

Beowulf

An epic tale of monsters and heroes,
good and evil, fame and infamy. . .

By Eddie McPherson

Characters

BEOWULF, *epic hero*

TWO POETS

HYGELAC, *King of the Geats,*

Beowulf's uncle

CAPTAIN OF THE COASTGUARD

KING HROTHGAR, *King of the*

Danes

QUEEN WEALHTHEOW,

Hrothgar's wife

GRENDEL, *terrible monster*

UNFERTH, *conceited warrior*

TWO WARRIORS

GRENDEL'S MOTHER

KING'S SERVANT

BEOWULF'S MEN

HROTHGAR'S MEN *extras*

PEOPLE OF HEOROT

TIME: *The year 1000.*

SETTING: *Geatland and Land of the Danes.*

AT RISE: *The stage is dark. A low growl is heard. The growl becomes louder. The lights come up half, making the stage dim. GRENDEL enters and slithers across the stage. He ends up center as 1ST POET enters.*

1ST POET: It is a demon! The worst kind of grotesque monster that lives down inside the bowels of the earth. Its eyes burn like red-hot coals. Its terrible groans could wake a hundred dead men. (*GRENDEL crosses quickly to 1ST POET and stands behind him, giving him a looking-over.*) Its breath hot, like lava. No creature large or small will come near the devil beast! It has a name. Grendel, they call him. Evil. Darkness. Death itself. Seed of Cain. (*GRENDEL hisses and groans out toward the audience, then exits quickly. There is a blackout. HYGELAC enters. 1ST POET crosses to him. Lights come up full.*)

HYGELAC: Are these stories that you report true accounts, young bard?

1ST POET: Yes, Lord Hygelac. The land of the Danes which lies far across the water is doomed because of constant attacks from this monster I am telling you about. The great Hall Heorot has lost many men.

HYGELAC: Have there been any attempts to rid the Danes of this terrible beast?

1ST POET: Many, Sire, but the monster is too strong and evil. No man is able to stand against it. (*BEOWULF has entered and stands behind HYGELAC.*)

BEOWULF: I shall stand against it, Your Highness.

HYGELAC (*Surprised*): I didn't see you enter. Beowulf, this is a royal bard from the land of the Danes. (*Turns to 1ST POET*) My nephew, Beowulf.

BEOWULF: I have heard others speak of this terrible beast whose name is Grendel. Hall Heorot in this land of the Danes stands empty because men fear to enter it. I have decided I will go and destroy this beast for the good of every man there.

1ST POET: But surely you have heard that no man has stood against the corpse-maker.

BEOWULF: Mark my words, sir. With my bare hands I will smite the beast and bring peace to Hrothgar's kingdom. The Great Lord is on my side. (*2ND POET enters as HYGELAC and BEOWULF exit and 1ST POET crosses downstage.*)

2ND POET: Beowulf is not like any other man. He is stronger than most, with a focused mind and a will like iron.

1ST POET (*To audience*): Beowulf and thirteen of his bravest men set out

across the sea to this land of the Danes, and was greeted by the Captain of Hrothgar's Coastguard. (*CAPTAIN OF THE COASTGUARD enters right; BEOWULF enters left. They meet center.*)

CAPTAIN: Halt! State your name and why you dare to land on Hrothgar's coast.

BEOWULF: I am Beowulf, son of Ecgtheow. I have come to destroy the demon Grendel.

1ST POET: The Captain was immediately impressed with Beowulf's quiet strength and confident demeanor.

CAPTAIN: Grendel has slaughtered many men and fear has paralyzed the kingdom. Allow me to warn you in advance: If you plan to confront the creature, don't expect to return to your home, for surely Grendel will kill you and all your men. If you have any brains at all, you will go aboard your ship again and return home.

BEOWULF: I thank you for your advice, Captain, but forgive me if I do not heed it. I have come for the purpose of removing the evil and I will not leave until I have done just that.

CAPTAIN: I cannot quite decide, then, if you are the bravest man I have ever met or the most foolish. Nevertheless, you are welcome here and I will escort you and your men to Heorot, where you will be introduced to the king.

BEOWULF: Many thanks. I will summon my men. (*BEOWULF and CAPTAIN exit.*)

2ND POET: Beowulf and his men were led to Heorot, where King Hrothgar, King of the Danes, greeted Beowulf in his private hall. (*KING HROTHGAR enters and meets BEOWULF center.*)

HROTHGAR: I understand you have come to kill the beast, Grendel.

