

READINGS IN

VOLUME I

The Western Humanities

FOURTH EDITION



Roy T. Matthews

F. DeWitt Platt

READINGS IN THE WESTERN HUMANITIES

Volume I

Fourth Edition

Edited by

ROY T. MATTHEWS

F. DEWITT PLATT

Michigan State University



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READINGS IN THE WESTERN HUMANITIES, VOLUME I

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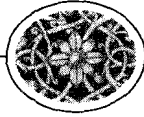
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PREFACE



We are pleased once again to present this new edition—the fourth—of *Readings in the Western Humanities*. From its inception this anthology was designed to complement our textbook, *The Western Humanities*, currently also in its fourth edition, and both books continue to reflect the educational ideal of the nineteenth-century poet and critic Matthew Arnold—that to be truly educated, students need to be exposed to “the best that has been thought and said.” Now, more than ever before, we are convinced that this ideal offers the best alternative to the cultural forces threatening to engulf our era and isolate people from their historical roots. The forces we refer to are a cyberspace culture divorced from history and a mass culture catering to the lowest common denominator. This anthology will give students an understanding of the West’s literary and philosophical heritage and thereby empower them to expand their horizons and establish vital linkages to the great achievements of the constantly evolving Western tradition.

That tradition, beginning in about 3000 B.C. and developed over five thousand years, consists of a vast, diverse, and complex group of literary and philosophical writings. To keep this anthology to a manageable length, we have kept two principles in mind as we made our selections: include works that have significantly influenced Western culture, and offer as many diverse and representative voices as possible. The readings, placed in chronological order, are arranged in twenty-one chapters, just as is *The Western Humanities*, and divided into two volumes. Volume I covers ancient Mesopotamia through the Renaissance; Volume II, the Renaissance through the twentieth century.

In Volume I of the fourth edition we retain many of the selections found in previous editions, but about one-fourth of the selections are new to this edition. Our major change was to include five authors and/or works for the first time. We added selections from the *Code of Hammurabi*, because, as the first known compilation in the West, it is the ultimate ancestor of all later Western legal codes. We chose an excerpt from *On the Apparel of Women* by Tertullian to show the hostile attitude toward women that was common among early Christian leaders. Other new authors and works included were Hrosvitha, the first known German dramatist, and “the recognition scene” from her play *Abraham*; Gaspara Stampa, the finest Italian woman poet of the Renaissance, and five of her passionate verses; and Pius II, the Renaissance pope, and a selection from his memoirs called *The Commentaries*.

Some changes involved the inclusion of new materials in existing selections: The “Search for Eternal Life” passage was made part of the selection from *The Epic of Gilgamesh*; the Athenian Plague episode was added to Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*; the meeting of Dido and Aeneas was included in Vergil’s *Aeneid*; the Pyramus and Thisbe legend was joined to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*; and about thirty lines from the Middle English original of Chaucer’s Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* was included for contrast with the modern translation.

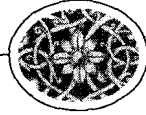
New materials added to the collection of readings took two other different forms. First, we kept some authors but changed their respective selections. Thus, we exchanged Odysseus's adventures with Skylla and Charybdis and on the Island of the Sun in Homer's *Odyssey* for the more familiar episode with the Cyclops; we replaced a single monologue from Menander's *The Woman of Samos* with the entire third act of the play; we substituted Cicero's speech *Against Cataline* for *The Dream of Scipio*; we omitted the prophecy of *Isaiah* in exchange for the *Book of Ecclesiastes*; and we selected Marie de France's lay of *Lanval* in place of the *Lay of the Dolorous Knight*. Second, we included a new selection while shortening what was in place, as, for example, the addition of the Hector and Andromache scene from Book 22 of Homer's *Iliad*.

Finally, we selected several new translations, which we considered better than those used in earlier editions. We adopted Robert Fagles's translations of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, because they are fresher and more attuned to modern readers' ears. For two of the Sappho poems, we used the lively versions of Suzy Q. Groden; however, we continued the Paul Roche translation of "Let's Not Pretend," which is very good, since Groden's version covered only a few lines of the long lyric fragment. The third substitution was the Frederick Goldin translation of *Song of Roland*, which is more consistent in its use of proper names and less awkward than the previous version.

