

Why the story of
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hero r...

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



In writing a story, the author usually has an underlying reason as to why he laid out the story in a particular way. In most cases, however, it is left to the a reader to point out why the story was written the way it was. The story of Beowulf, to a great extent, focuses on the history of the main character as a hero as opposed to a king. Depending on the reader's understanding, a number of reasons could be linked to the author's decision.

When going through the poem, what immediately stands out is that as much Beowulf had been born a prince, it was his courage and adventures that made him the man he became. And the deduction that leads to this conclusion is simply because one can be born in a royalty or even get anointed into it, but as long as his life is spent within the confines of the castle, his story becomes pointless to tell.

From the beginning of the story, where Beowulf travels to Denmark to help in dealing with the monstrous evil that is Grendel and his (Grendel's) mother, one can tell that he is destined for greatness, and his path sets ground for a story that can be retold for generations. It even makes it interesting to read his preparation for the battles, as illustrated by the example below:

Beowulf got ready, donned his war-gear, indifferent to death; his mighty, hand-forged, fine-webbed mail would soon meet with the menace underwater. It would keep the bone-cage of his body safe, [His helmet] was of beaten gold, princely headgear hooped and hasped by a weapon-smith who had worked wonders (Williamson and Shippey 12).

Another school of thought can point to the fact that the story of Beowulf came out the way it did, purely by default. This is because Beowulf spent a lot of his noticeable public time dealing with monsters and dragons, amongst other dangers, than he spent on administrative chores. This, in effect, makes the story of his life easy to tell by analyzing his landmark victories as opposed to how great he was at drafting his country's policies, if he did.

On his return to his kingdom, Beowulf again finds himself tackling a vicious dragon. With the assistance of one of his kinsmen, he manages to take it down, ultimately rescuing an entire people. To ensure that his legend lives on, the author allows Beowulf to die, a heroic death. With little attention given to the place of Beowulf in society, the author of the poem makes him more relatable with all and sundry.

The poem becomes more interesting when anyone who reads it can easily mistake Beowulf for any hero, who rose from the ground to build a name for himself, only to realize that he was actually born great, and he made himself unforgettable. This is well illustrated by the eulogy presented at the end of the poem.

O flower of warriors, beware of that trap. Choose, dear Beowulf, the better part, eternal rewards. Do not give way to pride. For a brief while your strength is in bloom but it fades quickly; and soon there will follow illness or the sword to lay you low, or a sudden fire or surge of water or jabbing blade or javelin from the air or repellent age. Your piercing eye will dim and

darken; and death will arrive, dear warrior, to sweep you away (Williamson and Shippey 186).

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the story of Beowulf was meant to be an epic, illustrating the man's desire to fight for his people. As such, it could only make sense if it was told in such a way that illustrates how the man came to be very popular with his people than looking at the man's activities after he had been confirmed a king. Of importance to note is that because the author of the poem did not make an effort to explain his intentions or flows of thought when writing the poem, any reasons given are speculative.

Williamson, Craig and Tom Shippey., trans. Beowulf and Other Old English Poems. 2nd

Edition. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. Print.