lover Shamhat did me tame.
 Even now I know much about the forests and hills.
 Forester that I am, a mountainous power is mine.
 But lovely Shamhat has showed me her civilizing ways, so
 Before you now I give my power to further Uruk's ends."
 Shamshat smiled and took his hand and the went to Uruk, Holy Eanna's ground.
 For three days they walked, and then through human made gates they walked.
 They walked passed gaudy crowds, gaudy girls, gaudy musicians.
 Each night these party fiends do their best to enjoy the time.

Enkidu you will see Great Gilgamesh.
 Watch his face, note his strength, hear his civilized words, feel the Holy Eanna in his ways.
 Before you left the herds he dreamed of you.
 And Lady Wild Cow, Virgin Ninsun, she calmed him with her words."
 First Enkidu heard these words, then he charmed the sacred temple girl that night.
 And then they slept smiling.

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Tablet II

Enkidu and Gilgamesh Meet

Long before Enkidu met Shamhat, long before Enkidu was civilized, Gilgamesh dreamt.
 Gilgamesh saw a star fall from heaven.
 Gilgamesh saw a star fall on the ground outside holy Eanna's city
 Gilgamesh saw the people gather around the fallen star.
 Gilgamesh was drawn to the fallen star as to a woman.
 Gilgamesh walked from Uruk to the fallen star and saw the people's awe and fear.
 Gilgamesh walked up to the fallen star and tried to lift it, and could not.

Gilgamesh awoke with fear in his heart.
 Gilgamesh cried out and arose.
 Gilgamesh went to his mother, virgin Lady Wild Cow, Ninsun.
 Gilgamesh told her his dream.
 Virgin Ninsun said this to her son Gilgamesh:
 "You did right to tell me of this dream.
 You did right to wonder what it meant.
 This star represents a man who will be a gift from heaven.
 This star represents a man who will be loyal to you and brave for you.
 This star represents a man who will be your friend.
 This star represents good things for you and for Uruk
 Gilgamesh, his heart calmed then said:
 Let this dream happen as you tell it.

Shamhat and Enkidu began their journey.
 Shamhat cut her cloak in two and covered Enkidu with one half.
 Shamhat taught Enkidu how to dress.
 Shamhat then took Enkidu's hand like a mother takes a toddling son,

Like a goddess takes a worshipper into her temple.
Shamhat led Enkidu from the woods and so their journey began.

Into a shepherds camp they walked.
The shepherds looked at Enkidu and thought:
"Like Gilgamesh is this man, twice as large as most, twice as strong, twice as steady.
This man is like a star from heaven."

To the pair the shepherds brought cooked food.
To the pair the shepherds brought beer.
And Enkidu looked at the cooked food and knew it not.
And Shamhat continued teaching Enkidu how to eat.
"Enkidu, this is cooked food. It is good food. Eat your fill.
Enkidu, this is beer to drink. It is good to drink. Drink your fill."
So Enkidu ate the cooked food. Seven platters of the cooked food.
So Enkidu drank the beer. Seven jugs of the cooked food.
At the end Enkidu sprang up. Enkidu was happy and began to sing to heaven.

Shamhat taught Enkidu how to wash his body which was twice the size of other men.
Shamhat showed Enkidu how to rub fragrant oils into his body which was twice that of other men.
The shepherds brought new clothes for Enkidu to wear.
Shamhat taught Enkidu how to dress.
Enkidu dressed himself in new clothes the shepherds brought.
Shamhat taught Enkidu how to speak fine and clear.
Enkidu thanked the shepherds for the hospitality and asked what they might do in turn.
Shamhat taught Enkidu how to listen when someone speaks.
The shepherds taught Enkidu to use a spear.
The shepherds taught Enkidu how to protect the sheep, to protect the shepherds and to protect Shamhat.
Thus did Enkidu guard all about when the sun had set and night lay across the sky.

Column II

One day soon after a stranger came to the shepherd's camp bearing fine gifts.
Shamhat asked: "Where are you going with all those fine gifts?"
And the stranger said in reply: "To Uruk do I bear these gifts, for a wedding of my friend.
The bride shall first lie with Gilgamesh in pleasure then the groom shall go to his bride."

On hearing these words, Enkidu leaped up and cried, "Why does the groom allow that to be?"
The stranger replied: "All fall before the power and desire of Gilgamesh, Wild Ox greatest of all."
Enkidu scowled and proclaimed: "Take me to Gilgamesh. Take me to Uruk now.
I am a wild man born of wildness, fallen from heaven. I cannot be withstood."
So to Uruk did this trio go.

Column III

When Enkidu did stride on Uruk's streets,
When Enkidu did walk upon its holy ground
Then the people did remark on how another Gilgamesh had appeared
"Who be this man so like Gilgamesh. Here Gilgamesh has met his match. Here Gilgamesh has met his twin"

And straight to the wedding party did the trio go.
 And straight to the bride's door did Enkidu door.
 There he took a protective stance.
 Like a shepherd Enkidu guarded the door.
 Enkidu, Wild Man, stood ready to meet and stop the king.
 Gilgamesh came like a Wild Ox to take the bride as his.
 Wild heart met wild heart,

At the door and then struggled did begin.
 Each body on the other did meet with grapple and heavy blows.

Stray swings did the door break, did the door jamb did break, did the walls did crack.
 On to the streets did the pair wrestle, wild heart to wild heart.
 Doors fell, corners were broken off, stalls knocked down, and still on they fought.
 They fought to the city gates, which trembled with their blows.
 Then with a terrible shout Gilgamesh did in anger throw his strength straight at Enkidu.
 A the wild heart of an Ox did wrestle to his knees the wild heart of the wild-man.
 Enkidu said "You are the strongest of us two.
 You are blazing rage to my angry shout,
 You are terror to my puny fear.
 Virgin Ninsun bore only you. Eanna's city is yours to rule."
 And so right quick did anger subside in the wild heart of the Ox Gilgamesh,

And hard resolve did they hug, then kissed, and then held in trust the other's arm.

Column IV

And while they stood face to face, hand to arm, wild heart to wild heart, did Ninsun come.
 "Enkidu was heaven born. No father nor mother his.
 Enkidu lived on grass, and with the prairie deer did run with no guidance from his kind.
 Enkidu has learned the civilized ways, and will never forget.
 Enkidu will be loyal and brave for you too."
 Enkidu wept to hear himself so well understood.
 And with each a shout hugged each other and then gripped each others hand, a covenant of newly
 forged friends.

Tablet III A Friendship Forged and Plans to Do Great Deeds

Column I

Gilgamesh and Enkidu each with a shout hugged each other and then gripped each others hand, a
 covenant of newly forged friends.

Column II

So now as friends the days were short.

With each other did they sit and speak as friends do speak.
 Together they did work, play and pray.
 And in this way Gilgamesh did his people's trust once more regain
 For they could see that friendship was greater than boredom's curse.
 One day in Shamash temple where they went
 A dire prophecy of future doom did they hear.
 Shamash told them that common folk froze and ate meat and roots totally raw because of one demon.
 Shamash told them of that demon who with howls and killing breath did protect the cedar forest from being felled.
 Shamash did tell Gilgamesh to go to cedar forest far, and strike off a demon's head.
 And on hearing this Enkidu did proclaim:
 "I was a wild man of the woods, so about forest I do know.
 In the cedar forest's to the west sits a demon, awesome Hawawa.
 Great Enlil did fashion this guardian of his cedar forest far and wide.
 His power is like the fire of the sun, like the flood of the ocean.
 When Hawawa roars all before its noisy power falls.
 Hawawa hears every fearful breath while his own breath is death."

But Gilgamesh shrugs and says,
 A man's life is short, shall we live in shallow hole and cry?
 Follow me to the cedar forest and urge me to take each step.
 Each man does die, but my immortality is sure.
 If Hawawa strikes me down most dead, it will be said I fought howling Hawawa. No shame!
 If I do Hawawa strike down and slay him now and forever then I will have greater fame. No shame.

