Beowulf Translations Handout


710 Da com of more under misthleoþum
Grendel gongan, godes yrre bær,
mynte se manscāða manna cynnes
summe besyrwan in sele þam hean.
Wod under wolcnum to þæs þe he winreced

715 goldsele gumena gearwost wisse
fættum fahne. Ne wæs þæt forma sið
þæt he Hroðgares ham gesohte;
næfre he on aldordagum ær ne siððan
heardran hæle healðegnas fand.

720 Com þa to reced rinc siððian
dreamum bedæld. Duru sona onarn
fyrbendum fæst syððan he hire folmum onhran;
onbræd þa bealohydig, da he gebolgen wæs,
recedes mýran. Rafe æfter þon

725 on fagne flor feond treddode,
eode yrremod; him of eagum stod
ligge gelicost leoht unfæger.
Geseah he in recede rinca manige
swefan sibbegedriht samod ætædere

730 magorinca heap. Þa his mod ahlog;
mynte þæt he gedælde, ær þon dæg cwome,
atol aglæca anra gehwylces
lif wið lice þa him alumpen wæs
wistfylle wen. Ne wæs þæt wyrd þa gen

735 þæt he ma moste manna cynnes
ðicgean ofer þa niht.
710 Then came from the moor / under misty slopes
Grendel gliding, / God's ire he bare ;
Was minded, that murderer, / of mannes-kind
Some to ensnare / in that solemn hall.
Waded he under the welkin / till he the wine-house,

715 Gold-hall of grooms / might get well is sight,
With filigrees fretted ; nor was it the first time
That he Hrothgar's / home had sought.
Nor ever in his days did he, / ere nor after,
Hardier hero / nor hall-thegns find.

720 Came then to the house / that creature hieing,
From delights divided ; / the door soon opened,
Through with fired-bands fastened, / when his fingers touched it
Burst he in then balefully-minded, / when boiling he was,
The mouth of the room. / Rapidly after

725 On its fashioned floor / the fiend was treading,
On went he ireful, / in his eyes there shone,
To leaping-flame likest, / a light unlovely,
Saw he in the hall / heroes many,
A cousin-band sleeping / couched together,

730 A head of friendly warriors. / Then his heart laughed out ;
He was minded to divide, / ere the day came,
That ugly devil, / in each and all
The life from the limbs ; / then lust to him came
Of feasting his fill. / Nor was it fated again

735 That more he might / of mannes-kind
Stomach after that night.
710 Then from the moorland, by misty crags,
with God's wrath laden, Grendel came.
The monster was minded of mankind now
sundry to seize in the stately house.
Under welkin he walked, till the wine-palace there,
gold-hall of men, he gladly discerned,
flashing with fretwork. Not first time, this,
that he the home of Hrothgar sought, —
yet ne're in his life-day, late or early,
such hardy heroes, such hall-thanes, found!