* * *

We want to express our appreciation to Holly Allen, our sponsoring editor, who made the initial project possible and who continues to support our work. We also thank Kelly Winters, the copy-editor, whose well-trained eye has saved us from many mistakes. Special thanks go to Deneen Sedlack for shepherding the manuscript through the various production stages. To our former humanities students at Michigan State University who served as guinea pigs for most of the anthology's selections, we offer our gratitude; their informed responses helped hone the way we interpret literature and philosophy. If our headnotes are clear and apposite, then part of the praise must be shared with those students.

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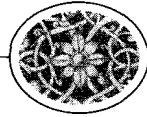
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PREHISTORY AND NEAR EASTERN CIVILIZATIONS



Selections from *The Code of Hammurabi*

Hammurabi (?–1750 B.C.), who ruled Babylonia from about 1792 to 1750 B.C., is the most famous of the Amorite tribal kings who gained control of the lower Euphrates Valley (modern Iraq) about 2050 B.C. Like most sovereigns of that period, he attended to the welfare of his cities and their inhabitants, attempted to appease the deities, and protected his people through alliances and wars. His reign was relatively peaceful until the last decade of his life when he fought his enemies and expanded his empire. Hammurabi combined his newly-acquired territories with his inherited lands and extended his bureaucracy to create a unified kingdom. After his death, the Amorite dynasty declined, and within two centuries the Kassites conquered Babylonia. The Babylonian kingdom was swept away but Hammurabi's set of laws, promulgated to unify his diverse subjects, survived and became an enduring legacy.

Known as the Code of Hammurabi, these laws were inscribed on a seven-foot stele—a stone slab or pillar—which was enshrined in the temple of Marduk, the national god of the Babylonians. The stele miraculously survived over the centuries, being rediscovered in 1901 at Susa in southwest Iran, and is on display today in the Louvre. Once thought to be original with Hammurabi, the Code is now considered a summary of a body of long-standing Sumerian laws. Recent discoveries of Sumerian clay tablets, dating from about 2200 B.C. and inscribed with laws covering prices, wages, payments of loans, marriage contracts, property, and slaves, indicate that the Code borrowed laws from Hammurabi's predecessors. It is probable that the bureaucrats who drew up the Code relied on various local ordinances, some of them written, which had been used to control commerce, trade, and personal relationships for centuries. At one time scholars thought that the Code of Hammurabi influenced the Mosaic laws of the Hebrews (see *The Holy Scriptures*), but now it appears that the two sets of laws shared a common cultural tradition.

The Code is divided into three parts: the prologue, the laws, and an epilogue. The prologue repeats a message similar to others inscribed on ancient monuments. Hammurabi's achievements are listed and support from the gods is assured. The laws and regulations, usually including the punishments for breaking the law, are conditionally phrased; that is, if a person commits a certain act, he/she will be punished in certain prescribed ways. The extensive list of laws (282 examples) attempts to incorporate every phase of life—commerce, trade, parental and domestic relations, slavery, libel, slander, theft, marriage, adultery, divorce, property rights and ownership, and employer–employee regulations. Punishment for breaking the law is based on the

lex talionis or the law of retaliation, “an eye for an eye,” which most ancient societies imposed on wrongdoers. A long epilogue reiterates that Hammurabi has governed wisely and with the blessings of the deities and, in conclusion, warns future rulers that if they do not follow the laws and obey the gods, they will be cursed.

Reading the Selection

These excerpts illustrate how much the laws, regardless of their nature and types of punishment, were grounded in everyday life and the shared experiences of humans who lived in communities and were willing to accept a set of rules to settle their differences. In their historical context, they reveal how far societies had come from their earlier tribal customs of blood feuds and personal retaliation. Now, a set of laws, with harsh penalties, applied to all members of the kingdom. The selections from the prologue and the epilogue show that the rulers, who had been chosen by the deities to enact and to administer the laws, were totally dependent upon the gods who had originated the laws and would punish those who disobeyed. The Code, so closely related to the society’s religious beliefs, meant that doing good or committing evil was what the gods deemed to be right or wrong. Thus, while the laws dealt with ordinary and mundane events, they possessed a moral dimension which bound the society together. Only by following the laws, emphasized the epilogue, would justice be done, peace maintained, and prosperity possible.