Whatever I try I shall succeed to brand my life upon the memory of my sons.
 So Enkidu, you who have fought with lion and wolf, bring that courage with me now."
 So Enkidu does reply,
 "In fear I make me small, and smaller still would I make this friendship be.
 So therefore let us plan this assault on fierce Hawawa and forge our friendship in tighter bonds
 For death met with comrades true makes death less awesome to behold."

Column III

The pair to metal workers went
 And watched them make solid implements of defence.
 And also watched make awesome implements of death.
 As they watched axes, and mauls and sharp swords too were forged true.
 With greaves and helmet, breast plate and girdles thick.
 And with this armour and these weopens did Gilgamesh cry out:
 "Holy Eanna, Shamash great, Elders and People of Uruk, holy ground, attend!
 I Gilgamesh shall to forest stride and like none before confront demon Hawawa.
 With these deeds I shall ensure my everlasting memory in the mind of my sons.
 Bless this quest, start a feast and when I return I will host the first toast to my fame.
 The Elders did then stand and say,
 "Young Gilgamesh, listen to this and slow your stride.
 Your valiant heart sees death's danger not.
 But mark our words.
 Hawawa power is like the fire of the sun, like the flood of the ocean.
 When Hawawa roars all before its noisy power falls.

Hawawa hears every fearful breath while his own breath is death."

So Gilgamesh said with his kingly power:

"It is I who walks into cedar forest far."

"Take Enkidu, who knows the forest ways, and put him first.", the Elders replied.

"Take Enkidu, who knows the wilderness, let him lead you there.", the Elders replied.

"Take Enkidu, who will not desert you, take him to find your way through mountain passes.", the Elders replied.

"Take Enkidu, who wild food knows, who can uncover deep water pure.", the Elders replied.

"Take Enkidu, who with water found can with you offer deed water pure to Mighty Shamash.", the Elders replied.

"Take Enkidu, who will protect you. For the sake of your father Lugalbanda, do remember his ways.", the Elders replied.

Then up spoke Enkidu to Gilgamesh mute,

"If young urges make you want to walk into cedar forest far, then take me, Gilgamesh

For I your companion will stay behind your back, at your side, before you as I need to guard you as a friend.

I, Enkidu who knows forest, and the wilderness, where the wild food lies, where deep water pure resides.

I, Enkidu will lead you to deep water pure to offer to Shamash to succeed in your quest.

I, Enkidu will protect you as my friend. I your friend shall led you to cedar forest far.

These words Gilgamesh did admire, and his thoughtful head did join with his wild heart and there was peace.

Column IV

Ninsun, virgin Lady Wild Cow, most serene

Heard what her only son did plan

and so straight to to Shamash's temple did she stride.

Ninsun purified herself, adorn herself with holy garments, and sprinkled holy water on the ground

Then she mounted stairs to the temple's roof and at the altar burned

plants, sacred and fragrant to Shamash, while

With grief in her voice, with grief in her limbs, with grief in her eyes

Ninsun asked of Shamash:

"Why have you given my son a restless heart?

No one before has gone to cedar forest far.

And there he will face fire like the sun, flood like the ocean, a breath of death.

You Shamash ask for him to kill this demon far.

Protect him then when he lives this holy city ground.

Protect him in the wildness, through the mountains, when he enters the cedar forest far.

Protect him Shamash and keep him safe. Have your watchers, the heavenly stars watch him and Enkidu."

Then with the priests did Ninsun turn

And about Enkidu's wide neck did she place, adopting him like a son,

A sacred charm to protect him while he protected her womb born son.

So with these wishes did the two depart holy Eannu's ground, from Uruk did they go.

Tablet IV

Hawawa Met and Battle Become

Column I-II

Enkidu and Gilgamesh marched fast.
 Breaking their march with first meal, sixty long walks had they covered
 Setting their nightly camp, another 20 long walks had they covered.
 In three days they passed what all others would see pass only in three full weeks.
 After 3 days Enkidu found water in the driest sand
 They drank their fill only to Shamash receive libation.
 Nothing could stop their march to challenge Hawawa.

Column III-IV

Steadfast did they march
 Straight to danger
 in cedar forest far.
 An high hill did Gilgamesh offer Shamash flour
 "Give us dreams, O Might God, that sharpen the steel of our resolve."
 And that very night did Gilgamesh awake, dream tense and look about.
 Awakening Enkidu he did ask:
 "I had a dream just now, of you and idea walking through a mountain pass,
 When down the mountain came,
 Upon our heads, like a man's hands upon two flies."
 Enkidu once man of wildness did respond:
 "I was a wild man so this good dream I know.
 It is Hawawa, the falling mountain,
 Falling Hawawa as he dies, all about us."
 With these words Gilgamesh did relax and returned to sleep.
 And in his sleep he dreamt again.
 Gilgamesh awoke and awakening Enkidu he did ask:

 "I had another dream.
 In this dream I lay helpless on the ground
 While above me a great bull was bellowing in delight
 Each bull breath on me did I feel
 Each stamp of the bull did I feel as the ground about did shake
 Dusk did I break as the ground beneath his hoofs did break

 And yet I was brought water to slake my thirst."
 Enkidu once a man of wildness did respond:
 "I was a wild man so this good dream I know.
 The bull is not cedar forest demon, but Shamash.
 In the triumph of Hawawa's death does Shamash delight,"
 So to your parched lips did he bring like father to son, sweet respite."
 And with these words back to slumber did Gilgamesh go, but dreamed once more.
 Gilgamesh awoke and awakening Enkidu he did ask:
 "I had a third dream.
 In this dream there was sky and earth with mountain in between,
 And in the dark lightning did make bright all about,
 And thunder shook me from head to feet
 And Fire rained down all about, And Ash came after Fire, and covered all things about."

Enkidu once a man of wildness did respond:
 "I was a wild man so this good dream I know.
 When Hawawa is dead, the world will continue,
 Time will bury memory of him like the Fire long gone,
 Is but Ash."
 So Gilgamesh fell into sleep and dreamt no more.

Column IV

When the pair walked down next morn,
 Into pine scented air, green all about.
 The silence did inspire fear in the two friends
 Fear which grew until both took their axe and fell three cedars.
 There came a roar then a crash and the a ear filling crack.
 The Enkidu turned to Gilgamesh and said: "Recall your words you did to me say:
 'A man's life is short, shall we live in shallow hole and cry?
 Follow me to the cedar forest and urge me to take each step.
 Each man does die, but my immortality is sure.
 If Hawawa strikes me down most dead, it will be said I fought howling Hawawa. No shame!
 If I do Hawawa strike down and slay him now and forever then I will have greater fame. No shame.
 Whatever I try I shall succeed to brand my life upon the memory of my sons. So Enkidu, you who
 have fought with lion and wolf, bring that courage with me now.'
 Gilgamesh, hear me now, make small your fear [tur su nu]."
 And Gilgamesh did take heart from Enkidu's words
 So Gilgamesh did reply,
 "Thank you wild Enkidu, friend most true,"
 Hawawa has seven forms, each one terrible to behold,
 But two friends can stand fast against each form,"
 And in that way beat him down.
 And so far he has shown only one form to us, so let us beat that down."

Column V

When the demon form did come forth,
 Enkidu fled from the fearsome face
 But Gilgamesh did pursue and to him said,
 "Enkidu two friends can prevail against one form, no matter the fear,
 Let us back to forest go and defeat Hawawa one form again and again."
 Enkidu did rejoice "Strong are you so strong am I, let us depart.

Column VI

The one form they did meet.
 With companion blows and wounds
 Did they meet the howls, and claws and foul smells of demon kind
 So in the end the demon fell, one of seven, to the ground.

Tablet V

Hawawa Defeated

Column I

Enkidu and Gilgamesh marched in forest deeper still.
 Hawawa showed his next form, breath as death so foul be it.
 Enkidu said to Gilgamesh quick
 "Two friends against one demon is for sure a victory of friendship."
 And so they went against the demon who before them stood.
 And through the air axes chopped and swords sliced.
 Hawawa fought with demon strength, but this form did die,
 So Hawawa showed yet another form.

