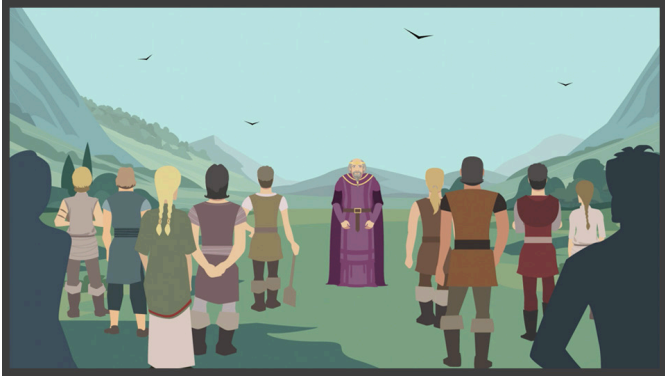


BEOWULF - EPISODE 1



Storyteller: Many years ago in the land of Denmark, Lord Hrothgar was king.

Hrothgar was rich and powerful and he was a good ruler who cared for his people. One day he announced:

Hrothgar: I am going to build a great hall where all my people can meet together - to eat and drink and be happy! Work will start immediately!

Storyteller: For two years Hrothgar's builders worked to complete the hall and when it was finished everyone agreed that it was the biggest and most beautiful building they had ever seen.

Hrothgar: Today I name this great hall Heorot. Tonight there will be a feast. It will be the first of many to be held in our fine new building. All are welcome!

Storyteller: Heorot was full that night. The people ate and drank. They told stories. They sang and they laughed and they were happy. But not everyone in Denmark was happy that night. Out on the dark moors a creature was slowly moving towards Heorot. A creature full of hatred. A monster driven by evil: Grendel.

Grendel: Listen to the humans. When I hear the humans laughing I want to crush their bones! They won't be laughing soon. Grendel is coming. Grendel will stop the laughing...



Storyteller: Inside Heorot everything became quiet as the people slept. Grendel stood outside the great hall and sniffed the air. Then he lifted his huge fist and smashed the great door to pieces...and the next moment he was inside.



Hrothgar: Tell me the worst. How many?

Thane: My Lord...

Hrothgar: How many has the creature killed?

Thane: Thirty, my Lord.

Hrothgar: Thirty.

Thane: Yes, my Lord.

Hrothgar: Now it has attacked once it is sure to return. Make ready for tonight. Build barricades and strengthen the great door. Tell all our thanes to sharpen their swords and dress themselves in armour. When the monster returns we will be ready!

Storyteller: Hrothgar was right. That night Grendel did return. The fighting men of Heorot could hear the monster as he came closer and closer. There was a moment of silence, then suddenly...the great door was once again smashed to pieces.

The Danes fought bravely but their swords and spears could not pierce Grendel's skin.

Grendel: Fools! I am too strong for you! But this is just the start. I will attack again and again!

Storyteller: News of the terrifying creature spread far and wide until it reached Geatland, home of a prince called Beowulf. As soon as Beowulf heard about Grendel he went to his king, Hygelac...



Beowulf: My Lord, every night our friends in Denmark are attacked by this cruel monster. It has to stop! I will sail to Denmark and kill the creature.

Hygelac: Beowulf, you are bravest and the strongest of us all, but even you will be no match for Grendel. If you go Denmark the creature will kill you and we will never see you again. Forget this idea. It's too dangerous.



Beowulf: My Lord, I am not afraid. Maybe this monster will be too strong for me. Maybe he will kill me. But I have to try. I have to do my best.

Hygelac: If you must go to Denmark then go with our blessing. I will give you my fastest ship and fourteen of our bravest thanes. Travel safely, Beowulf. May the gods protect you!

Storyteller: And so the next morning, Beowulf and fourteen of Geatland's fiercest warriors set sail for Denmark. And the people who gathered on the shore to watch them depart wondered if they would ever see them again.

