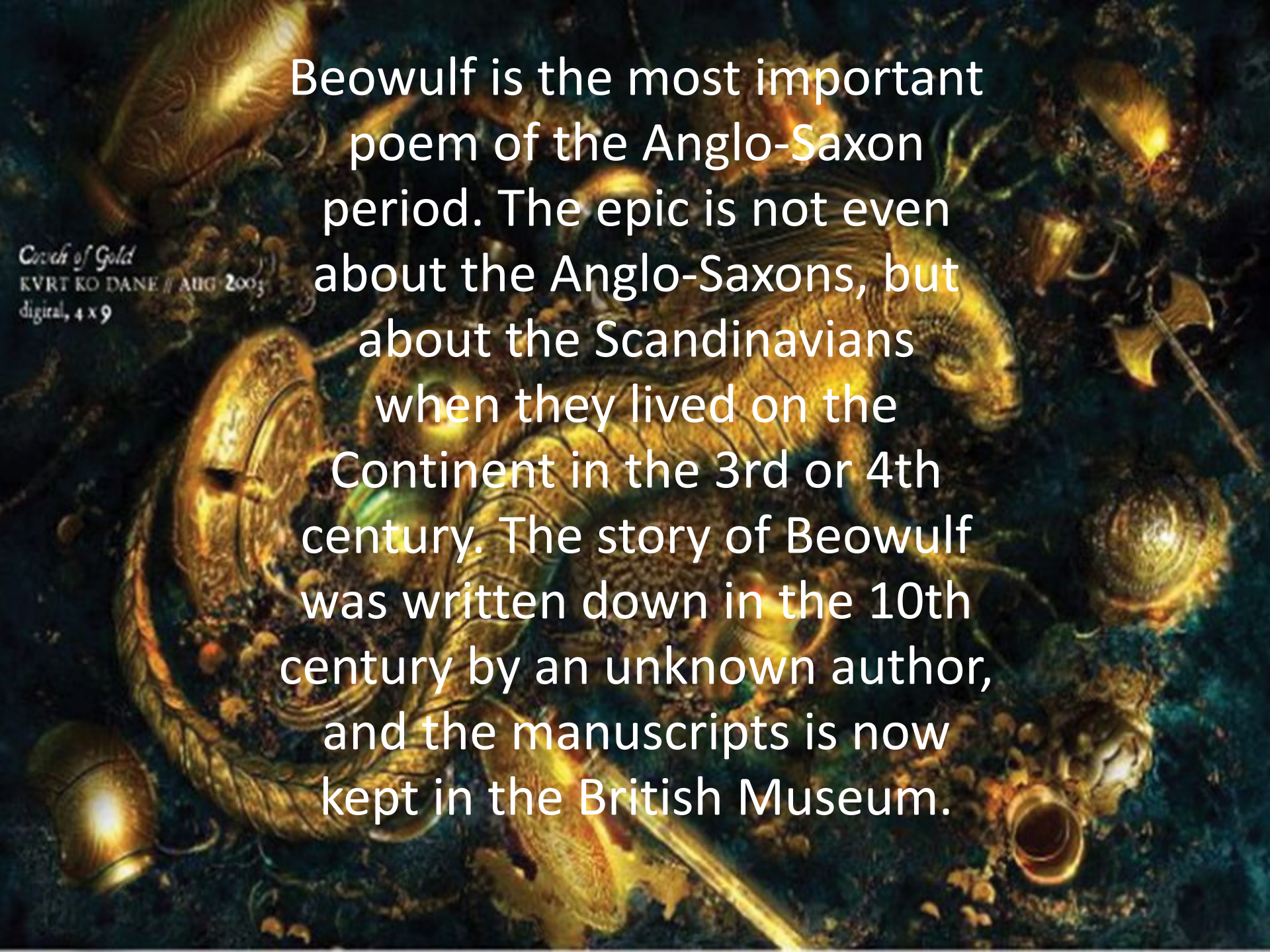


A dramatic scene from the movie 'Beowulf' showing a warrior on a horse running through a fiery, dark landscape. The warrior is in the foreground, riding a dark horse towards the viewer. The background is filled with intense orange and yellow flames, suggesting a battle or a fire. The overall atmosphere is dark and intense.