Column II

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Column III

Hawawa roared "Try to take me down, when like a mighty tree trunk am I formed."
 Did the friends run straight to danger
 in cedar forest far.
 And through the air axes chopped, and swords sliced,
 So to kindling did they reduce this form of Mighty Hawawa.
 But very quick did Hawawa become a whirlwind between the trees.
 And just as quick did Enkidu with axe in steady arms fell each tree
 Which about him lay.
 Gilgamesh lay down his sword and with maul did ensure
 Each falling tree did go all the way down to the ground."
 Now did Hawawa show his three remaining forms standing together.

Column IV

On the left was fire, on the right was flood, and in the middle stone.
 Gilgamesh did cry aloud to the heavens above:
 "I was a wild man so this good dream I know.
 Shamash, O Great Bull Above, give us strength, my friend and I.
 Give us courage to surpass our fear before this fearsome Hawawa."
 And in the heavens above Shamash did hear Gilgamesh pray
 So with lift of hand did he send thirteen winds against awful Hawawa
 Thirteen winds to stop the stone, and blow the fire into the flood then the flood back to the earth
 below.
 Shamash sent
 Si-mur-ru wind from heaven down
 Se-Ho-Has-Hu wind from north cold-bound land,
 Su-Kum-Hu wind from south hot-bound land,
 Se-Us-Hu wind from west-bound land,
 Se-utu-Hu wind from east sun-bound land,
 Se-gur-Ho-Has wind from beside the north-bound land.
 Sa-e-Ho-Has wind from the other side of the north-bound land.
 Su-tur-na-Kum-Hu wind from beside the south-bound land.

Su-eme-Kum-Hu wind from the other side of the south-bound land.
 Se-Us-ka-ka-Hu wind from beside the west-bound land.
 Se-Us-us-Hu wind from the other side of the west-bound land.
 Su-gal-Us-Hu wind from beside the east-bound land.
 Su-had-Us-Hu wind from the other side of the east-bound land.
 Shamash raised his other hand,
 And the thirteen winds blew against Hawawa's forms.
 The thirteen winds broke his stone, blew out his wind, blew away his flood. The thirteen winds left only Hawawa.
 Gilgamesh rushed forward.

Column IV

Hawawa fell to his knees.
 Hawawa cried out:
 I, Hawawa, make me your servant. I will cut down the trees for you.
 Shamash has blown me down.
 Shamash has sent you to beat me down.
 Gilgamesh you are son of virgin Lady Wild Cow.
 Gilgamesh you are king of Uruk.
 I, Hawawa can guard the wood for Uruk's gates."
 Enkidu with mighty roar did say:
 "The demon lies. He must be killed. To the demon do not listen. To me listen well."
 Hawawa made a piteous cry:
 "Why should you listen to one without mother, without father, who is only wild?
 Enlil, first of gods, when he shall hear, shall curse you and your friends,
 And Enlil, god of wildness, curse shall bring down man of wilderness Enkidu then."
 Enkidu said once more "The demon must be killed before Enlil is told.
 Gilgamesh, bring Hawawa down and build a cedar gate to Shamash.
 Gilgamesh this gate will tell how Gilgamesh destroyed the demon guardian of cedar forest far."
 And Gilgamesh did take heart from Enkidu's words
 So Gilgamesh did with his sword did slice into Hawawa's neck from the right.
 So Enkidu did with his ax did chop into Hawawa's neck from the left.
 And Hawawa's tongue and spoke never more.
 With gore and blood fouled clothes did they bring down vast cedar
 For a boat, and floated more cedar planks for the gate of holy Uruk.
 They cleansed themselves for the celebration
 And the rousing shouts that would surely greet them on their return.

Tablet VI The Hero Returns - The Bull of Heaven

Column I

Gilgamesh returned to the holy ground of Uruk, divine Eanna's city.
 Gilgamesh returned covered in Hawawa's gore.
 Gilgamesh washed the blood from his hair.
 Gilgamesh was the gore from his body.

Gilgamesh was clothed in the finest robes, the finest sash, the finest shoes, the finest cloak.
 Gilgamesh was returned his weapons, cleaned and polished.
 Gilgamesh placed his torcs upon his arms.
 Gilgamesh placed his crown on his head.
 Gilgamesh placed his ruling mace in his right hand.
 Gilgamesh did sit on his throne.

Divine Eanna saw him and was overwhelmed with lust.
 "Be my lover. Love me as a husband does a wife.
 Give me your seed, give me your semen.
 Plant your seed in my womb.
 Abundance will follow, produce without name.
 Your riches will pile up higher than the sky.
 A chariot of lapis lazuli, brass, ivory and golden wheels shall you have.
 On it pulled by horses created from thunderheads shall you arrive
 At our home, with cedar post, with cedar floor, with cedar wall in every room.
 Each power in the land will bow down before you
 And offer their new born triplets to you alone.
 Have sex with me and all this shall become yours."

Gilgamesh to these words did reply:
 "What may I offer in return, Queen of Love? You have everything.
 You want for all I state merely my cock?
 Why not I give you the food and drinks of the gods?
 I have nothing for she who has all.
 What happens when your desire burns out?
 What happens when you leave?
 Shall I love the cold air left?
 Shall I have after only your memory, a tar that won't wash away?
 Where are your lovers past and your husbands too?
 Dumuzi the shepherd, slain for your gain, forced to live underground
 While you play above.
 And then there was that courtier who fluttered into your snare.
 Do you hear his cries ever since?
 "My wing is broken; broken is my wing".
 A mighty lion did you fuck, and when his seed was in your sack
 You led him to a hunter's pit seven times seven deep, and left him to rot.
 You broke a wild horse and in his mouth placed harsh bit
 By let him take you hindmost,
 And then hobbled him
 So he can drink the water of a stream his hoofs muddied all the while.
 You took each sacrificed kid, ate the proffered cakes and drank from a goat herder's sweet
 and in return into wolf did you him turn, which dogs did follow and bite.
 With no further thought of that ex-lover you quickly turned to
 Your father's gardener Ishullanu whom you did tease when sweet figs and dates for you.
 "Ishullanu, come touch me here between my legs,
 Put your fingers deep within my sacred sack,
 I have no clothes on to halt your way."

And to you did Ishullanu say,
 Why, Eanna, should I eat your rotten meal,

When a tasty healthy meal could be mine?"
 Why should I sin And be accursed to lie
 Cold, hungry and afright in wild marsh land?"
 Now some say that you, Eanna so kind, turned into a frog who does croak:
 "I know not, I know not at all".
 And some say that you turned his penis into a mole
 Stuck in a tunnel in the ground which
 He can pull not out nor push further in.
 So Eanna, so sweet and kind,
 Which of these fates do you wish me find?

Column II

With these words from Gilgamesh in her ears
 Eanna did roar and shout, and
 Straight to heaven did she fly.
 Straight to her father Anu, and her mother Anunna too.
 "The king of Uruk has insulted me.
 He mocks my loves, and told of them to everyone."
 Anu looks down on his daughter and does ask:

"Why do you rage? Did you not lust for Gilgamesh
 To Thrust his semen into your sack?
 Did you not him approach like a man?
 Why complain what you did start?
 He tells only to all what you did do.
 The truth is no crime."

Eanna did roar and then she did demand:
 "Give me the Bull of Heaven so I may punish his flaying tongue.
 Give me the Bull of Heaven so I may trample him dead.
 Give me them or I shall break the gates to the land of the dead,
 And let them wander out to feast on living flesh,
 So many dead they will be more than any living ones for sure."

Anu say to his daughter Eanna thus:
 "The Bull of Heaven will trample the grain to the ground for seven years.
 Unless you gather each harvest now your people will in famine lie.
 Surely you want not your worshippers to eat only husks.
 Surely you want the sweet smoke of good offerings sent to you.
 Have you thought on this?"

