

# The Dream of the Rood

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Vercelli Book

Hwæt! Ic swefna cyst secgan wylle,  
hwæt me gemætte to midre nihte,  
syðþan reordberend reste wunedon!  
þuhte me þæt ic gesawe syllicre treow  
on lyft lædan, leohte bewunden, 5  
beama beorhtost. Eall þæt beacen wæs  
begoten mid golde. Gimmas stodon  
fægere æt foldan sceatum, swylce þær fife wæron  
uppe on þam eaxlegespanne. Beheoldon þær engel dryhtnes ealle,  
fægere þurh forðgesceaft. Ne wæs ðær huru fracodes gealga, 10  
ac hine þær beheoldon halige gastas,  
men ofer moldan, ond eall þeos mære gesceaft.

Syllic wæs se sigebeam, ond ic synnum fah,  
 forwunded mid wommum. Geseah ic wuldres treow,  
 wædum geweorðode, wynnum scinan, 15  
 gegyred mid golde; gimmas hæfdon  
 bewrigene weorðlice wealdendes treow.  
 Hwæðre ic þurh þæt gold ongytan meahte  
 earmra ærgewin, þæt hit ærest ongan  
 swætan on þa swiðran healfe. Eall ic wæs mid sorgum gedrefed, 20  
 forht ic wæs for þære fægran gesyhðe. Geseah ic þæt fuse beacen  
 wendan wædum ond bleom; hwilum hit wæs mid wætan bestemed,  
  
 beswyled mid swates gange, hwilum mid since gegyrwed.  
 Hwæðre ic þær licgende lange hwile  
 beheold hreowcearig hælendes treow, 25  
 oððæt ic gehyrde þæt hit hleoðrode.  
 Ongan þa word sprecaþ wudu selestas:  
 "þæt wæs geara iu, (ic þæt gyta geman),  
 þæt ic wæs aheawen holtas on ende,  
 astyred of stefne minum. Genaman me ðær strange feondas, 30  
 geworhton him þær to wæfersyne, heton me heora wergas heb-  
 ban.

Bæron me ðær beornas on eaxlum, oððæt hie me on beorg aset-  
 ton,  
 gefæstnodon me þær feondas genoge. Geseah ic þa frean man-  
 cynnes  
 efstan elne mycle þæt he me wolde on gestigan.  
 þær ic þa ne dorste ofer dryhtnes word 35  
 bugan oððe berstan, þa ic bifian geseah  
 eorðan sceatas. Ealle ic mihte  
 feondas gefyllan, hwæðre ic fæste stod.  
 Ongyrede hine þa geong hæleð, (þæt wæs god ælmihtig),  
 strang ond stiðmod. Gestah he on gealgan heanne, 40  
 modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa he wolde mancyn lysan.  
 Bifode ic þa me se beorn ymbclypte. Ne dorste ic hwæðre bugan  
 to eorðan,  
 feallan to foldan sceatum, ac ic sceolde fæste standan.  
 Rod wæs ic aræred. Ahof ic ricne cyning,  
 heofona hlaford, hyldan me ne dorste. 45  
 þurhdrifan hi me mid deorcan næglum. On me syndon þa dolg  
 gesiene,  
 opene inwidhlemmas. Ne dorste ic hira nænigum sceððan.  
 Bysmeredon hie unc butu ætgædere. Eall ic wæs mid blode

bestemed,  
 begoten of þæs guman sidan, siððan he hæfde his gast onsended.  
 Feala ic on þam beorge gebiden hæbbe 50  
 wraðra wyrda. Geseah ic weruda god  
 þearle þenian. þystro hæfdon  
 bewrigen mid wolcnum wealdendes hræw,  
 scirne sciman, sceaðu forðeode,  
 wann under wolcnum. Weop eal gesceaft, 55  
 cwiðdon cyninges fyll. Crist wæs on rode.  
 Hwæðere þær fuse feorran cwoman  
 to þam æðelinge. Ic þæt eall beheold.  
 Sare ic wæs mid sorgum gedrefed, hnag ic hwæðre þam secgum  
 to handa,  
 eaðmod elne mycle. Genamon hie þær ælmihtigne god, 60  
 ahofon hine of ðam hefian wite. Forleton me þa hilderincas  
 standan steame bedrifenne; eall ic wæs mid strælum forwundod.  
 Aledon hie ðær limwerigne, gestodon him æt his lices heafdum,  
 beheoldon hie ðær heofenes dryhten, ond he hine ðær hwile  
 reste,  
 meðe æfter ðam miclan gewinne. Ongunnon him þa moldern  
 wyrcan 65

beornas on banan gesyhðe; curfon hie ðæt of beorhtan stane,  
gesetton hie ðæron sigora wealdend. Ongunnon him þa sorhleoð-

galan

earme on þa æfentide, þa hie woldon eft siðian,  
meðe fram þam mæran þeodne. Reste he ðær mæte weorode.

