

The Wanderer

	Oft him anhaga are gebideð, metudes miltse, þeah þe he modcearig geond lagulade longe sceolde hreran mid hondum hrimcealde sæ wadan wræclastas. Wyrð bið ful aræd!	Often the solitary one finds grace for himself the mercy of the Lord, although he, sorry-hearted, must for a long time move along the waterways by hand, the ice-cold sea, tread the paths of exile. Fate is fully decreed!
5	Swa cwæð eardstapa, earfeþa gemyndig, wraþra wælsleahta, winemæga hryre: 'Oft ic sceolde ana uhtna gehwylce mine ceare cwipan. Nis nu cwicra nan þe ic him modsefan minne durre sweotule asecgan. Ic to soþe wat þæt biþ in eorle indryhten þeaw, þæt he his ferðlocan fæste binde, healde his hordcofan, hycge swa he wille.	So spoke the wanderer, mindful of hardships, of fierce slaughters, the downfall of kinsmen: 'Often (or always) each morning before dawn alone I had to speak of my trouble. There is none now living to whom I dare my innermost thoughts clearly speak. I know it truly, that it is in a man a noble custom, that he should bind fast his spirit-chest (mind), guard his treasure-chamber (thoughts), think as he wishes.
10	Ne mæg werig mod wyrde wiðstondan, ne se hreo hyge helpe gefremman. Forðon domgeorne dreorigne oft in hyra breostcofan bindað fæste; swa ic modsefan minne sceolde, oft earmcearig, eðle bidæled, freomægum feor feturum sælan, siþþan geara iu goldwine minne hrusan heolstre biwrah, ond ic hean þonan wod wintercearig ofer wapema gebind, sohte seledreorig sinces bryttan, hwær ic feor oþþe neah findan meahte þone þe in meoduhealle mine wisse, oþþe mec freondleasne frefran wolde, wenian mid wynnum. Wat se þe cunnað hu sliþen bið sorg to geferan þam þe him lyt hafað leofra geholena: warað hine wræclast, nales wunden gold, ferðloca freorig, nalæs foldan blæd.	The weary spirit cannot withstand fate, nor does the sorrowful mind provide help. Thus those eager for glory often their dreary thoughts Bind fast in their breast; so I, often wretched and sorrowful, bereft of my homeland, far from noble kinsmen, have had to bind in fetters my inmost thoughts, since long years ago my gold-friend I hid in the darkness of the earth, and I, wretched, from there travelled most sorrowfully over the frozen waves, sought, sad at the lack of a hall, a giver of treasure, where I, far or near, might find one in the meadhall who knew my people, or wished to console the friendless one, me, entertain (me) with delights. He who has tried it knows how cruel is sorrow as a companion to the one who has few beloved friends: the path of exile (wræclast) holds him, not at all twisted gold, a frozen spirit, not the bounty of the earth.
15	Gemon he selessecgas ond sincþege, hu hine on geoguðe his goldwine wenede to wiste. Wyn eal gedreas! Forþon wat se þe sceal his winedryhtnes leofes larcwidum longe forþolian: ðonne sorg ond slæð somod ætgædre earmne anhogan oft gebindað. Þinceð him on mode þæt he his mondryhten clyppe ond cysse, ond on cneo lecge	The gold-friend cannot withstand fate, nor does the sorrowful mind provide help. Thus those eager for glory often their dreary thoughts Bind fast in their breast; so I, often wretched and sorrowful, bereft of my homeland, far from noble kinsmen, have had to bind in fetters my inmost thoughts, since long years ago my gold-friend I hid in the darkness of the earth, and I, wretched, from there travelled most sorrowfully over the frozen waves, sought, sad at the lack of a hall, a giver of treasure, where I, far or near, might find one in the meadhall who knew my people, or wished to console the friendless one, me, entertain (me) with delights. He who has tried it knows how cruel is sorrow as a companion to the one who has few beloved friends: the path of exile (wræclast) holds him, not at all twisted gold, a frozen spirit, not the bounty of the earth. He remembers hall-warriors and the giving of treasure How in youth his lord (gold-friend) accustomed him to the feasting. All the joy has died! And so he knows it, he who must his beloved lord's counsels forgo for a long time: then sorrow and sleep both together often tie up the wretched solitary one. He thinks in his mind that he his lord embraces and kisses, and on his (the lord's) knees lays
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honda ond heafod, swa he hwilum ær
 in geardagum giefstolas breac.
 45 Ðonne onwæcneð eft wineleas guma,
 gesihð him biforan fealwe wegas,
 bapian brimfluglas, brædan feþra,
 hreosan hrim ond snaw hagle gemenged.
 Þonne beoð þy hefigran heortan benne,
 50 sare æfter swæsne. Sorg bið geniwad
 þonne maga gemynd mod geondhweorfeð;
 greteð gliwstafum, georne geondsceawað
 secga geseldan; swimmað oft on weg.
 Fleotendra ferð no þær fela bringeð
 55 cuðra cwidegiedda. Cearo bið geniwad
 þam þe sendan sceal swiþe geneahhe
 ofer waþema gebind werigne sefan.
 Forþon ic gepencan ne mæg geond þas woruld
 for hwan modsefa min ne gesweorce
 60 þonne ic eorla lif eal geondþence,
 hu hi færlice flet ofgeafon,
 modge maguþegnas. Swa þes middangeard
 ealra dogra gehwam dreoseð ond fealleð;
 forþon ne mæg weorþan wis wer, ær he age
 65 wintra dæl in woruldrice. Wita sceal gepyldig,
 ne sceal no to hatheort ne to hrædwyrde,
 ne to wac wiga ne to wanhydig,
 ne to forht ne to fægen, ne to feohgifre
 ne næfre gielpes to georn, ær he geare cunne.
 70 Beorn sceal gebidan, þonne he beot spricedð,
 oppæt collenferð cunne gearwe
 hwider hreþra gehygd hweorfan wille.
 Ongietan sceal gleaw hæle hu gæstlic bið,
 þonne ealre þisse worulde wela weste stondeð,
 75 swa nu missenlice geond þisne middangeard
 winde biwaune weallas stondaþ,
 hrim bihrorene, hryðge þa ederas.
 Woriað þa winsalo, waldend licgað
 dreame bidrorene, duguþ eal gecrong,
 80 wlonc bi wealle. Sume wig fornóm,
 ferede in forðwege, sumne fugel opbær
 ofer heanne holm, sumne se hara wulf
 deaðe gedælde, sumne dreorighleor
 in eorðscræfe eorl gehydde.
 85 Yþde swa þisne eardgeard ælda scyppend
 oppæt burgwara breahmta lease
 eald enta geweorc idlu stodon.