"Yes I have thought on this
 And each harvest have I stored for seven years,
 So each beast and person too will eat and drink well,
 Of this I be sure."

Column III

So to his daughter did Anu give
 the Bull of Heaven.
 And soon he was heard

Snorting and bellowing like a mighty herd.
 He stomped his hoofs.
 The Euphrates shook.
 He stomped his hoofs.
 Uruk shook.
 He stomped his hoofs.

The whole earth shook.
 He stomped his hoofs.
 The earth did break and into the cracks,
 100 Uruk men fell through.
 On this third stomp did Enkidu rush forth
 And before the Bull of Heaven stood.
 Grasping in his wildness shaped hands the horns
 He twisted the head of the Bull
 So stinking slobber did splash on Enkidu's face.
 Enkidu twisted the Bull the other way
 The bull's stinking tail did brush Enkidu's face.

To Gilgamesh did Enkidu cry:
 "Life is short.
 Let us fight the Bull of Heaven
 And win."
 Gilgamesh rushed in to fight.
 "Friends together can win out"
 So while Enkidu held taut stinking tail

Gilgamesh shoved his sword like a butcher's knife
 between shoulder and horn and so killed the Bull.
 From the Bull the two friends tore
 his heart as offering to great Shamash.

Bowing first to Shamash,
 The two friends sat down and rested.

Column IV
 From heaven down did Eanna come with roar and shout.
 On high tower of Uruk did she stand and curse all below.

Woe be to all because of Gilgamesh.
 For insult to Eanna by his telling all her myriad ways.
 For insult to Eanna by killing her punisher the Bull of Heaven. "

Angry did these word make Enkidu.
 So he flung a haunch of slaughtered Bull
 at the wall of the tower on which the goddess stood.
 "If I could reach you now
 I would tear your leg from your body
 As I have this leg from the Bull.
 I would."
 Eanna swooped down and the haunch she took

To her temple and
 < With attendants, priests and sacred temple girls
 Did wail and lament over this haunch.

Gilgamesh then did show to all the artisans
 To show how the Bull of Heaven had been made.
 He showed the the coating on the horns two fingers thick.
 He cut the horns off and filled them with six measures of oil.
 He offered the oil in memory to his father Lugalbanda.
 He hung the empty horns in his room at home.
 Then to the Euphrates Gilgamesh in hand with Enkidu did they go.

Gilgamesh and Enkidu, friends, washed their hands in calm river waters.
 Behind them gathered Uruk's folk
 Blessed them and cheered them back through Uruk's streets.
 Then Gilgamesh spoke to the crowds.

"I am the strongest one of all.
 Fame will attend my sons for ever more.
 Eanna is mocked by Uruk and
 Gilgamesh is proclaimed for the glory he has obtained."
 All night did the palace sing and dance
 The victory this day and in cedar forest far.
 But later in his sleep did Enkidu dream
 That the gods did meet and
 And he when awoke he did feel the end seemed near.

 Tablet VII
 Enkidu Dies

Column I

Enkidu's dream went like this:
 In council did the gods sit and speak.
 Anu said:
 "Huwawa and the Bull of Heaven have they killed.
 Both offenses to heaven's decree so one of them must die.
 The first to strike a cedar in cedar forest far must die."
 Enlil said:
 "Enkidu must die, and thereby punish Gilgamesh his friend."
 Shamash said:
 "Both went together to follow my word.
 Both went together to cedar forest far on my command.
 Why should either die?"
 Enlil said:
 "I sent Hawawa to protect cedar forest far.
 You spited me and with these two friends did go
 To stand as friend when into the cedar forest far they did go

And kill my guardian Hawawa."

Column II

So with these words made decree, Enkidu fell sick.
 Gilgamesh on him looked, and fell to weeping like a child.
 "Why am I too live when my brother dies?
 What spares me and takes him away?"
 Enkidu then spoke:
 "Is it true that now I go to sit with the dead all about me
 To sit alone without my friend around?"
 Gilgamesh then said:
 Must I sit no closer to Enkidu than outside the door of dead-land
 While within sits my friend with only shadows for companions?
 Enkidu then cursed the door made of wood from cedar forest far
 "Deaf ignorant door,
 I searched 20 long marches to find the tallest cedar
 With which to adorn our city with useful monument
 Of demon bested in cedar forest far.
 If I had but known this would be the result
 I would to kindling this cedar tree have chopped
 Let some future king, or god on high
 Destroy this gate so that the name of Enkidu is no more."

"Gilgamesh heard and weeping like a child did say
 "Enkidu's wild heart does make final struggle
 With his god given fate.
 To struggle against god given fate is futile.
 What Enlil does decree be writ can not be erased.
 And that was told in a dream shall I Gilgamesh beg through prayers
 That Enkidu my friend my companion shall from this be spared.
 And if Gilgamesh prays be heard then shall I the king build
 A statue to the gods to celebrate the fame of Enkidu."

Column III

In the next morning's early dawn
 Did sleepless, weeping Enkidu make this cry to Shamash.
 "As for the hunter who saw me in grasslands running with herds,
 May he always see these beasts flee from him scot free.
 Fill his hunting pits, destroy his snares.
 May he starve for having brought me here."

As the first light of the creeping dawn lit the sky above,
 Did sleepless, weeping Enkidu make this cry to Shamash.
 Let the sacred temple girl who did come to civilize me,

Eat from the garbage in the streets,
 Drink from the cesspools and foul streams in the streets,
 May you get no lovers, though hard you walk in the streets,
 May vomit on your clothes in the doorways where you sleep,

Repulse each man who come quite and instead
 Make them revile you and turn away in disgust.
 All this for bring me to civilizing ways.
 All this for causing the herds with which I ran."
 Shamash then spoke to Enkidu, saying thus:
 "Why curse the sacred temple girl?
 Because of her fine palace food and drink do you partake.

Because of her fine princely clothes do you wear.
 Because of her you sit next to your friend Gilgamesh.
 Because of her Gilgamesh is your friend.
 Because of her Gilgamesh will build you a statue to celebrate your fame.
 Realize now that Gilgamesh shall you mourn.
 Realize now that Gilgamesh shall order wailing in your name.
 Realize now that Gilgamesh shall wander as a wild beast for you.

Enkidu heard the words of Shamash
 And for a time his tormoil did abate.
 He denounced his curses on the sacred temple girl, and said:
 "Bless Shamhat.

Let no one revile you, curse you or turn away from you.
 May the young and the old show respect to you while with you they take joy.
 May your house be gift-laden,
 May your house be full of crystal, gold, carnelian and lapis lazuli.
 May your house be rich with finely shaped gold, finely made clothes.
 May the priests honor with their invitation to the temple.

Column IV
 As the dawn deepened into morning bright
 Enkidu told with this dream with gut clenched with fear

To Gilgamesh:

"In the heavens was a noise.
 From the earth was a noise.
 Alone on a dark plain did I hear.
 Then I saw one man with talons of an eagle
 Come and seize me and hold me fast no matter how hard I hit him
 No matter how hard I struggled to escape his grasp.
 He dragged me down to Ereshkigal's house
 Darkness and Despair enveloped me.
 There the awful goddess does command
 The dark, and closes off from me
 the bright light leading back.
 < Now my food is dust with nothing to drink.
 Now my companions were only the dead and helpless.

Even dead kings lay prostate there.
 Even priests lay prostate there.
 Kneeling before Ereshkigal was her scribe Geshtinanna

Holding the Tablets of Destinies.

And on it was writ that my time here in this awful place was now.

Gilgamesh then said:

"This dream is truly horrible."

Enkidu continued:

"We killed together the demon Hawawa of the cedar forest far.

We killed together the Bull of Heaven rampaging over Uruk's holy ground.

We said to each other that

'Life is short

But standing together friends can prevail.'

And now I die small piece by small piece"

Not like a hero should.

I ask my friend Gilgamesh to stand with me and help me prevail

But he cannot."

