

Beowulf

Here, let me tell you of the time Hrothgar, king of Denmark, built a hall in his castle. When it was complete, he named it Heorot. Heorot was a hall where the people in the palace ate supper and then slept when it was time for bed.

Nearby there lived a beast who lurked in the dark. He was called Grendel, and was grand and gruesome. Grendel abhorred Heorot (no one knows why); one night he went to the hall, broke through a wall, and found many men to feast on. Grendel growled ferocious and loud, and his red eyes glared in the dark.

The noise awoke all who slept in the hall and the knights were poised for battle. But the beast Grendel showed his horrible teeth and grabbed the first knight he found and gnashed him with one big bite. The monster roared and everyone ran, leaving Grendel loudly laughing as he went back to his lair where he soundly slept.

The monster managed to raid Heorot for eleven years. Finally it became clear King Hrothgar needed help killing the beast in battle, because his warriors were dying one by one in this gruesome Grendel War. The Danes prayed to the gods to keep the monster from preying on them. Their prayers were answered when a ship sailed to their shores. Beowulf was aboard the boat, and he came from across the sea to help Hrothgar from the terror of Grendel's teeth. Beowulf announced himself to Hrothgar, and the King welcomed him with open arms. Hrothgar fed his guest a feast in his hall, and Beowulf announced he planned to fight

Grendel with his fists.

When the feast was over, it was bedtime for the brave Beowulf. He laid in bed awake, waiting for Grendel to strike. Grendel stormed through the stone wall, grabbed a startled soldier with his cruel claws and bit him to the bone. The monster moved toward Beowulf, and lifted him out of bed. But before the beast could open its mouth, Beowulf put Grendel in an arm lock no man or beast had ever witnessed, and the monster let out a horrible howl. The two tumbled about the hall until the sound of the scream from the loser lifted everyone out of their beds.

The monster had been manacled from a man stronger than him, and the beast ran recklessly back to his den to die. Grendel's arm was torn off by Beowulf's grasp and he could not live much longer. Beowulf picked the arm off the floor, evidence of the fight, and stood among his men victorious.