his hands and his head, Just as, at times (hwilum), before,
 in days gone by, he enjoyed the gift-seat (throne).
 Then the friendless man wakes up again,
 he sees before him fallow waves
 sea birds bathe, preening their feathers,
 frost and snow fall, mixed with hail.
 Then are the heavier the wounds of the heart,
 Longing for the lord. Sorrow is renewed
 when the mind (mod) surveys the memory of kinsmen;
 he greets them joyfully, eagerly scans
 the companions of men; they always swim away.
 The spirits of seafarers never bring back there much
 in the way of known speech. Care is renewed
 for the one who must send very often
 over the binding of the waves a weary heart.
 Indeed I cannot think why my spirit
 does not darken when I ponder on the whole
 life of men throughout the world,
 How they suddenly left the floor (hall),
 the proud thanes. So this middle-earth,
 a bit each day, droops and decays -
 Therefore man (wer) cannot call himself wise, before he has
 a share of years in the world. A wise man must be patient,
 He must never be too impulsive nor too hasty of speech,
 nor too weak a warrior, nor too reckless,
 nor too fearful, nor too cheerful, nor too greedy for goods,
 nor ever too eager for boasts, before he sees clearly.
 A man must wait when he speaks oaths,
 until the proud-hearted one sees clearly
 whither the intent of his heart will turn.
 A wise hero must realize how terrible it will be,
 when all the wealth of this world lies waste,
 as now in various places throughout this middle-earth
 walls stand, blown by the wind,
 covered with frost, storm-swept the buildings.
 The halls decay, their lords lie
 deprived of joy, the whole troop has fallen,
 the proud ones, by the wall. War took off some,
 carried them on their way, one, the bird took off
 across the deep sea, one, the gray wolf
 shared one with death, one, the dreary-faced
 man buried in a grave.
 And so He destroyed this city, He, the Creator of Men,
 until deprived of the noise of the citizens,
 the ancient work of giants stood empty.

Se þonne þisne wealsteal wise gepohte
90 ond þis deorce lif deope geondþenceð,
frod in ferðe, feor oft gemon
wælsleahta worn, ond þas word acwið:
Hwær cwom mearg? Hwær cwom mago? Hwær cwom mappumgyfa?
Hwær cwom symbla gesetu? Hwær sindon seledreamas?
Eala beorht bune! Eala byrnwiga!
95 Eala þeodnes þrym! Hu seo þrag gewat,
genap under nihthelm, swa heo no wære.
Stondeð nu on laste leofre dugube
weal wundrum heah, wyrmlicum fah.
Eorlas fornoman asca þrype,
100 wæpen wælgifru, wyrd seo mære,
ond þas stanhleoðu stormas cnyssað,
hrið hreosende hrusan bindeð,
wintres woma, þonne won cymeð,
nipeð nihtsca, norþan onsendeð
105 hreo hæglfare hæleþum on andan.
Eall is earfoðlic eorþan rice,
onwendeð wyrdas gesceaft weoruld under heofonum.
Her bið feoh læne, her bið freond læne,
her bið mon læne, her bið mæg læne,
110 eal þis eorþan gesteal idel weorþeð!
Swa cwæð snottor on mode, gesæt him sundor æt rune.
Til biþ se þe his treowe gehealdeþ, ne sceal næfre his torn to rycene
beorn of his breostum acypan, nempe he ær þa bote cunne,
eorl mid elne gefremman. Wel bið þam þe him are seceð,
115 frofre to Fæder on heofonum, þær us eal seo fæstnung stondeð.

He who thought wisely on this foundation,
and pondered deeply on this dark life,
wise in spirit, remembered often from afar
many conflicts, and spoke these words:
Where is the horse gone? Where the rider? Where the giver of treasure?
Where are the seats at the feast? Where are the revels in the hall?
Alas for the bright cup! Alas for the mailed warrior!
Alas for the splendour of the prince! How that time has passed away,
dark under the cover of night, as if it had never been!
Now there stands in the trace of the beloved troop
a wall, wondrously high, wound round with serpents.
The warriors taken off by the glory of spears,
the weapons greedy for slaughter, the famous fate (turn of events),
and storms beat these rocky cliffs,
falling frost fetters the earth,
the harbinger of winter; Then dark comes,
nightshadows deepen, from the north there comes
a rough hailstorm in malice against men.
All is troublesome in this earthly kingdom,
the turn of events changes the world under the heavens.
Here money is fleeting, here friend is fleeting,
here man is fleeting, here kinsman is fleeting,
all the foundation of this world turns to waste!
So spake the wise man in his mind, where he sat apart in counsel.
Good is he who keeps his faith, And a warrior must never speak
his grief of his breast too quickly, unless he already knows the remedy -
a hero must act with courage. It is better for the one that seeks mercy,
consolation from the father in the heavens, where, for us, all permanence rests.