And after 12 days

Gilgamesh turned to the virgin Ninsun and said

This hero has died. I shall mourn.

Tablet VIII

Gilgamesh Laments, Fears Death, Says Goodbye to Enkidu

Column I

The Elders of Uruk stood in the dawn's early light

Hearing Gilgamesh weeping say:

"It is for my friend Enkidu that I weep.

He brought joy to the feast.

He was a shield before me in the confusion of battle.

He was a weopen by my side attacking my foes, defending me from my foes.

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

Enkidu first roamed the hills with the bests living with them as one.

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

He led me through the mountain passes to cedar forest far.

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

He found me water in the desert to quench my thirst as we went to cedar forest far.

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

He fought Hawawa together; together we killed Hawawa demon of cedar forest far.

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

He fought the bellowing Bull of Heaven with me; with me he killed the bellowing Bull of Heaven.

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

Enkidu you are asleep. What has made you sleep?

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

Enkidu your flesh is rotting. Why is that?

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.

Enkidu your eyes no longer move. Why is that?

Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.
 Enkidu I cannot feel the beat of your heart. Why is that?
 Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.
 Enkidu I cover your face now innocent of life.
 Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend.
 Enkidu I will stand as a mountain lion over your body, protecting it from vultures.
 Great evil has taken Enkidu my friend."

Column II

Gilgamesh on him looked and fell to weeping like a child.
 "May every wild beast mourn for Enkidu, both predator and prey.
 May the mountain, the hill, the valley, the very fertile earth mourn for Enkidu.
 May the trees, and the grass and moss on every rock mourn for Enkidu.
 May the water in the sea, in the lake, in the rivers, in the dew mourn for Enkidu.
 May old men, may young men who fought the Bull, may children and women of every kind mourn for Enkidu.
 May the farmers sing and works in his fields mourn for Enkidu.
 May his nurturing foster-parent, creatures though they were, mourn for Enkidu.
 May the shepherds who brought you cooked food and beer mourn for Enkidu.
 May Shamhat, sacred temple girl, who brought civilizing ways mourn for Enkidu.
 May you Elders hear my words, I weep and I mourn for Enkidu.
 Enkidu was my friend."

Column III

In the next morning's early dawn
 Gilgamesh did order artisans of every kind to make a statue of Enkidu.
 "You, Enkidu, wore as princes do.
 You, Enkidu, sat in honor with the king.
 You, Enkidu, every person did bow to.
 You, Enkidu, had me as a friend.
 You, Enkidu, how has this statue to live on your fame.
 You, Enkidu, receive these tears of Gilgamesh.
 You, Enkidu, receive the tears of Uruk.
 You, Enkidu, now are gone.
 You, Enkidu, for you I will wear animal skins and wander in wilderness lost.
 You, Enkidu, look on this altar, look on this carnelian bowl filled with honey.
 You, Enkidu, look on this altar, look on this lapis lazuli bowl filled with butter.
 You, Enkidu, look on this altar, look on these offerings to the god."

 --

Tablet IX

Gilgamesh Seeks Immortality and Meets a Scorpion.

Column I

In wild animal skins, through the wilderness did Gilgamesh wander.

Hearing Gilgamesh weeping say:
 "It is for my friend Enkidu that I weep.
 He has died. Must I die too?
 I feel my fear of death now growing.
 I feel my guts twisting tight.
 I will seek out Utnapishtim, son of Ubartutu, who is immortal now.
 I will seek out Utnapishtim to tell me how to avoid my death.
 I will seek out Utnapishtim no matter what my happen in between."

Column II

That night Gilgamesh into mountain pass with fearful walk did go
 praying to Sin:
 "Save me in this pass from wild predator, from wild lions."
 That night Gilgamesh did dream of fearful noises and of fearful stabbing things.
 That night in his sleep Gilgamesh did struggle to best something with no name.

Column III

To the mountain Mt. Mashu Gilgamesh came.
 Mt. Mashu with two heads
 One greets Shamash arriving in the east
 One watches Shamash departing in the west.
 Mt. Mashu most large.
 It's heads into heaven do they sit,
 While it's breasts into earth do they hang.
 To enter Mt. Mashu must Gilgamesh pass
 Two scorpions whose look is death.
 Two scorpions who guard the pass deathly bright do they sit.

The male scorpion to his sister says
 "Only a god would dare approach us."
 The female scorpion to her brother says
 "One part mortal, two parts divine."
 One part of Gilgamesh stood paralyzed.
 Two parts of Gilgamesh moved towards the pair.
 The male scorpion to Gilgamesh says:
 "Who dares our death? Why come through wilderness to get our death? Why come this way of no mortal before?"
 Though body paralyzed those parts divine made words:
 "I come for divinely made immortal Utnapishtim.
 I come to ask about life and about death."
 The female scorpion to Gilgamesh spoke
 "No mortal has taken Shamash's nightly path, 12 long walking hours to go, no mortal would dare."
 Still his body was, but his heart could speak:
 "Open the gate, I must pass, to yonder vale."
 Scorpion Sister, Scorpion Brother both then say:
 "It is open. Safely pass. Your heart speaks while your tongue can no longer do."

Without a friend did Gilgamesh pass.

One long walk later without a friend, without a sound, without a light, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Two long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Three long walks with no light, without sound, without friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Four long walks with no light, no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Five long walks with no light, no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Six long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Seven long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Struggling to see, struggling to breath, struggling against loneliness, Gilgamesh did say:
 "Life is short. But standing together two friends can prevail..."

Eight long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Nine long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, but something else did Gilgamesh feel.
 From the North came a wind which licked Gilgamesh like a roughened lion's tongue.
 Ten long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Eleven long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, still did Gilgamesh pass.
 Twelve long walks with no light, with no sound, with no friend, when suddenly Gilgamesh did fall
 Into morning's brightest light, into bird's passionate verses, into the rarest garden on the earth.

Column IV

In this garden did grow in colors of rainbow, every hue,
 Fruit and Plants in every way. And through the branches and the leaves did Gilgamesh see the sea.

Tablet X

Siduri Whose Drinks Refresh the Soul
 The Boatman, Urshanabi
 Gilgamesh Implores Utnapishtim

Column I

Siduri had a tavern on the road by the sea.
 She sometimes sat there veiled and watched the road in dying sun light.
 Her bowl was gold in the pale evening light.
 The sea waters were pale in the evening light.
 Gilgamesh the king she saw as he walked nearer on the road.
 Like a wild man was he dressed.
 In animal skins, covered all in hair,
 Though he was two parts divine, one part mortal.

Siduri felt fear of this animal man two parts divine.
 She closed the tavern, locked it tight.
 Gilgamesh heard the door closing, it being locked tight.
 Gilgamesh he yelled at her through the door.

"Why do you hide? Open it or I will break through the door!
 Shall I have to break through this door?"

Siduri with her tavern by the sea said to Gilgamesh:

"I am afraid of what I see on your face drawn so tight and thin. Why are you this way?
What misfortune has robbed your youth? What sorrow eats your soul?
What long hot journey has sapped your flesh? And why did you depart your familiar home?"

Gilgamesh responded thus:

"Woman, great deeds have I done in short time every one.

I killed demon Hawawa in cedar forest far.
I killed the Bull of Heaven threatening Uruk's sacred walls.
Life is short
But standing together two friends can prevail against all life's troubles.
Hear me now. I slew but slew not alone.
My friend Enkidu, wild heart like star from heaven did beside me stand.
This was Enkidu, my soul's good half, who raced with wild beasts on the plain,
Who sought to tame the Wild Ox Gilgamesh
Who sought the mountain pass, and deep water in desert dry
Who helped slay Hawawa evil guardian of cedar forest far
Who gave bellowing Bull of Heaven a pull of tail to steady the beast for my slaughtering axe."