BEOWULF: I have, Your Highness.

HROTHGAR (*Gesturing*): I see no weapon. You have not brought a sword with you?

BEOWULF: I have left all weapons on my ship, Sire. I will kill the beast on my own strength. The Great Lord is on my side.

HROTHGAR (*Frowning*): But you have not seen this beast, this creature from Hell. You have not hidden in the shadows as this seed of Cain crushed innocent men's bones with its scaly claws and ripped apart their torsos with its razor teeth. You have not heard the cries of pain that fill the hall at midnight when the beast attacks. (*QUEEN WEALHTHEOW enters and stands behind BEOWULF.*)

WEALHTHEOW: Nor have you had to clean the blood of your own people that flowed here after the creature returned to its lair.

HROTHGAR: Beowulf, meet Queen Wealhtheow, my wife. This is Beowulf from the land of the Geats.

WEALHTHEOW: I know who he is. I also know he has come to fight the grim demon. Only a fool would stand against Grendel. Only a greater fool would fight it without a weapon.

BEOWULF: I have come for this mission and would be forever grateful if I might have your blessings before I begin my task.

HROTHGAR: You are sure, then?

BEOWULF: I am sure.

HROTHGAR: You have my blessings, Beowulf.

WEALHTHEOW: And mine. A fool needs blessing more than the average warrior.

HROTHGAR: Go fight Grendel. And may the Great Lord be on your side. (*BEOWULF bows to HROTHGAR and WEALHTHEOW.*)

1ST POET: Word spread quickly of Beowulf's plan of ultimate defeat. (*BEOWULF, HROTHGAR, and WEALHTHEOW exit.*) Every ear in the land of the Danes has heard the reason why Beowulf is here and what he has planned to do.

2ND POET: Every ear but Grendel's. This creature is not wise to the great warrior's presence. Another night has fallen and is darker than most as the wheezing from Grendel's nostrils rises from its lair. (*GRENDEL enters and slithers around the stage, underneath full light this time. It is a hideous-looking creature.*) Once again it crawls from its hell with empty bowels, ready to fill them with bone and flesh. (*GRENDEL stops center and addresses the audience with a rasping voice.*)

GRENDEL: I will crush their bones into powder. I will tear their flesh like dried skin of goats. I crave their blood and long to hear the wailing of their souls in agony. I am Grendel. No man on earth has ever stopped me. (*Laughs wickedly, then exits*)

1ST POET: It is Grendel.

2ND POET: Its hungry hollowness drives it back to the great hall.

1ST POET: Through muddy swamps that surround its fen it creeps in search of human food.

2ND POET: The great Hall Heorot stands practically empty, though. Only Beowulf and his men are slumbering there, waiting for the corpse-maker.

(UNFERTH enters with one hand perched on his sword, bent over as though he is calling a dog.)

UNFERTH: Come to me, little monster. I will stomp you under my shoe as I would a mouse or a helpless spider. Come out, come out. Are you not too old to play hide-and-seek? *(Freezes)*

1ST POET: This rebel named Unferth, who thinks of himself more highly than does anyone else, has put into his own head that he will defeat Grendel and receive his own fame and glory.

UNFERTH *(Calling out):* I will cut off your tail, you lizard, and watch it wiggle in my hand. I will make myself a necklace from your intestines and wear it about my neck so all the women will swoon and want me for their husband. *(As he looks about the stage)* Women enjoy the company of brave men, so enter here so I might smite you and prove my bravery.

1ST POET: He is a foolish warrior; a coward disguised as a champion.

UNFERTH *(Shouting out):* I dare you to come! *(GRENDEL enters and sneaks up behind UNFERTH.)* Women will not want me if I do not kill you. What is that warm sensation upon my neck? I—I hope it is Grendel so I may tu. . . turn sharply and make his death quick. *(GRENDEL growls. UNFERTH is visibly trembling.)* It is nothing but my imagination. *(GRENDEL growls louder.)* My imagination is vivid. It seems as though a creature stands but feet away. *(GRENDEL growls. UNFERTH now knows GRENDEL is behind him.)* Ugly Grendel, you had better run! Hide yourself—for here I come! *(He runs out quickly.)*

2ND POET: Grendel recognizes a coward and never wastes his time on them. A weak man is not a challenge to this despised creature.

