

**XXXVI.**

**WIGLAF THE TRUSTY**

The day is now come when the ruler of earthmen  
Needeth the vigor of valiant heroes:  
Let us wend us towards him, the war-prince to succor,  
While the heat yet rageth, horrible fire-fight.  
God wot in me, 'tis mickle the liefer  
The blaze should embrace my body and eat it  
With my treasure-bestower. Meseemeth not proper  
To bear our battle-shields back to our country,  
'Less first we are able to fell and destroy the  
Long-hating foeman, to defend the life of  
The prince of the Weders. Well do I know 't isn't  
Earned by his exploits, he only of Geatmen  
Sorrow should suffer, sink in the battle:  
Brand and helmet to us both shall be common,  
Shield-cover, burnie." Through the bale-smoke he stalked then,  
Went under helmet to the help of his chieftain,  
Briefly discoursing: "Beowulf dear,  
Perform thou all fully, as thou formerly saidst,  
In thy youthful years, that while yet thou livedst  
Thou wouldst let thine honor not ever be lessened.  
Thy life thou shalt save, mighty in actions,  
Atheling undaunted, with all of thy vigor;  
I'll give thee assistance." The dragon came raging,

Wild-mooded stranger, when these words had been  
uttered  
(’Twas the second occasion), seeking his enemies,  
Men that were hated, with hot-gleaming fire-waves;  
With blaze-billows burned the board to its edges:  
The fight-armor failed then to furnish assistance  
To the youthful spear-hero: but the young-aged stripling  
Quickly advanced ’neath his kinsman’s war-target,  
Since his own had been ground in the grip of the fire.  
Then the warrior-king was careful of glory,  
He soundly smote with sword-for-the-battle,  
That it stood in the head by hatred driven;  
Nægling was shivered, the old and iron-made  
Brand of Beowulf in battle deceived him.  
’Twas denied him that edges of irons were able  
To help in the battle; the hand was too mighty  
Which every weapon, as I heard on inquiry,  
Outstruck in its stroke, when to struggle he carried  
The wonderful war-sword: it waxed him no better.  
Then the people-despoiler—third of his onsets—  
Fierce-raging fire-drake, of feud-hate was mindful,  
Charged on the strong one, when chance was  
afforded,  
Heated and war-grim, seized on his neck  
With teeth that were bitter; he bloody did wax with

Soul-gore seething; sword-blood in waves boiled.