

Grendel by john gardner

Literature



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John Gardner or John Edmund Gardner as you may know him wrote this famous novel by the name of Grendel. The novel was completed in 1970 and was published the following year meaning in 1971. This novel basically describes a scenario of the first part of the Anglo-Saxon epic where a Danish king by the name of Hrothgar, is in danger due to a monster killing his people by coming to his meadhall named as Heorot. Later a hero by the name of Beowulf kills the monster and also the mother of the monster that came to take revenge. Beowulf later dies while fighting the dragon and killing him. The monster Grendel has the power that human weapons can't hurt him given as a curse by the same dragon that later dies fighting Beowulf. Grendel can speak the same language that people speak and understand. Grendel's mother somehow doesn't speak and only takes out weird noises. The uniqueness of the story is the fact that the story has been written from the villain's or the monster Grendel's view. Grendel is trying to figure out the reason of his existence when he hears the poet Shaper and goes to live among humans. He is confronted by fearful men that force him to turn into an evil monster and Grendel starts killing people. The story tells about Grendel from his birth to his death. Although during the story Grendel commits crimes and shows cruelty but still Grendel has gained sympathy from the reader, because of this some critics and readers have considered Grendel to be the hero of the novel. In reality if the text of the novel is studied closely and interpreted it can be clearly seen that Grendel in fact is not the hero of the novel. The originally assigned qualities of Grendel clearly show that he is a villain but according to reality someone is not completely evil symptoms of good deeds are also present, in the same way Grendel has been depicted in the novel. The story is about Grendel but the hero is

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Beowulf and that is not surprising as an evil monster had to be killed by someone. Beowulf does not kill Grendel by any weapons but the strength of Beowulf turns out to be more than Grendel can handle. Grendel in the story resembles normal human being in behavior and feelings, which is proven by the incident of Grendel's childhood. Grendel in his childhood got stuck in a tree and cried before his mother came to rescue him. In reality the stories are usually written from view of the hero but as I mentioned earlier this was a unique story written from the villain's prospective. Another interesting character in the story is of Wealtheow Variant, which in the opinion of Grendel is of the heroine as she has sacrificed her life to keep peace between Helmings and the Scyldings. This thought by Grendel shows his heroic side in the story and due to his respect for this woman he also spares her life.