BEOWULF

Practical work
10 "B" class
Semonenko Julia

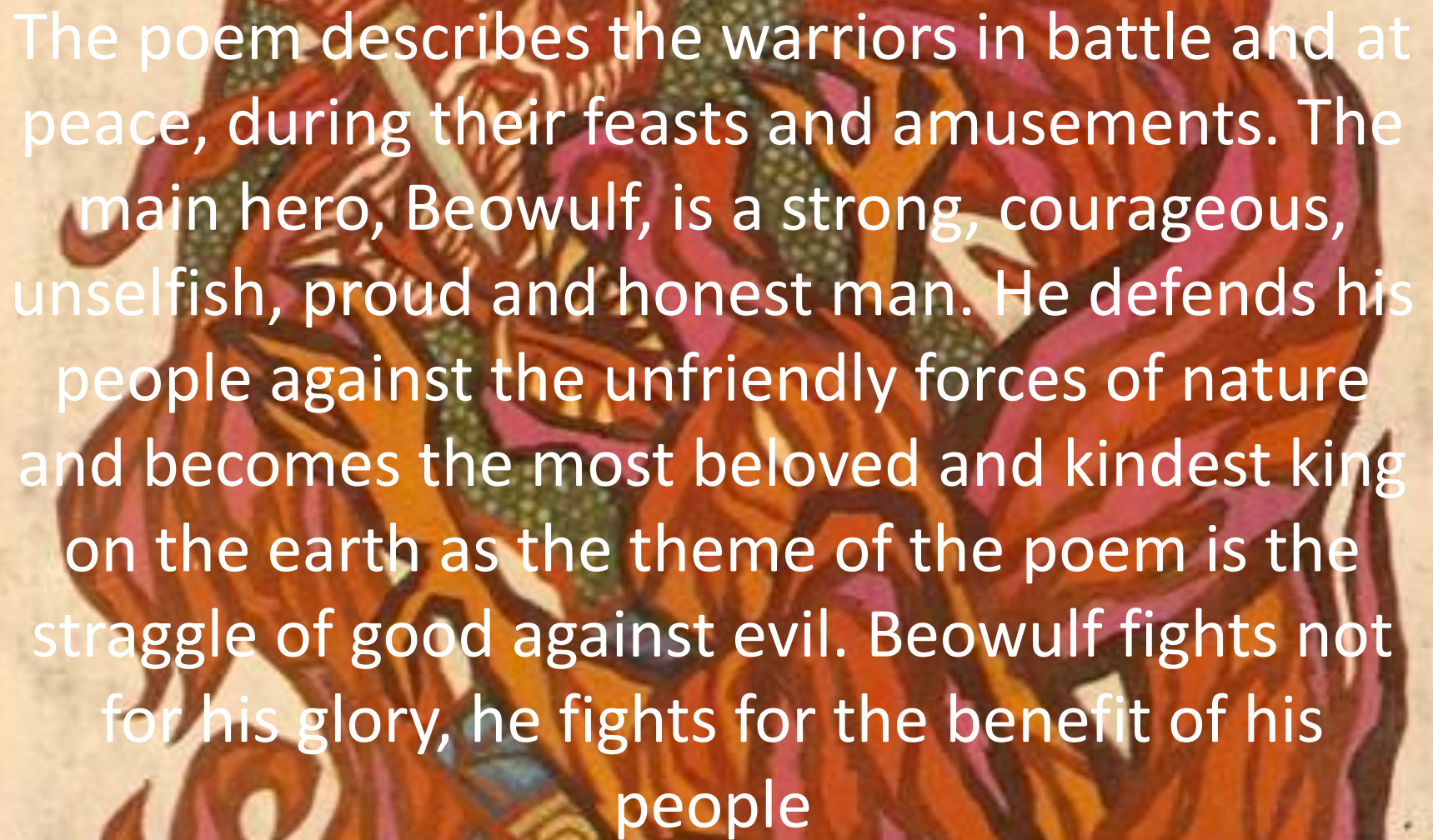


Beowulf is the most important poem of the Anglo-Saxon period. The epic is not even about the Anglo-Saxons, but about the Scandinavians when they lived on the Continent in the 3rd or 4th century. The story of Beowulf was written down in the 10th century by an unknown author, and the manuscripts is now kept in the British Museum.