Column II

Gilgamesh continued:

"Life is short.
But standing together two friends can prevail.
And when the gods did conspire to bring the short time to an end of my fair Enkidu
Then I wept for seven days for the lost past with Enkidu, and for my future death surely so soon to come.
Then into wilderness did I walk, in animal skin and with lengthening hair.
Walking. Walking. Walking over hills, never feeling inner peace so I could rest.
Could I rest when surely will I pursue Enkidu to the grave?
O Woman! Tell me now how to get to Utnapishtim.
Where are the road signs? Point the way. Help me find what I do seek."
"Tell me, girl, how to get to Utnapishtim.
Where do I look for signs? Show me directions. Help,
Please let me have safe passage over seas.
Give me advice to guide me on my way."

Siduri said quickly through door still still barred,

"No man walks on the deadly night sea as Shamash does.
Shamash is the only one who can.
When mortal takes a step
Quick he sinks, and just as quick comes death."

Column III

Siduri continued her speech to wild looking Gilgamesh:

"O Might King, remember now that only gods stay in eternal watch
 Humans come then go, that is the way fate decreed on the Tablets of Destiny.
 So someday you will depart, but till that distant day
 Sing, and dance

Eat your fill of warm cooked food and cool jugs of beer.
 Cherish the children your love gave life.
 Bathe away life's dirt in warm drawn waters.
 Pass the time in joy with your chosen wife."
 On the Tablets of Destiny it is decreed
 For you to enjoy short pleasures for your short days."
 And what would you get, mortal man, could you receive from Urshanabi in mountains of
 Utnapishtim?
 The dead know only the dead, and you the living shall he never attend to.
 But if he listens to your words, and replies with supportive word then go further on the way with
 him
 But if he walks away, return to me."
 With these words in his ear, Gilgamesh did to sea turn.
 Gilgamesh did now walk toward the crosser over the deadly sea and his solid boat.
 Gilgamesh tore through bush and did leap high
 And down on boat did he bring
 His axe so that Urshanabi could not deny by flight safe passage to this Wild Ox's heart.
 And Urshanabi barely saw the arrow's glint and too late heard the ax's thud.
 And so surprised was he that there was never any chance to
 hide or to deny the daring man at least a chance at some safe passage.
 This ferryman Urshanabi did this to Gilgamesh say:
 "Your face is clenched with grief's tight grip
 And dead seems where you're at.
 You act as if you had no home except wilderness terribly born."
 Gilgamesh replied to the ferryman:
 "True it be my face is clenched with grief's tight grip
 And surely I be better dead than feel as I do now.
 But choose I this not random walk but seeking quest to find the one of my mourning grief.
 Enkidu, my loyal friend, who ran with wild herding beasts, and clashed with wild predator
 It is for him whom I grieve.
 Enkidu my friend for ever more will I remember who we strove two together to prevail over highest
 mountain and deepest valley in order to both serve and defy the gods above.
 With Enkidu I did overthrow Hawawa of cedar forest far, and slew most dead Bull Of Heaven who
 came from on high.
 With Enkidu I did all this but then he died, and left me weep, fit only to weep over his rotting corpse.
 With Enkidu nothing I feared for long, and now I fear all but to roam.
 But I roam alone with only his memory by my side.
 For Enkidu now I must roam, never stopping my weary steps.
 If I stop my roaming then my heart, half gone with Enkidu has left, will stop.
 Over many seas and across many mountains I roam. I can't stop pacing. I can't stop crying.
 How soon will I be dead, for that is what I dread and what I must seek?"

Urshanabi replied once more

"Your face is clenched with grief's tight grip

And dead seems where you're at.
 You act as if you had no home except wilderness terribly born."
 And Gilgamesh said to him then in swift reply:

"Worn out am I now from endless roaming and crying too.
 What direction should I take to Utnapishtim, immortal that he be?
 Point me the way to his doorstep so from him I may learn the secret of ever lasting life."
 free beyond death's deep, deep lake. Where can he be?
 Tell me how to venture there where I may learn his secrets."

Finally, Urshanabi uttered these honest words to Gilgamesh:

"You yourself have brought this on by destroying Enlil set guardian of cedar forest far,
 And did you not break the stoney image of the Bull of Heaven with your very own axe?
 For this sacrilege do you now repent?
 If so give your axe in give me sixty poles and sixty poles for yon boat of mine.
 Now head shamed sorely like muscles over pulled,
 Gilgamesh did raise his axe to strike
 Cedar trees down in order to make poles for ferryboat on high.
 So sixty poles then sixty more did Gilgamesh make with axe and sword.
 Brass rings did he make, and in pitch did these he set

So pole could be held with hand in steady spot.
 With this wood brought to Urshanabi.
 They made the boat ready to be launched.
 And together one pulling while the other pushed moved the ferryboat into the deadly sea.

They with strength divine did cross the deadly sea in three days
 Where mortals could only half as far cross in three full moon appearances.

Column IV #

Urshanabi called to king in wild animal skins:

"Pull your oar yet once again!, Gilgamesh,
 Give pulls ten times twenty, and then give pulls twenty times ten
 And then twice more ten.
 When this you have done, forget the number you have done, and do it all over again.
 But as you pole remember this, touch not these deadly waters with your hands."
 So Gilgamesh two part divine did push so hard that sixty times then sixty times more did his pushing
 pole break.
 But from his back his wild animal skins did Gilgamesh take
 And hoisted it as a sail on central mast
 So the ferry still moved over the deadly sea to yonder shore.
 Column III

~

Column IV

On yonder shore Utnapishtim look towards the boat
and spoke aloud as if to ask the world:

"There are two in that boat, one is the natural guide
The other has committed blasphemy and sacrilege.
Am I blind?
I cannot see who is that who stands the helm on the ferry of the deadly sea."

Column V #

When the boat did grind ashore
Utnapishtim did to Gilgamesh say
"your face is gripped with grief's tight hand

And dead seems where you're at.
You act as if you had no home except wilderness terribly born.
You wear wild animal skins and have wilderness roamed.
Why has all this come to past?"

Gilgamesh to Utnapishtim did say:
"I never rested. I never slept. Grief consumed me.
My clothing was wild animal skins when
The woman who helped me did I meet.
All this because Enkidu, my friend, was dead.
Enkidu who died to satisfy some divine decree from above.
A decree to punish us most sore
With Death Wild Man Enkidu
Who with beasts did run
Who found the mountain passes
Who found water in dry desert sand
Who urged me on to cedar forest far
Who helped me slay demon Hawawa.
Who then helped me break the Bull of Heaven.
A decree which punished me with Enkidu's death.
Which punished me by watching on his body foul worms feast
Which punished me by keep my grief as close to me as skin
Which punished me by having me roam in wilderness
Which punished me by having me wear unshorn hair
Which punished me by having me wear wild animal skins
Which punished me by having Siduri bar me with her tavern door
Which punished me by having me roam."

Column VI #

Utnapishtim replied:

"You are two parts divine from virgin Ninsun, mother yours
Why does your one part mortal domineer?
What surprise is it when building finally falls?
What surprise is it when friends finally fight?"

What surprise is it rivers swell and flood?
 What surprise is it when insects die?
 What surprise is it when sun gazing eye does blind?
 When the heaven came down, when the heaven did rise, from then nothing stays the same.
 Sleep is but practice for the lying still of the dead.
 Rich clothes on peasant do still fit.
 And both farmer and king will rot when their time is gone.
 The Anunnaku have decided together that first there is life, and then comes death to everything.
 Aruru has decreed that no one shall know when comes their time to sleep for ever more.

Tablet XI

The Flood
 Trial of Sleeplessness
 Foiled by the Serpent
 Triumphant Return From the Dead

Column I

To Utnapishtim, Gilgamesh said:

"When I first you saw
 I thought to fight you as did I Hawawa demon of cedar forest far.
 But now I see your face as if I saw my own in mirror surface.
 It is from once mortal man that I came to find how death be avoided.
 So tell me how came about wearing divinity like a skin?"