GRENDEL *(Jumping upon a perch):* I need blood! Lots of blood! Until I satisfy my craving, I shall not return to my lair. *(He turns quickly.)* What is that? *(He jumps from his perch and quickly exits as though to hide.)*

1ST POET: One of Beowulf's men who had been sleeping soundly hears a noise and, fetching his torch, takes a walk through the main hall of Heorot. *(1ST WARRIOR enters, holding a torch and looking around.)*

1ST WARRIOR: Hello? Is any man here? Beowulf, is it you? *(He crosses center. GRENDEL sneaks back on from hiding place.)*

GRENDEL: Welcome to the darkness, foolish warrior. *(1ST WARRIOR pulls his sword.)*

1ST WARRIOR *(Slowly backing away):* You are the creature they speak about.

GRENDEL: My fame stretches far and wide.

1ST WARRIOR *(As they face one another, circling the stage):* Your infamy, is what you mean. You are the epitome of evil, Grendel, so we have come to destroy you.

GRENDEL: An impossible task, for I will destroy you first, stupid one. *(GRENDEL begins backing 1ST WARRIOR into a corner.)*

1ST WARRIOR: I warn you to keep your distance; my sword is sharp and strong.

GRENDEL: My fangs and claws are stronger. *(He takes the sword from 1ST WARRIOR and backs him offstage.)* Your weapon is of no use to you. Neither are your screams.

1ST POET: And with those menacing words, Grendel proceeds to rip apart

the mighty warrior, eating his bones and drinking his blood. (*1ST WARRIOR lets out a scream backstage.*)

2ND POET: The warrior's shouts of agony cause Beowulf to stir from his hiding place. (*BEOWULF enters quickly with 2ND WARRIOR.*)

2ND WARRIOR: What was it, Beowulf? One of our own men?

BEOWULF: Grendel is here. I can smell its stench. Go back with the others and take refuge.

2ND WARRIOR: I will not leave you alone.

BEOWULF: Go! I will do away with the demon and join you shortly.

2ND WARRIOR: God speed, my lord. (*He exits quickly.*)

BEOWULF (*Looking around cautiously*): Grendel! I feel your presence and know you are hiding in the shadows. I have come to put an end to you! Are you afraid? Are you such a coward that you will not show your face? (*Low growl is heard offstage.*)

1ST POET: Beowulf hears a noise outside the hall. (*GRENDEL continues to growl offstage.*)

2ND POET: Beowulf turns and makes himself ready for the monster's attack.

BEOWULF: Grendel! Child of Cain! Come here into the hall so I might see you! I am Beowulf, son of Ecgtheow. I am Beowulf, not afraid of you. I am Beowulf and I have come to put an end to you! (*GRENDEL enters, bent over with his claws in the air. He growls and hisses loudly.*)

GRENDEL: My appetite has not been satisfied. Come to me! There is nowhere to run, so come here and I

shall feed upon you.

BEOWULF: I am Beowulf! I come from the light in order to kill that which lives in darkness. You hate the light! You hate all that is good! You must be broken!

GRENDEL: You are right, Beowulf. I hate you. I hate all men and any creature that walks or crawls. But you are wrong when you say you will destroy me! My hate runs too deep and makes me stronger than you. Say goodbye to the world that you know, for you have found yourself face to face with Grendel. (*GRENDEL lunges toward BEOWULF. BEOWULF darts and GRENDEL misses. GRENDEL turns and charges again. His growls become louder.*)

1ST POET: With one sweeping motion, Beowulf grabs the monster's throat and brings it down by mere strength alone. (*BEOWULF grabs GRENDEL's throat and holds him down. GRENDEL squeals and hisses as he struggles, then frees himself.*)

GRENDEL (*Backing away from BEOWULF; in disbelief*): Who is this with strength not human that even I cannot raze? Now is your chance to free yourself, Beowulf. For my anger has doubled and no mercy shall I give you as I attack a final time.

BEOWULF: I am not finished with you, Grendel. Be still and it shall be over quickly. (*He crosses to GRENDEL. GRENDEL backs away offstage, followed by BEOWULF.*)

1ST POET: At that moment Beowulf, using his strength alone, grabs the demon's hairy arm and rips it from its socket. (*A loud cry from GRENDEL is heard offstage. UNFERTH rushes in.*)

UNFERTH: Beowulf, I am here if you need my assistance. Just give a shout.