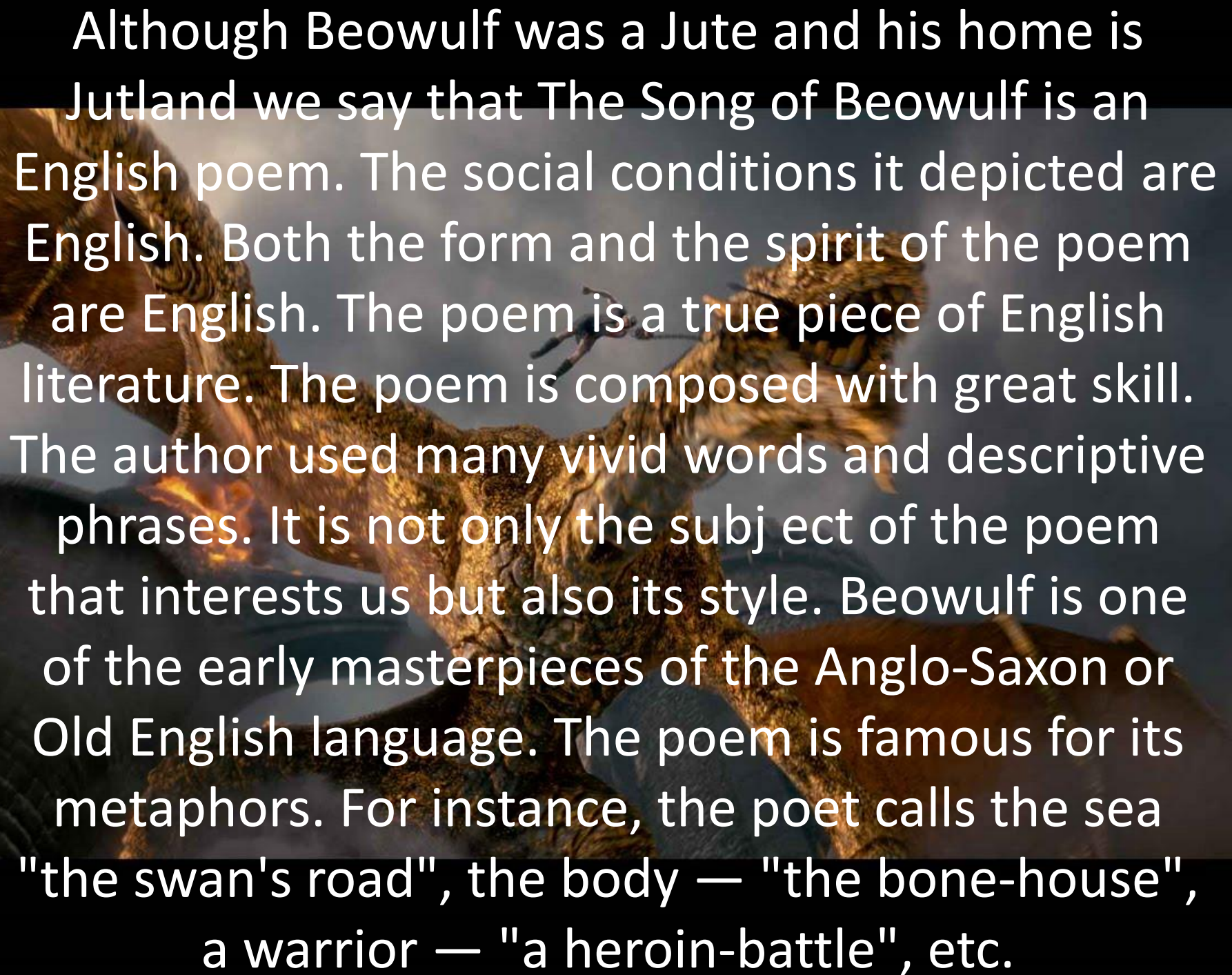
Couch of Gold
KVRT KO DANE // AUG 2003
digital, 4 x 9



Its social interest lies in the vivid description of the life of that period, of the manners and customs of the people at that time, of the relations among the members of the society and in the portrayal of their towns, ships and feasts. The scene takes place among the Jutes, who lived on the Scandinavian peninsula at the time. Their neighbors were the Danes. The Jutes and the Danes were good sailors. Their ships sailed round the coast of the peninsula and to far-off lands.