Utnapishtim said to him in swift reply:

"King of Uruk surely there is no one more bold
 Here is knowledge that no other has ever been told..
 Near where Euphrates born sits a city you call Shuruppak, home of those divine.
 Enlil send from there a flood to stop noisy human babbling all the time.
 Anunu, Anu, and Enlil were at Shuruppak.
 But it was Ea who did speak in whispers through my roofly straw to tell me to attend to what he says,
 Ea the ever vigilant did to me speak
 Saying build a boat and abandon what I have, for you riches can not save your life.
 Saying catch a creating match of every living thing which in your boat do put.
 Saying make water tight your boat, protect it from the flood which comes.
 Saying make the boat wide and equally long, then tile the roof with slate.
 Saying listen and attend to what I say.
 Saying tell your neighbours that you can not stay for Enlil hates you as he does
 Saying tell your neighbours that you must find another place to place you head to rest
 Saying tell your neighbours that Ea of the watery Abyss will protect you now, this you know.
 Saying to me to attend, to listen to his words.
 Saying to tell my neighbours that Shuruppak will reap only water and be no more.
 Saying to tell my neighbours that first Shuruppak will receive like rain loaves, and fish most great

Column II

So I did as Ea told to me
and from each house did outward flow
People came to build a boat.

Strong and weak, young and old.

Some carried pitch, and some carried oil.
Some carried timber, and some carried nails.
Some cut wood, and some nailed wood.
Sixty lengths by sixty lengths the boat did grow.
Six deck below, six decks above, twelve decks in all
I drafted plans, I showed where each board should go. I showed where pitch must go
Three times we pitched the outside in the seams.
Three times inside in the seams.
We slaughtered sheep and cattle by the score
For our work done we feasted as every day was the last.

And on the seven day it was done.
I oiled my hands and prayed thanks to Ea below.
We loaded up the living things and then my gold, jewels every precious thing.
We loaded up every household man, woman and child
We grasped sixty poles in our hands
And pushed the boat towards the setting sun.
We pushed then pulled the ungainly boat till solid in the river water did it lay
And in the sky the dark water heavy clouds did form as Ea had foretold.
We hustled everyone below. Puzuramurri did caulk the top hatch full shut from outside where he did stand.
So to make him glad I gave to him my house and everything around."

Column III

Then Utnapishtim continued, saying :
"By next day's dawn Adad made noise in the underground darkness in the clouds above.
Before Adad moved more, Hadad the horrible herald came before
Then the Annanuki blazed a terrible light,
Which even we caulked in below did this light into our eyes did cut.
Then like pushing waters escaping from a dam above came rain pushing down to us below.
Nergal from his underground home did break the posts and up water from below did come.
Ninurta let watery chaos abound
Drowning babe, cattle, and then trees.
South wind pushed waters into eyes
So people scrambling around flowing water could not see and so were drowned.
Like pieces of a broken pot lay the pieces of land among the spreading water.
So high did the water go that even the gods scrambled for mountain so high
And cringed like rain whipped dogs in the storm.
Eanna did cry like a birthing mom:
"This is not what I thought would be when I did bring to council my complaints.
Now the humans are like fish but still as if out of river had they gone on to stoney ground."

The Annunaki wept with her in regret
 For all that came out of anger pure.
 For six days did they weep,
 Then on the seventh day the squall of this birthing storm did still, so did their eyes dry every one.
 I, Utapishtim, did break open the hatch and in the daylight poured.
 All about was flat, like flattened baked clay.

Nothing moved. Humans were once more clay.
 The eyes of god now dry, my own eyes did weep.
 And while my tears did fall in rivers along the land of my face
 I continued to look in every way for something not river made.
 First far off then so close
 That the boat did run aground,
 Mt. Nishur was our stopping place.
 For seven days the boat stood in ground.
 So on the seventh day I let loose a single dove,
 Which flew around but could not land so returned to me.
 So on the seventh day I let loose a single swallow,
 Which flew around but could not land so returned to me.
 So on the seventh day I let loose a single raven,
 Which flew around and found a place to land so it returned not to me.
 So on the seventh day I let loose all the birds,
 Which flew around, and found places to land so they never returned to me.?"

Column IV

Upnapishtim continued:
 "Seven vessels did I set out
 When we got ashore.
 Then seven more vessels did I set out.
 A libation did I give to the gods.
 I built a fire. A set it alit.
 Smoke of cedar, myrtle and cane wafted heavenward.
 The Igigi were pleased.
 I slaughtered a sheep, and roasted it for the gods.
 So pleased were they, than down came fertile Eanna
 With necklace of lapis lazuli, gold, and amethyst, which
 Thereinafter we called the rainbow
 As this artisan gift she gave to us.
 A gift she gave to ever remind us of dimmer sadder days.
 So all the gods could partake in this holy smoke save Enlil, evil personified.

The gods about the altar did meet.
 When Enlil did see the boat and humankind about the altar he spit in rage.
 "Why are any of these humans alive, when the flood I sent was to score all of them from my sight."
 Ninurta spoke with contempt: "Ask Ea for he knows."
 Ea spoke to Enlil with contempt:
 "For one man's crimes do you kill all the rest?
 And crime's punishment should match the act.
 One offence you kill all including the innocent.
 Here me now I did not tell the secrets of the gods to Utnapishtim

But he listened to the wind and used his mind
 And the rest he wroth you do now see.
 So in the presence of this council atone you now
 For you act's excess."

So Enlil frowned then went down
 To my boat on the ground.
 He made me and my wife kneel on the deck, and said thus to us:
 "You mere human are now an immortal
 Dwell you now where all the rivers come." So thus it came to be that I live where now you see." So
 Gilgamesh, king and man, if you want the council of gods to convene
 Sit you down for a week with no sleep
 And by this test of seven nights find out
 What the gods think best."

Column V

But when Gilgamesh sat from the sea came a sleeping mist
 And into deep slumber did he slip.
 Utnapishtim sadly turned to his wife and said:
 "So this King Gilgamesh would sleep instead of awaiting the gods with open eyes."
 But his wife took pity on the hero form and this she said in reply:
 "Awaken him with your touch and send him back to Uruk bound."
 Utnapishtim laughed and said:
 "This be a man. He will first deceive himself and then us too.
 So on each day bake a loaf and lay that beside his form.
 Make a mark on yonder wall for each night this hero sleeps away his immortality."

On the first day she baked a loaf as dry as dust.
 On the second day she baked a loaf was hard as rock.
 On the third day she baked a loaf wet and awfully rotten all through.
 On the fourth day she baked a loaf custard with white slime
 On the fifth day she baked a loaf blue with mold.
 On the sixth day she baked a loaf which looked quite good.
 On the seventh day Utnapishtim touch the hero on his head
 And up from his deepest sleep came Gilgamesh.
 Gilgamesh did proclaim: "I nearly fell asleep but your touch did keep me awake.
 Utnapishtim shook his head and pointed to yonder wall
 "Look, O Hero, see the marks for every day which you did sleep,
 And on the ground there beside you know lay six loafs, one each day made
 By my wife, and note:
 On the first day she baked a loaf as dry as dust.
 On the second day she baked a loaf was hard as rock.
 On the third day she baked a loaf wet and awfully rotten all through.
 On the fourth day she baked a loaf custard with white slime
 On the fifth day she baked a loaf blue with mold."
 Gilgamesh did now frown and said with sadness and with fear:
 "What can I do?
 Sleep is much like death when into it I peek
 It captures me and from that prison I cannot escape."

Column VI

With this humble answer Utnapishtim did nod, and said:

"Boatman take his man and cast his

Wild animal skins away. Bath him, annoint him, braid his hair most fine

Cloth him in kingly robe, Return him to his Uruk town.

To Uruk town he be bound in honor with kingly replensident.

So thus was done

The boatman did take King Gilgamesh wild animal skins and away them threw.

The boatman did take King Gilgamesh bathing and annointing true.

The boatman did take King Gilgamesh and braided his hair most fine.

The boatman did take King Gilgamesh and cloth him kingly robes to make him kingly replensident.

The boatman did take King Gilgamesh and on the ferry boat did make him stand.