(Another cry from *GRENDEL* is heard.) The screams of agony come from that direction. (He points left, then quickly exits right.)

2ND POET: The creature's cry as its limb is torn away is heard by half the kingdom. (*GRENDEL stumbles out, missing an arm. He growls and hisses.*)

GRENDEL: Damn you, Beowulf! Damn you for what you have done! (He exits, running.)

1ST POET: It has happened. The first man who has seen Grendel face to face has not died, but triumphed over him. (*BEOWULF enters haughtily, holding GRENDEL's arm. He stands center.*)

2ND POET: Beowulf proudly presents his trophy to King Hrothgar and Queen Wealhtheow. (*HROTHGAR and WEALHTHEOW enter.*)

WEALHTHEOW: Beowulf, is it true you have ripped away the creature's arm?

BEOWULF: I have, Your Highness. And I have it here.

HROTHGAR: You have sacrificed greatly to return peace to my kingdom. Your heroism shall not go unrewarded.

WEALHTHEOW: We will prepare a feast and serve it in your honor. The name Beowulf will live forever in our books and songs and stories that the bards tell. (*All enter holding glasses of ale.*)

HROTHGAR: Allow the wine to flow freely. We celebrate because Heorot is safe once again. Beowulf is the guest of honor!

UNFERTH: It was a gruesome task, but we brought down that monster with our human strength alone.

ALL (*Holding up their cups*): Hail to Beowulf!

UNFERTH (*Smiling*): And me!

ALL: Hail to Beowulf!

UNFERTH (*A little agitated*): And me!

1ST POET (*As all laugh and toast*): The celebration is a great one. The hall of Heorot rings with laughter once again as Beowulf's heroic deeds are discussed and retold time and again. (*Everyone begins exiting.*)

2ND POET: Finally all is well in the land of the Danes.

UNFERTH (*As he exits*): Hail to me!

1ST POET: All is well—we think. . . (*GRENDEL stumbles on, holding the place where his arm used to be. He falls center.*)

GRENDEL (*In misery*): Death is pressing in, and I must see you face-to-face before I go.

1ST POET: The one to whom he speaks aloud is his own life-giver.

2ND POET: She has no name here, but is merely known in tales told for generations as Grendel's mother. (*GRENDEL'S MOTHER quickly enters. She is also hideous-looking. She jumps up on a perch and looks around, hunching. She sees GRENDEL and crosses to him.*)

GRENDEL'S MOTHER: Who has done this to you, my son? Speak his name.

GRENDEL (*Weakly*): Mother, my time is over.

GRENDEL'S MOTHER: Speak his name!

GRENDEL: His name is— (*GRENDEL goes limp. MOTHER rushes to his side.*)

1ST POET: Grendel's black heart stops

beating and its lifeless body grows cold.

2ND POET: And its mother holds it to her as though she were a mother who could feel compassion in any amount.

1ST POET: Her mourning turns quickly to anger, though, and her anger to bitter thoughts of vengeance.

GRENDL'S MOTHER (*Standing*): I will go to that dwelling outside the dark wood and bring pain to those who have brought pain to me. (*She hisses and runs out. There is a blackout.*)

2ND POET (*In the darkness*): And so Grendel's mother, with burning hatred, swims to the top of her watery fen and moves her ugly, slimy body through mud and briar to Hrothgar's kingdom. (*Lights come up full.*)

1ST POET: Not long after making her way there, a theft is reported to King Hrothgar. (*KING'S SERVANT enters right as HROTHGAR enters left. They meet center.*)

SERVANT (*Breathlessly*): Your Highness, Beowulf's trophy, that of Grendel's arm which was torn from its body and hung in the rafters of the main hall—

HROTHGAR: Slow down, my servant, so I can understand what you are saying.

SERVANT: It has been stolen, Sire. The arm of Grendel is gone. And what is more, two guards lie dead who stood watch nearby.

HROTHGAR: Grendel's arm stolen? But who would have motive?

SERVANT: I know not, Sire. Nonetheless, fear has once again returned to Heorot and we dare not sleep in the halls tonight.

HROTHGAR: You are dismissed. (*SERVANT exits.*)

WEALHTHEOW (*As she enters*): I have heard the news. It seems our troubles are not over.

HROTHGAR: I have tried to think who would have reason to steal the trophy of our hero, Beowulf.

BEOWULF (*Entering in haste*): Another monster has attacked, Your Majesty.