Prologue

When the exalted Anum king of the Annunaki (and) Illil lord of heaven and earth, who allots the destinies of the land, allotted the divine lordship of the multitude of the people unto Marduk the first-born son of Ea, magnified him amongst the Igigi, called Babylon by its exalted name (and) so made it pre-eminent in the (four) quarters of the world, and stablished for him an everlasting kingdom whose foundations are firmly laid like heaven and earth, at that time Anum and Illil for the prosperity of the people called me by name Hammu-rabi, the reverent God-fearing prince, to make justice to appear in the land, to destroy the

evil and the wicked that the strong might not oppress the weak, to rise indeed like Shamash over the dark-haired folk to give light to the land.

When Marduk commanded me to give justice to the people of the land and to let (them) have (good) governance, I set forth truth and justice throughout the land (and) prospered the people.



The Laws

§ 1

If a man has accused a man and has charged him with manslaughter and then has not proved (it against) him, his accuser shall be put to death.

§ 2

If a man has charged a man with sorcery and then has not proved (it against) him, he who is charged with the sorcery shall go to the holy river; he shall leap into the holy river and, if the holy river overwhelms him, his accuser shall take and keep his house; if the holy river proves that

man clear (of the offence) and he comes back safe, he who has charged him with sorcery shall be put to death; he who leapt into the holy river shall take and keep the house of his accuser.

§§ 3–4

If a man has come forward in a case to bear witness to a felony and then has not proved the statement that he has made, if that case (is) a capital one, that man shall be put to death.

If he has come forward to bear witness to (a claim for) corn or money, he shall remain liable for the penalty for that suit.

§ 5

If a judge has tried a suit, given a decision, caused a sealed tablet to be executed, (and) thereafter varies his judgement, they shall convict that judge of varying (his) judgement and he shall pay twelve-fold the claim in that suit; then they shall remove him from his place on the bench of judges in the assembly, and he shall not (again) sit in judgement with the judges.

§ 6

If a man has stolen property belonging to a god or a palace, that man shall be put to death, and he who has received the stolen property from his hand shall be put to death.

§ 7

If a man buys silver or gold or slave or slave-girl or ox or sheep or ass or anything else whatsoever from a (free) man's son or a (free) man's slave or has received (them) for safe custody without witnesses or contract, that man is a thief; he shall be put to death.

§ 127

If a man has caused a finger to be pointed at a high-priestess or a married lady and has then not proved (what he has said), they shall flog that man before the judges and shave half his head.

§ 128

If a man has taken a (woman to) wife and has not drawn up a contract for her, that woman is not a wife.

§ 129

If a married lady is caught lying with another man, they shall bind them and cast them into the water; if her husband wishes to let his wife live, then the king shall let his servant live.

§ 167

If a man has taken a wife and she has borne him sons (and) that woman goes to (her) fate, (if) after her (death) he marries another woman and she bears sons, after(!) the father goes to (his) fate, the sons shall not make a division according to mothers; they shall take the dowry of their (respective) mothers and shall divide the property of the paternal estate in proportion (to their number).

§§ 168–169

If a man sets his face to disinherit his son (and) states to the judges "I will disinherit my son," the judges shall determine the facts of his case and, if he has not deserved the heavy penalty of disinheritance, the father may not disinherit his son.

If he deserves the heavy penalty of disinheritance at the hands of his father, a first time they shall pardon him; if he deserves the (same) heavy penalty a second time, his father may disinherit his son.

§§ 196–205

If a man has put out the eye of a free man, they shall put out his eye.

If he breaks the bone of a (free) man, they shall break his bone.

If he puts out the eye of a villein or breaks the bone of a villein, he shall pay 1 maneh of silver.

If he puts out the eye of a (free) man's slave or breaks the bone of a (free) man's slave, he shall pay half his price.

If a man knocks out the tooth of a (free) man equal (in rank) to him(self), they shall knock out his tooth.

If he knocks out the tooth of a villein, he shall pay $\frac{1}{3}$ maneh of silver.

If a man strikes the cheek of a (free) man who is superior (in rank) to him(self), he shall be beaten with sixty stripes with a whip of ox-hide in the assembly.