Hwæðere we ðær grotende gode hwile 70

stodon on staðole, syððan stefn up gewat

hilderinca. Hræw colode,

fæger feorgbold. þa us man fyllan ongan

ealle to eorðan. þæt wæs egeslic wyrd!

Bedealf us man on deopan seaþe. Hwæðre me þær dryhtnes þeg-

nas, 75

freondas gefrunon,

ond gyredon me golde ond seolfre.

Nu ðu miht gehyran, hæleðmin se leofa,

þæt ic bealuwara weorc gebiden hæbbe,

sarra sorga. Is nu sæl cumen 80

þæt me weorðiað wide ond side

menn ofer moldan, ond eall þeos mære gesceaft,

gebiddaþhim to þyssum beacne. On me bearn godes

þrowode hwile. Forþan ic þrymfæst nu

hlifige under heofenum, ond ic hælān mæg 85  
 æghwylcne anra, þara þe him biðgesa to me.  
 Iu ic wæs geworden wita heardost,  
 leodum laðost, ærþan ic him lifes weg  
 rihtne gerymde, reordberendum.  
 Hwæt, me þa geweorðode wuldres ealdor 90  
 ofer holmwudu, heofonrices weard!  
 Swylce swa he his modor eac, Marian sylfe,  
 ælmihtig god for ealle menn  
 geweorðode ofer eall wifa cynn.  
 Nu ic þe hate, hælēðmin se leofa, 95  
 þæt ðu þas gesyhðe secge mannum,  
 onwreoh wordum þæt hit is wuldres beam,  
 se ðe ælmihtig god on þrowode  
 for mancynnes manegum synnum  
 ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum. 100  
 Deaðhe þær byrigde, hwæðere eft dryhten aras  
 mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe.  
 He ða on heofenas astag. Hider eft fundað  
 on þysne middangeard mancynn secan  
 on domdæge dryhten sylfa, 105

ælmihtig god, ond his englas mid,  
 þæt he þonne wile deman, se ah domes geweald,  
 anra gehwylcum swa he him ærur her  
 on þyssum lænum life gearnaþ.  
 Ne mæg þær ænig unforht wesan 110  
 for þam worde þe se wealdend cwyð.  
 Frinedhe for þære mænige hwær se man sie,  
 se ðe for dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde  
 biteres onbyrgan, swa he ær on ðam beame dyde.  
 Ac hie þonne forhtiað, ond fea þencaþ 115  
 hwæt hie to Criste cweðan onginnen.  
 Ne þearf ðær þonne ænig anforht wesan  
 þe him ær in breostum bereð beacna selest,  
 ac ðurh ða rode sceal rice gesecan  
 of eorðwege æghwylc sawl, 120  
 seo þe mid wealdende wunian þenceð."  
 Gebæd ic me þa to þan beame bliðe mode,  
 elne mycle, þær ic ana wæs  
 mæte werede. Wæs modsefa  
 afysed on forðwege, feala ealra gebad 125  
 langunghwila. Is me nu lifes hyht

þæt ic þone sigebeam secan mote  
 ana oftor þonne ealle men,  
 well weorþian. Me is willa to ðam  
 mycel on mode, ond min mundbyrd is 130  
 geriht to þære rode. Nah ic ricra feala  
 freonda on foldan, ac hie forðheonon  
 gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him wuldres cyning,  
 lifiaþnu on heofenum mid heahfædere,  
 wuniaþon wuldre, ond ic wene me 135  
 daga gehwylce hwænne me dryhtnes rod,  
 þe ic her on eorðan ær sceawode,  
 on þysson lænan life gefetige  
 ond me þonne gebringe þær is blis mycel,  
 dream on heofonum, þær is dryhtnes folc 140  
 geseted to symle, þær is singal blis,  
 ond me þonne asette þær ic syþþan mot  
 wunian on wuldre, well mid þam halgum  
 dreames brucan. Si me dryhten freond,  
 se ðe her on eorþan ær þrowode 145  
 on þam gealgtreowe for guman synnum.  
 He us onlyside ond us lif forgeaf,



heofonlicne ham. Hiht wæs geniwad  
mid bledum ond mid blisse þam þe þær bryne þolodan.  
Se sunu wæs sigorfæst on þam siðfate, 150  
mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,  
gasta weorode, on godes rice,  
anwealda ælmihtig, englum to blisse  
ond eallum ðam halgum þam þe on heofonum ær  
wunedon on wuldre, þa heora wealdend cwom, 155  
ælmihtig god, þær his eðel wæs.