HROTHGAR: Another monster? You know this?

BEOWULF: I have seen the bodies of the guards who were keeping watch near where the trophy hung. Have the kingdom's bards told of other creatures that have haunted in the past?

HROTHGAR: I confess I cannot imagine.

WEALHTHEOW: Wait. As a young girl, I heard stories of another hard-faced fiend who was seen slithering about Heorot. It was Grendel's mother. She has no name and is said to be even viler than her offspring.

BEOWULF: That is our answer, then. She has come to avenge the death of her son.

HROTHGAR: Will we never be free from these evil monsters and live in peace again?

BEOWULF: You shall live in peace once again. I will see to it. Your kingdom will be safe.

WEALHTHEOW: You are truly brave, Beowulf. God speed.

HROTHGAR: God speed.

BEOWULF (*Bowing*): Thank you, Your Highness. (*Turns to WEALHTHEOW*) Your Majesty. (*BEOWULF, HROTH-*

GAR and WEALHTHEOW exit.)

1ST POET: Beowulf immediately heads out to the dark wood on the white horse given to him by the king.

2ND POET: He takes along his men who were left alive after Grendel's attacks. They travel through the dark wood on a rough and rocky path.

BEOWULF (*Entering with UNFERTH and TWO WARRIORS*): You stay behind. I will do away with this second monster, then return to celebrate with you and the people.

UNFERTH: Do you need me to go along and protect you with my body that moves like the speed of a lightning bolt?

BEOWULF: I know you mean well, my friend—but I think it best if I go alone.

UNFERTH: Are you sure? My muscles are strong.

BEOWULF: I am sure.

UNFERTH: If that monster sheds but a drop of your blood (*Sticks out his chest*), she will not escape the wrath of my revenge.

2ND WARRIOR (*Pushing UNFERTH aside*): God speed, Beowulf.

1ST WARRIOR: God speed. (*WARRIORS and UNFERTH exit left as BEOWULF exits right.*)

1ST POET: She was there. Deep, deep at the bottom of her watery lair.

2ND POET: She immediately sensed a human and readied herself to protect her private hell. (*GRENDEL'S MOTHER enters.*)

GRENDEL'S MOTHER (*Shouting as she moves about the stage*): You have come

for me because I avenged my son's death. I am ready for you wherever you may be.

BEOWULF (*Offstage*): I am Beowulf, son of Ecgtheow. I did not fear your son and neither do I fear you.

GRENDEL'S MOTHER: Then show yourself and prove it! (*BEOWULF enters.*)

BEOWULF: You must be destroyed just as the seed of Cain, and that is my purpose here. (*He holds up his sword.*) You shall never again have the chance to take a man's life from him. Prepare to die yourself. (*As he circles her*) I will make it quick so my men and I may return to King Hrothgar and his people. (*He lunges toward her and she dodges.*) You are too old and full of fat to move quickly enough and avoid your fate, so be brave and face death eye to eye; its sting is but moments away. (*He lunges and GRENDEL'S MOTHER dodges as she hisses and growls and takes her own sword and holds it above her head. She brings it down and BEOWULF dodges the blow.*)

GRENDEL'S MOTHER: I hate you, Beowulf! I hate you all!

BEOWULF: If you hate me, bring down your sword upon my head, then celebrate alone after I have passed from this life into God's eternal arms.

GRENDEL'S MOTHER: I shall.

BEOWULF: You shall not. (*BEOWULF strikes GRENDEL'S MOTHER in the neck. She hisses and growls and falls to the ground.*)

GRENDEL'S MOTHER: I hate you, Beowulf! I . . . hate . . . all—(*She goes limp and falls.*)

1ST POET: Beowulf pulls his sword from her and wipes the blood from its blade.

2ND POET: She is dead. Good and dead. Her body turns quickly cold and stiff and begins to decompose straightaway. (*BEOWULF exits and the lights fade to black as the actor playing GRENDEL'S MOTHER exits.*)

1ST POET (*In the darkness*): Beowulf has killed the mother of Grendel. The word spreads quickly back to Heorot of Beowulf's heroic deeds. Hrothgar was greeted with the news immediately. (*Lights up as HROTHGAR and WEALHTHEOW enter. Two of BEOWULF'S MEN meet them center.*)

HROTHGAR: What is the word on Beowulf? Is he alive?