Utnapishtim's wife spoke up now

Oh husband, this man has endured great hardship to come here, give him something for his return

So Utnapishtim said to Gilgamesh:

"I shall tell you this secret of gods for you to take on your return.

There is a thorny bush which underwater does grow.

This plant is named Reborn Man and here is what you should do.

Dive down to that plant and seize it the Reborn Man in your hand.

And know I tell you so you know Reborn man is under you boat deep in the deadly sea.

So Gilgamesh tied two massive stones, one two each of his feet.

Into deadly waters did he leap

Down, down this in his hand he seized Reborn Man taking the pain of thorns in one hand

While with other he did cut free of the stones and thus descend back to Utnapishtim's shore.

Column VII

With a cry of joy did Gilgamesh speak to boatman Urshanabi.

"With Reborn Man new life can be made

With Reborn Man our Elder there can share new life with everyone

With Reborn Man I can return to youth wherein I be most strong"

Column VIII

So away did they sail.

When 20 long walks did they pass

They did eat.

When another 20 long walks did they pass

They did a short time rest.

When another 20 long walks did they pass

They did make camp.

It was then that with plant in hand Gilgamesh did go to bathe.

But to wash himself he must Reborn Man put down, and then

A nearby serpent smelled its myrrh, and straight

To it did it go.

The serpent stole and ate it, and thusly

Does the snake Reborn of skin once every full moon.

Gilgamesh realized his loss.
 He weep and said:
 "What is the use of this long journey,
 For now I am as at the start."
 But seeing nothing could be done
 Gilgamesh the king, two parts divine one part man, went on.

Column IX

Within 60 days the boatman and the King saw holy Uruk in their sight..
 Boatman mark these walls, so high and thick.
 Boatman mark those fields so lush and fertile.
 Boatman mark these people so vital and rich.
 Boatman mark that this town is Uruk. It is mine.

Introduction to Tablet XII

Scholars disagree about the relation of Tablet XII to the other eleven tablets.
 The general consensus is that it was an appendage added to the other Gilgamesh stories at a later date.
 This tablet presents a stark contrast to the earlier eleven in style and content.
 The appearance of a "resurrected" Enkidu is especially startling. In light of these inconsistencies with Tablets I-XI, why include Tablet XII?
 Tablet XII provides further insight into some of the major themes and questions explored in the first eleven tablets.
 Is there an afterlife? What is the nature of it? What earthly behaviors are rewarded there? By the conclusion of Tablet XI,
 Gilgamesh was forced to accept the limits of mortal existence and be satisfied with its attainable rewards.
 Questions about the "state of being" in death had fiercely possessed him, however, and the answers remained a mystery.
 The defining and "coming to terms" with human mortality has been the province of every system of religious beliefs throughout history.
 Here is our first recorded vision of an afterlife. it is for these reasons that Tablet XII is included here.

Tablet XII

Column I

"Who has Eanna's drumstick and her drum that I let fall into the world below?
 Will the gods help me?
 Who shall descend to the world below and retrieve the Eanna's gift I let fall?
 Enkidu offered to go to the world below and retrieve Eanna's gifts.
 So Gilgamesh said this to Enkidu:

"If you descend then heed these words of mine.
 Go down with filthy clothes lest the dead know you yet quick.
 Neither should you wear fragrant perfume in your hair.
 And another thing to avoid is carrying arrows and a bow.
 For the fragrance shall attract as mosquitoes to warm flesh, or ghouls to death scene
 Wearing shoes will cause you to announce with crashing step your presence in their realm.
 Do not praise nor beat your wife, and holy son for such sex and violence does attract Ereshkigal."

Column II

But proud Enkidu went he down
 With finery on his skin, and fragrant oils in his hair and arrows with a bow to protect his soul.
 Enkidu went down with crashing shoes. He beat and praised his wife and holy son.
 Thus did the souls which long depart and their master Ereshkigal did walk straight to Enkidu.
 And seized and bound him hand and foot.

Column III

Gilgamesh did grieve for lost Enkidu, so to Enlil did he go.
 "Great Enlil, I did lose Eanna's gift of drumstick and her drum.
 They fell in the world below.
 When I asked for someone to retrieve
 Enkidu did go down to the world below for me.
 And Ereshkigal herself did seize Enkidu.
 Queen of the world below herself did seize him.
 Help me Enlil to free my friend and retrieve the gifts of Eanna now."

Enlil refused,
 So to Sin did Gilgamesh go,
 "Great Sin, I did lose Eanna's gift of drumstick and her drum.
 They fell in the world below.
 When I asked for someone to retrieve
 Enkidu did go down to the world below for me.
 And Ereshkigal herself did seize Enkidu.
 Queen of the world below herself did seize him.
 Help me Sin to free my friend and retrieve the gifts of Eanna now."

Sin refused.
 So to Ea did Gilgamesh go.
 "Great Ea, I did lose Eanna's gift of drumstick and her drum.
 They fell in the world below.
 When I asked for someone to retrieve
 Enkidu did go down to the world below for me.
 And Ereshkigal herself did seize Enkidu.
 Queen of the world below herself did seize him.
 Help me Ea to free my friend and retrieve the gifts of Eanna now."

Ea from his abyss deep heard Gilgamesh and took pity then said:
 "Nergel, hear me now, open a most wide hole in your roof
 From whence can Enkidu waft like smoke up from your hot fires below."
 Nergel heard Ea's great voice and did cut a hole in his roof

To let Enkidu's spirit waft up from his hot fires below.
 Enkidu's spirit did waft up
 Till Gilgamesh his friend did see that wraith.
 The king did try to hug and kis is one time companion.
 So in frustration did Gilgamesh ask
 "How goes it with you in the world below?"
 Enkidu said: "You don't want to know."
 Gilgamesh said: "Tell me anyway, for I do want to know."
 Enkidu spoke: "Rats eat my flesh that you once touched in joy."
 With these worlds did Gilgamesh cry.

Column IV

When Gilgamesh had recovered himself again he spoke:
 "In the world below have you seen the man with no son?"
 Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man with no son."
 Gilgamesh asked once more: "How goes it with the man with no son in the world below?"
 Enkidu replied: "The man with no son sits by the wall in the world below and weeps."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a man with two sons?"
 Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man with two sons in the world below."
 Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the man with two sons?"
 Enkidu replied: "The man with two sons in the world below sits on a stone and eats some bread."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a man with three sons?"
 Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man with two sons in the world below."
 Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the man with three sons?"
 Enkidu replied: "The man with three sons in the world below has one son to bring him water to quench his thirst."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a man with four sons?"
 Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man with four sons in the world below."
 Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the man with four sons?"
 Enkidu replied: "The man with four sons in the world below acts like a farmer with four ox to pull his plow."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a man with five sons?"
 Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man with five sons in the world below."
 Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the man with five sons?"
 Enkidu replied: "The man with five sons in the world below is treated like a scribe to a king."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a man with six sons?"
 Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man with six sons in the world below."
 Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the man with six sons?"
 Enkidu replied: "The man with six sons in the world below acts like a farmer with a very fertile field."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a man with seven sons?"
 Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man with seven sons in the world below."
 Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the man with seven sons?"
 Enkidu replied: "The man with seven sons in the world below acts like a king sitting on his throne listening to music."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a sailor drowned?"

Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the sailor drowned in the world below"

Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the sailor drowned?"

Enkidu replied: "The sailor drowned in the world below is brought pure water all his days to drink."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a warrior killed in battle glory?"

Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the warrior killed in battle glory in the world below."

Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the warrior killed in battle glory?"

Enkidu replied: "The warrior killed in battle in the world below has his head lifted up by his parents and his wife grieves at the couch of death."

Gilgamesh asked yet again: "Have you seen in the world below a man who died with no one to mourn him?"

Enkidu spoke: "Yes I have seen the man who died with no one to mourn him."

Gilgamesh could not refrain: "How goes it in the world below with the man who has no one to mourn him?"

Enkidu replied: "The man who died with no one to mourn him wanders about with no home, and he must eat what no starving dog would touch."