720 To the house the warrior walked space,
parted from peace ; the portal opened,
though with forged bolts fast, when his fists had struck it
and baleful he burst in his blatant rage,
the house's mouth. All hastily, then,
o'er fair-paved floor the fiend trod on,
ireful he strode ; there streamed from his eyes
fearful flashes, like flame to see.
He spied in hall the hero-band,
kin and clansmen clustered asleep,
hardy liegemen. Then laughed his heart ;
for the monster was minded, ere morn should dawn,
savage, to sever, the soul of each,
life from body, since lusty banquet
waited his will! But Wryd forbade him
to seize any more of men on earth
after that evening!
Then from the moor under the misty cliffs came Grendel, he bore God's anger. The foul foe purposed to trap with cunning one of the men in the high hall; he went under the clouds till he might see most clearly the wine-building, the gold-hall of warriors, gleaming with plates of gold. That was not the first time he had sought Hrothgar's home; never in his life-days before or since did he find bolder heroes and hall-thanes. The creature came, bereft of joys, making his way to the building. Straightway the door, firm clasped by fire-hardened fetters, opened, when he touched it with his hands; then, pondering evil, he tore open the entry of the hall when he was enraged. Quickly after that the fiend trod the gleaming floor, moved angry in mood. A baleful light like flame flared from his eyes. He saw in the building many heroes, the troop of kinsmen sleeping together, the band of your warriors. Then his mind exulted. The dread monster purposed ere day came to part the life of each one form the body, for the hope of a great feasting filled him. No longer did fate will that after that night he might seize more of mankind.
And now from out the moorland, under the misty slopes
Came astalking Grendel— God's anger on his hopes.
That Scather foul was minded to snare of human kin
Some one, or sundry, that high hall within.
Under the welkin strode he, until full well he spied
The wine-house, the gold-hall, with fret-work glittering wide.
Nor was that the first time Hrothgar's home he sought.
Yet never in his life-days, late or early, aught
Like this harsh welcome found he from thanemen in the hall.
He came afooting onward to the house withal,
This warring One that ever had been from bliss out-cast;
Forthwith the door sprang open, with forgéd-bolts through fast,
When with his paws he pressed it; yea, then on bale-work bent,
Swoln as he was with fury, that house's mouth he rent,
Anon he Fiend was treading the shining floor in there;
On he moved in anger; from eyes of him did glare,
Unto fire likest, a light unfair.
He saw within the chamber many a man asleep,—
Kinsmen band together, of clanfolk a heap;
Laughed his mood, was minded that Hobgoblin grim,
Ere the dawn to sunder each his life from limb,
Now that fill-of-feeding he weened awaited him!
But Wyrd it was that would not longer grant him might
To seize on more of mankind after that same night.
From the stretching moors, from the misty hollows,
Grendel came creeping, accursed of God,
A murderous ravager minded to snare
Spoil of heroes in high-built hall.
Under clouded heavens he held his way
Till there rose before him the high-roofed house,
Wine-hall of warriors gleaming with gold.
Nor was it the first time of his fierce assaults
On the home of Hrothgar; but never before
Had he found worse fate or hardier hall-thanes!
Storming the building he burst the portal,
Through fastened of iron, with fiendish strength;
Forced open the entrance in savage fury
And rushed in rage o'er the shining floor.
A baleful glare from his eyes was gleaming
Most like to a flame. He found in the hall
Many a warrior sealed in slumber,
A host of kinsmen. His heart rejoiced;
The savage monster was minded to sever
Lives from bodies ere break of day,
To feast his fill of the flesh of men.
But he was not fated to glut his greed
With more of mankind when the night was ended!
Out from the marsh, from the foot of misty Hills and bogs, bearing God's hatred, Grendel came, hoping to kill Anyone he could trap on this trip to high Herot. He moved quickly through the cloudy night,

Up from his swampland, sliding silently Toward that gold-shining hall. He had visited Hrothgar's Home before, knew the way— But never, before nor after that night, Found Herot defended so firmly, his reception So harsh. He journeyed, forever joyless, Straight to the door, then snapped it open, Tore its iron fasteners with a touch And he rushed angrily over the threshold. He strode quickly across the inlaid Floor, snarling and fierce: his eyes Gleamed in the darkness, burned with a gruesome Light. Then he stopped, seeing the hall Crowded with sleeping warriors, stuffed With rows of young soldiers resting together. And his heart laughed, he relished the sight, Intended to tear the life from those bodies By morning; the monster's mind was hot With the thought of food and the feasting his belly Would soon know. But fate, that night, intended Grendel to gnaw the broken bones Of his last human supper.
Grendel drew on from the moor along the mist-slope's foot, God's wrath upon him; the vicious waster meant to snare some man or other in the high-built Hall. He moved beneath the clouds until he saw the winehall clearly, gilded shining Hall of men.

That was not the first inroad he had made on Hrothgar's home; in all the days of life, before or since, he found no harder luck or hardier thanes. The soul cut off from joys came near the Hall. Soon after he laid hold of it with hands the door gave way, though clinched by fire-brands; then when his baleful mind was swollen he forced wide the great Hall's mouth. Swift in wrath the fiend now trod the variegated floor; unlovely flame-like light flashed from his eyes. Within the room he made out many warriors sleeping, a gathered band of young thanes close in blood. His spirit laughed; the dreaded monster meant, before day came, to part the life of each man from his body, now that hope of banqueting had come. But he was fated not to feed on man again, that night once past.
Then from the moor under the mist-hills Grendel came walking, wearing God's anger. The foul ravager thought to catch some one of mankind there in the high hall. Under the clouds he moved until he could see most clearly the wine-hall, treasure-house of men, shining with gold. That was not the first time that he had sought Hrothgar's home. Never before or since in his life-days did he find harder luck, hardier hall-thanes. The creature deprived of joy came walking to the hall. Quickly the door gave way, fastened with fire-forged bands, when he touched it with his hands. Driven by evil desire, swollen with rage, he tore it open, the hall's mouth. After that the foe at once stepped onto the shining floor, advanced angrily. From his eyes came a light not fair, most like flame. He saw many men in the hall, a band of kinsmen all asleep together, a company of war-men. then his heart laughed: dreadful monster, he thought that before the day came he would divide the life from the body of every one of them, for there had come to him a hope of full-feasting. It was not his fate that when that night was over he should feast on more of mankind.
710 Then up from the marsh, under misty cliffs, Grendel came walking; he bore God's wrath. The evil thief planned to trap some human, one of man's kind, in the towering hall. Under dark skies he came till he saw  
715 the shining wine-hall, house of gold-giving, a joy to men, plated high with gold. It was not the first time he had visited Hrothgar; never in his life, before or after, did he find harder luck or retainers in hall.

