

## CHARACTER KEY (WITH OLD ENGLISH PRONUNCIATIONS)

**Scyld (shild):** Sails mysteriously from the sea as a child. Later, as a warrior, captures mead-halls of enemies. Becomes king and founds the Danish line. Buried at sea. Is the great-grandfather of Hrothgar.

**Hrothgar (roth-gar) [also called son of Healfdene]:** Great-grandson of Scyld. King of the Danes when Grendel attacks. Builds the hall Heorot.

**Hart (hay-oh-rot) [also called Heorot]:** Grand mead-hall built by Hrothgar. Named for the stag to symbolize kinship.

**Grendel (gren-dell):** Somewhat human, yet regarded as a monster. Comes from the wilderness and is upset by the sounds of the mead-hall Heorot. Bears God's curse on the descendents of Cain. Attacks mead-hall at night.

**Hygelac (hee-lack):** King of the Geats; also Beowulf's uncle. Sends his men to help the Danes. Rewards Beowulf greatly after hearing his successes.

**Beowulf (bay-ah-wolf):** Nephew and warrior of king Hygelac. Later becomes King of the Geats. Hero of the epic poem. Battles Grendel, Grendel's mother, and a dragon.

**Wulfgar (wolf-gar):** King Hrothgar's warrior. Greets Beowulf and the other Geats to the land of the Danes.

**Unferth (oon-fairth) [also called son of Ecglaf]:** The peacebreaker; a thane of Hrothgar's. Taunts Beowulf about losing a swimming contest with Breca (brek-aye), Beowulf's childhood friend. Later gives Beowulf a sword.

**Wealhtheow (way-ick-thay-ow):** Danish queen; Hrothgar's wife and the mother of his two sons. Name means "treasure bearer." Presents necklaces and mead-cups at feast.

**Grendel's mother:** Mother, likely a sea nymph-like monster, of the man-monster Grendel. Seeks vengeance for the death of her son.

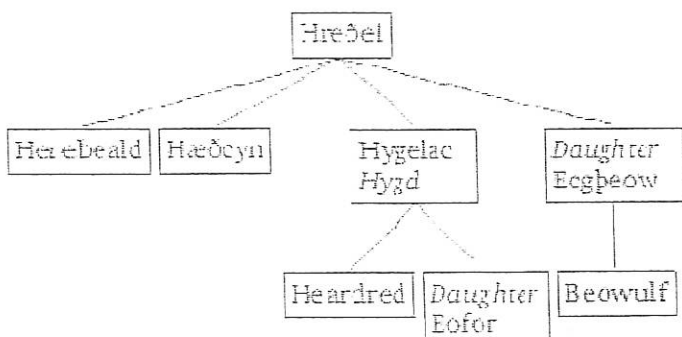
**Aeschere (ash-her-aye):** An important official to Hrothgar. Killed by Grendel's mother.

**Hrunting (hruin-ting):** Unferth's sword given to Beowulf to kill Grendel's mother. Is unable to cut her, however.

**The Dragon:** Third monster that Beowulf must defeat. After a Geat slave steals from his treasure, the dragon goes on a rampage.

**Wiglaf (vig-laf):** Beowulf's kinsman; the only thane who stays with Beowulf during the dragon battle.

GEATISH ROYAL FAMILY TREE



DANISH ROYAL FAMILY TREE