The poem describes the warriors in battle and at peace, during their feasts and amusements. The main hero, Beowulf, is a strong, courageous, unselfish, proud and honest man. He defends his people against the unfriendly forces of nature and becomes the most beloved and kindest king on the earth as the theme of the poem is the struggle of good against evil. Beowulf fights not for his glory, he fights for the benefit of his people

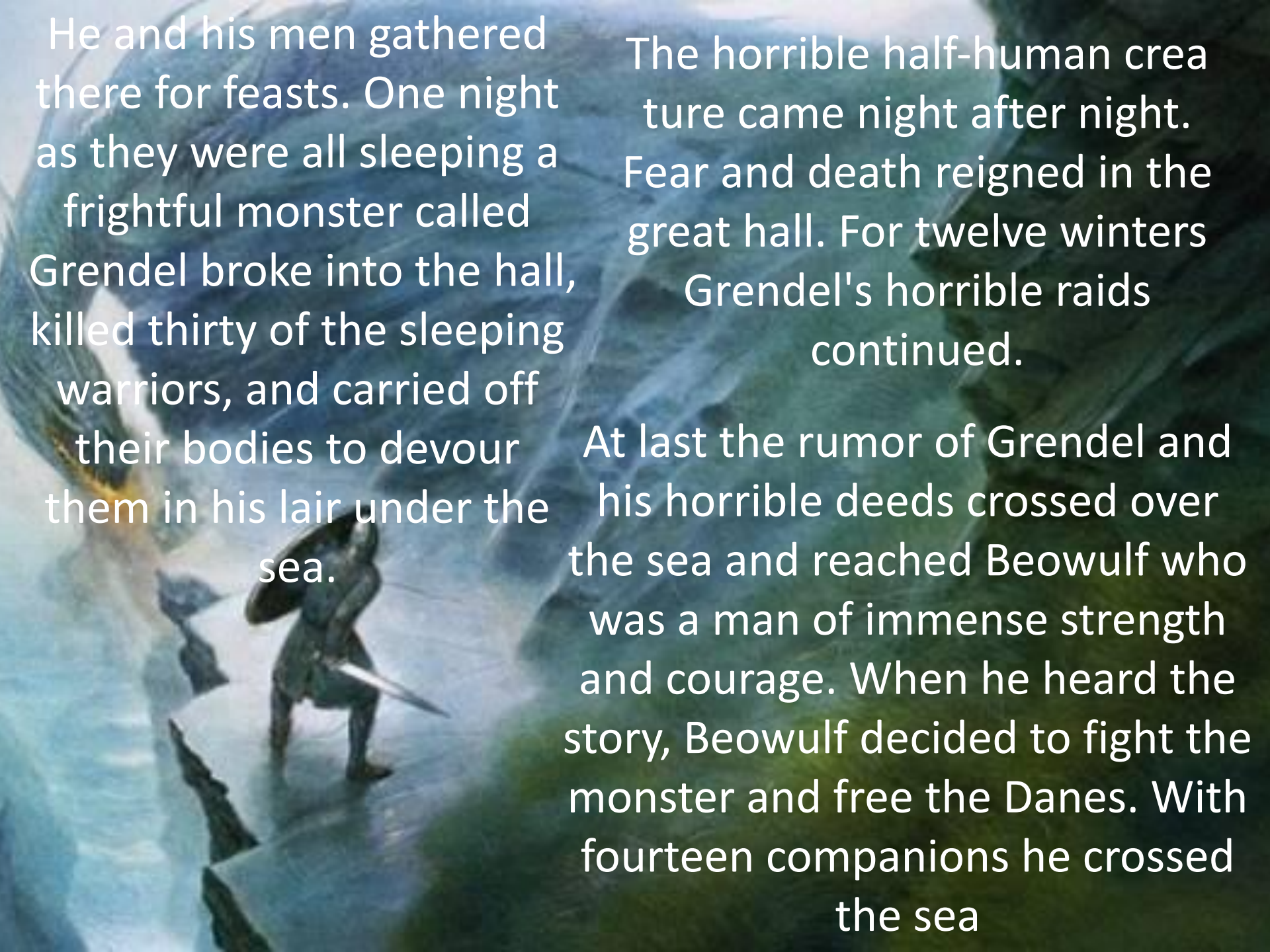
A dramatic scene from a movie showing a large dragon breathing fire, with a small figure of a warrior on its back. The dragon is breathing fire, and the warrior is standing on its back. The background is a dark, smoky sky.