720 The evil warrior, deprived of joys, came up to the building; the door burst open, though bound with iron, as soon as he touched it, huge in his bloodlust; enraged, he ripped open the mouth of the hall; quickly rushed in—

725 the monster stepped on the bright-paved floor, crazed with evil anger; from his strange eyes an ugly light shone out like fire. There in the hall he saw many men—the band of kinsmen all sleeping together, a troop of young warriors. Then his heart laughed; evil monster, he thought he would take the life from each body, eat them all before the day came; the gluttonous thought of a full-bellied feast was hot upon him.

730 No longer his fate to feed on mankind, after that night.
Then from the moorland under misty hills
Grendel came gliding; God's wrath he bore.
That murderer meant there in the mighty hall
to seek to ensnare some man or other.
He strode under stormclouds till the stronghold loomed,
gleaming golden, with gilded plating
disclosed clearly. He had come before
to maraud, ravage Hrothgar's home.
He had not found in life before nor since
harder misfortune then in the hall of Geats.

Then to the building came the brute wandering,
deprived of pleasure. Yet the portal gapèd,
though fast with forged bands, as he first touched it.
Angry he opened the entrance to the building
with hateful purpose. Hurriedly crossing
the patterned pavement the oppressor came
in fuming fury. From the fiend's eyes shot
lurid light flashing like lightning glare.
In the hall he beheld heroes in plenty,
a cluster of kinsmen caught there sleeping,
huddled warriors. Then his heart rejoiced;
the horrid hellfiend hoped before daylight
to outrage each one, all flesh riven,
breath from body. He was blindly sure
of his fill feasting.

But no further prey

would his lot allow when this last night passed,
no more of mankind.
Then from the moor, in a blanket of mist,
Grendel came stalking — he bore God's anger;
the evil marauder meant to ensnare
some of human-kind in that high hall.
Under the clouds he came until he clearly knew
he was near the wine-hall, men's golden house,
finely adorned. It was not the first time
he had sought out the home of Hrothgar,
but never in his life, early or late,
did he find harder luck or a hardier hall-thane.
To the hall came that warrior on his journey,
bereft of joys. The door burst open,
fast in its forged bands, when his fingers touched it;
bloody-minded, swollen with rage, he swung open
the hall's mouth, and immediately afterwards
the fiend strode across the paved floor,
gently angrily; in his eyes stood
a light not fair, glowing like fire.
He saw in the hall many a soldier,
a peaceful troop sleeping all together,
a large company of thanes — and he laughed inside;
he meant to divide, before day came,
this loathsome creature, the life of each
man from his body, when there befell him
the hope of a feast. But it was not his fate
to taste any more of the race of mankind
after that night.
In off the moors, down through the mist bands
God-cursed Grendel came greedily loping.
The bane of the race of men roamed forth,
hunting for a prey in the high hall.
Under the cloud-murk he moved towards it
until it shone above him, a sheer keep
of fortified gold. Nor was that the first time
he had scouted the grounds of Hrothgar's dwelling—
although never in his life, before or since,
did he find harder fortune or hall-defenders.
Spurned and joyless, he journeyed on ahead
and arrived at the bawn. The iron-braced door
turned on its hinge when his hands touched it.
Then his rage boiled over, he ripped open
the mouth of the building, maddening for blood,
pacing the length of the patterned floor
with his loathsome tread, while a baleful light,
flame more than light, flared from his eyes.
He saw many men in the mansion, sleeping,
a ranked company of kinsmen and warriors
quartered together. And his glee was demonic,
picturing the mayhem: before morning
he would rip life from limb and devour them,
feed on their flesh; but his fate that night
was due to change, his days of ravening
had come to an end.