1ST MAN: He is returning, Sire. He has defeated the second monster and brings with him yet another trophy from his journey.

WEALHTHEOW: He has torn her arm from its socket as he did Grendel's?

2ND MAN: No, Your Majesty. You will see, for Beowulf is approaching now. (*BEOWULF'S MEN and the PEOPLE OF HEOROT enter and kneel, creating a path for BEOWULF to walk along. BEOWULF enters carrying GRENDEL's head on a stick, holding it proudly in the air. UNFERTH walks in front of BEOWULF, his head held high. He waves to the crowd as though the celebration were for him. The people chant in unison.*)

ALL (*Shouting ad lib*): You are greater than any man! Your name will be remembered forever! You are the hero of every man! (*Etc. When BEOWULF reaches HROTHGAR and WEALHTHEOW, crowd quiets down.*)

HROTHGAR: Beowulf, you have achieved great things for my kingdom. Your glory is secure!

WEALHTHEOW: We cannot express

adequately our gratitude for what you have done.

HROTHGAR: You have brought us Grendel's head?

BEOWULF: I fought the mother long and hard; it was not an easy task, because she was strong and her skin wore thick scales that deflected the mightiest blade. Yet I persevered and slew the monster, then saw her son lying dead and cold in a cave near her lair. I took off his head and have returned to you.

ALL: Hail to Beowulf.

UNFERTH: And me!

HROTHGAR (*To BEOWULF*): Never forget this journey taken to the land of the Danes. Learn from your adventures here. For one day you will be old and slow and weak. Beware. Be mindful of the frailty of life, for it is given to us for only a little while. Remember these things.

BEOWULF: I will remember. (*BEOWULF bows to HROTHGAR.*)

HROTHGAR: As you travel back to the land of the Geats, the day will come when you shall serve as their king. No man deserves that honor over you, Beowulf.

1ST POET: With those kind words King Hrothgar presents Beowulf with gifts of gold and other treasures. (*Two of HROTHGAR'S MEN enter, each carrying a bag stuffed full. They hand bags to BEOWULF.*)

2ND POET: And just as Hrothgar predicted, Beowulf becomes king of the Geats and lives to be an old man who fights other creatures in his own country.

1ST POET (*As BEOWULF holds up*

GRENDEL's head on a stick): And his great name lives forever in the land of the Danes as everyone remembers the great feats of heroic bravery he performed there.

2ND POET: He was a true hero.

UNFERTH: You flatter me with your thoughtful words.

1ST POET: An epic hero. May the name of Beowulf live for all time.

WARRIOR: Hail Beowulf!

ALL: Hail Beowulf.

UNFERTH: Hail me! (*Lights fade to a slow blackout.*)

THE END

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The way I have used this drama in the past is to have my class perform it for other English classes in the school. To accommodate all the classes, we perform the play several times throughout the day, a few days before teachers begin the Beowulf unit. This gives students a visual representation of the key episodes before delving into the text. Some teachers have also used the script to read in their classes before or after studying the epic poem. Additional material you may be interested in: *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation* by Seamus Heaney and *Grendel* by John Gardner.

—E.M.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Beowulf

CHARACTERS: 13+ flexible male and female, with easy doubling.

PLAYING TIME: 25 minutes.

COSTUMES: May be elaborate or simple. Don't be afraid to allow the audience to use its imagination. The monsters need to look evil. Be creative with the costumes and makeup. After Grendel's arm is "ripped off," the actor playing Grendel slides his arm inside his costume. The arm that Beowulf brings out is a stuffed replica. Grendel's head is a Styrofoam head wearing the same mask as Grendel.

PROPERTIES: Swords and shields; bags of gold; scepters for kings and the queen; glasses for celebration.

SETTING: The stage is simple. A bare stage with perches here and there will work nicely.

LIGHTING: If available, creative lighting would prove effective. For example, any time the monsters are on stage, red lighting is used.

Pronunciation Guide

Beowulf	<i>bay oh wolf</i>
Grendel	<i>gren dull</i>
Hygelac	<i>high guh lak</i>
Hrothgar	<i>hroth gar</i>
Wealthew	<i>weel thee oh</i>
Ecgtheow	<i>edge thayo</i>

Note: the accent always falls on the first syllable. When "h" comes before "r," it's a strong breathy sound, as in **H**rothgar. When "c" and "g" come together, it makes the same sound as "dg" does in the word "edge."