Although Beowulf was a Jute and his home is Jutland we say that The Song of Beowulf is an English poem. The social conditions it depicted are English. Both the form and the spirit of the poem are English. The poem is a true piece of English literature. The poem is composed with great skill. The author used many vivid words and descriptive phrases. It is not only the subject of the poem that interests us but also its style. Beowulf is one of the early masterpieces of the Anglo-Saxon or Old English language. The poem is famous for its metaphors. For instance, the poet calls the sea "the swan's road", the body — "the bone-house", a warrior — "a heroin-battle", etc.



The epic consists of two parts. The first part tells us how Beowulf freed the Danes from two monsters.

Hrothgar King of the Danes, in his old age had built near the sea a hall called Heorot.



He and his men gathered there for feasts. One night as they were all sleeping a frightful monster called Grendel broke into the hall, killed thirty of the sleeping warriors, and carried off their bodies to devour them in his lair under the sea.

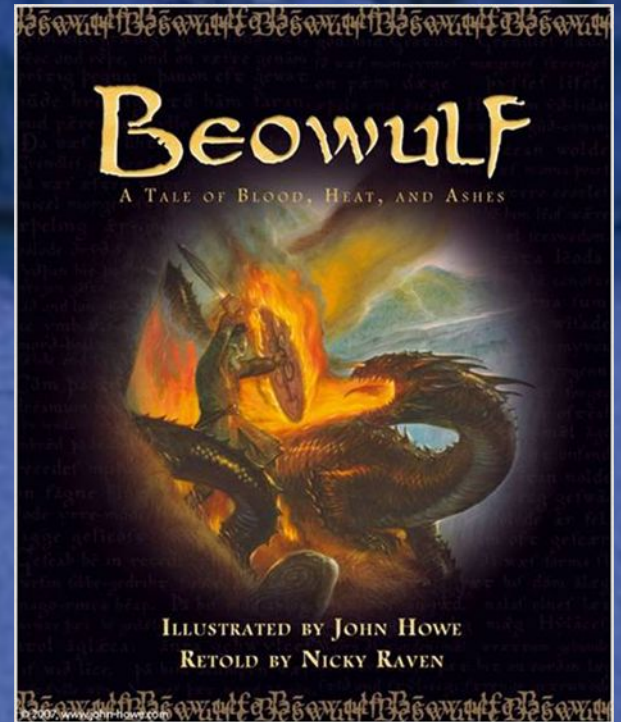
The horrible half-human creature came night after night. Fear and death reigned in the great hall. For twelve winters Grendel's horrible raids continued.

At last the rumor of Grendel and his horrible deeds crossed over the sea and reached Beowulf who was a man of immense strength and courage. When he heard the story, Beowulf decided to fight the monster and free the Danes. With fourteen companions he crossed the sea

The Danes receive Beowulf and his companions with great hospitality, they make a feast in Heorot at which the queen passes the mead cup to the warriors with her own hand. But as night approaches the fear of Grendel is again upon the Danes.



They all withdraw after the king has warned Beowulf of the frightful danger of sleeping in the hall. Beowulf stays in the hall with his warriors, saying proudly that since weapons cannot harm the monster, he will wrestle with him barehanded.



Breaking into the hall, Grendel seizes one of the sleepers and devours him. Then he approaches Beowulf and stretches out a claw, only to find it clutched in a grip of steel. A sudden terror strikes the monster's heart. He roars, struggles, tries to free his arm; but Beowulf leaps to his feet and grapples his enemy barehanded. After a desperate struggle Beowulf manages to tear off the monster's arm; Grendel escapes shrieking across the moor, and plunges into the sea to die.

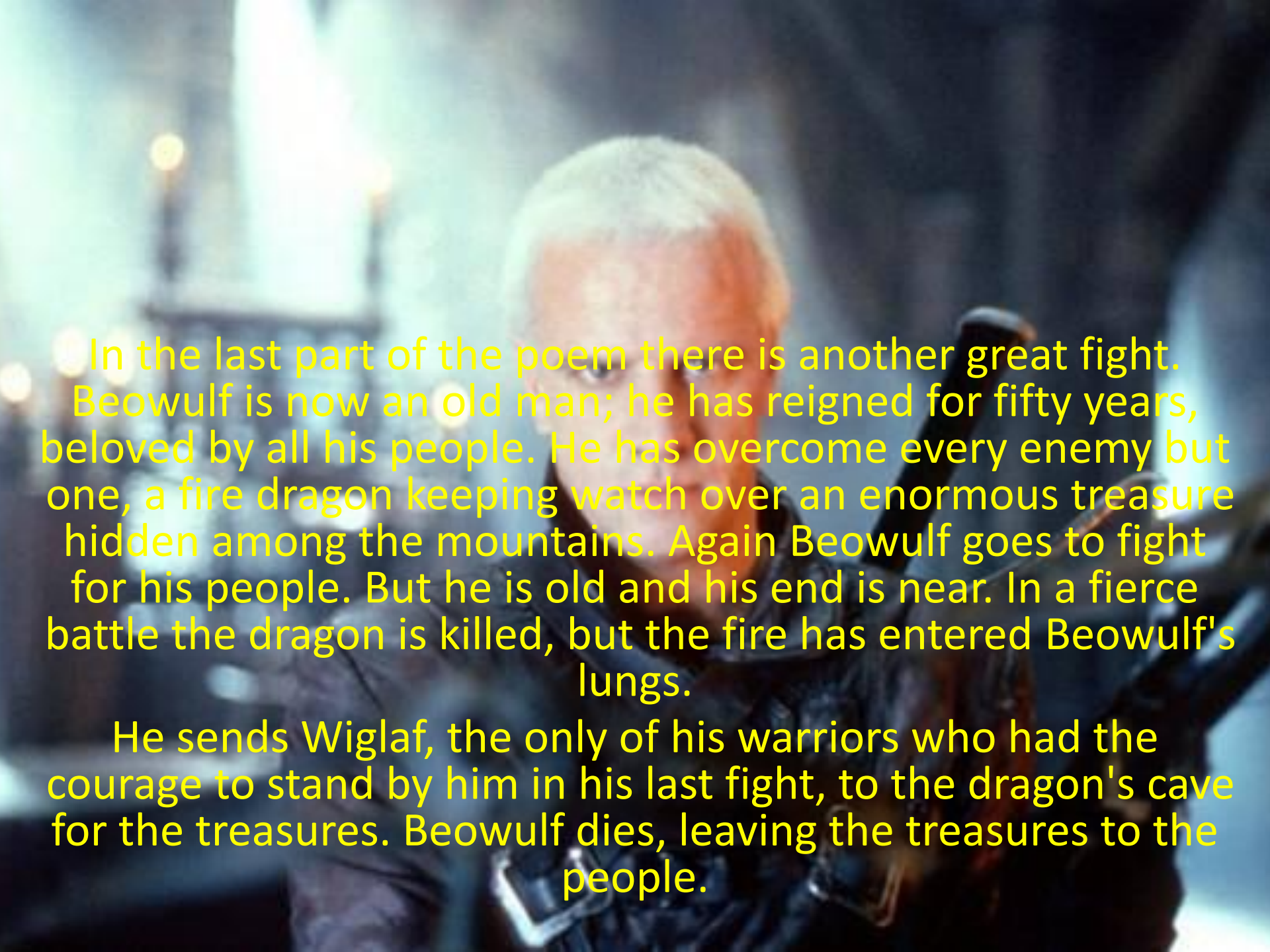


Beowulf hangs the huge arm with its terrible claws over the king's seat; the Danes rejoice in Beowulf's victory. When night falls, a great feast is spread in Heorot. Beowulf receives rich presents, everybody is happy. The Danes once more go to sleep in the great hall. At midnight comes another monster, mother of Grendel, who wants to revenge her son. She seizes the king's best friend and councilor and rushes away with him over the fens. The old king is broken-hearted, but Beowulf tries to console him



Then Beowulf prepares for a new fight. He plunges into the horrible place, while his companions wait for him on the shore. After a terrible fight at the bottom of the sea in the cave where the monsters live, Beowulf kills the she-monster with a magic sword which he finds in the cave. The hero returns to Heorot, where the Danes are already mourning for him, thinking him dead. Triumphantly Beowulf returns to his native land.





In the last part of the poem there is another great fight. Beowulf is now an old man; he has reigned for fifty years, beloved by all his people. He has overcome every enemy but one, a fire dragon keeping watch over an enormous treasure hidden among the mountains. Again Beowulf goes to fight for his people. But he is old and his end is near. In a fierce battle the dragon is killed, but the fire has entered Beowulf's lungs.

He sends Wiglaf, the only of his warriors who had the courage to stand by him in his last fight, to the dragon's cave for the treasures. Beowulf dies, leaving the treasures to the people.



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Thank you for
your attention