If the man strikes the cheek of a free man equal to him(self in rank), he shall pay 1 maneh of silver.

If a villein strikes the cheek of a villein, he shall pay 10 shekels of silver.

If the slave of a (free) man strikes the cheek of a free man, they shall cut off his ear.



Epilogue

(These are) the just laws which Hammurabi the able king has established and (thereby) has enabled the land to enjoy stable governance and good rule.

I Hammu-rabi, the gracious king, have not been careless nor been slack on behalf of the dark-haired folk whom Illil has granted to me (and) whose shepherding Marduk has given to me; I seek out peaceful places for them (and) have relieved their cruel distresses, (and) I make light to rise upon them. With the mighty weapon

which Ilbaba and Ishtar have bestowed upon me, with the wisdom which Ea has allotted to me, with the ability which Marduk has given to me, I have plucked up (my) enemies from north to south, extinguished wars (and) prospered the land; I have made the people of the towns to lie down in safety (and) have left them none to affright them.

If that man has not heeded my words which I have inscribed on my monument, has despised my curses and has not feared the curses of the gods and so has razed the judgement which I have judged, revoked my commandments (and) altered my carved figures, has erased my name inscribed (thereon) and has then inscribed his (own) name (in its place), (or if) in fear of those curses he suborns another indeed (to do so), may the great Anum the father of the gods who has called me to reign deprive that man, whether king or lord or governor or any of mankind that bears a name, of royal splendour, break his sceptre (and) curse his destiny; may the lord Illil who allots the destinies (of mankind), whose word then is unalterable, the magnifier of my kingdom, kindle disorder that cannot be put down (and) despair to be the ruin of him in his habitation, may he allot unto him as (his) destiny a reign of sighs, days of scarcity (and) years of famine, thick darkness (and) death in the twinkling of an eye; may he by his honoured mouth ordain the ruin of his city, the scattering of his people, the overthrow of his kingdom, the extinction of his name and of his fame in the land.

May Ishtar, the lady of battle and conflict who unsheathes my weapon, my favouring guardian spirit (and) the lover of my reign, curse his kingdom in her great rage from her wrathful heart, turn his good fortune into ill fortune, break his weapons in field battle and conflict, raise disorder (and) rebellion against him, strike down his he-

roes (and) let the earth drink their blood, (and) let his armies be left a heap of corpses on the plain, let no quarter be given to his soldiers, deliver that man into the hand of his enemies and lead him in bonds to a land at enmity with him.

May Nergal, mighty amongst the gods, the warrior whom none can resist, who has fulfilled my eager desire, by his great power consume his people like a fire raging amongst rushes, may he cleave him asunder with his mighty weapon and shatter his limbs as of a statue of clay.

May Nintu, the exalted lady of the lands, the mother my creatress, bereave him of an heir and let him have no name, let him create no seed of mankind in the midst of his people.

May Ninkarrak, the daughter of Anum, who speaks in my favour in Ekur, bring upon his limbs a grievous sore, an evil plague, a sore wound which none can assuage (and) of which no physician knows the nature (and) cannot relieve it with dressings, (and which) like the sting of death cannot be plucked out, so that he may then bewail his (lost) manhood until his life is extinguished.

May the great gods of heaven and earth, the Anunnaki all together, and the protecting deity of the house, the brick-god of Ebabbar, curse that (man), his seed, his land, his soldiers, his people and his army, with a baleful curse.

May Illil with his word which shall then be unalterable curse him with clear curses, and may they quickly overtake him!

Selections from *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

The Epic of Gilgamesh is now considered by most scholars to be the oldest known epic in Western literature. This work predates Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* by some fifteen hundred years, appearing about 2200 B.C.

Like other epics, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* went through several variations before reaching its final form. It is based on a historical figure who quickly passed over into folklore. Gilgamesh reigned as king of the Sumerian city of Uruk around 2700 B.C., and soon after his death, his ordinary experiences were turned into stories of heroic deeds and dangerous journeys. Civilizations that succeeded the Sumerians infused into the epic new episodes and characters, different sets of deities, and issues reflecting the concerns of their own time. Nonetheless, despite its evolution through various civilizations, this epic recalls similar events that appear in other cultures' histories. In *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the tale of a devastating flood that killed all animals and humans except those who took refuge in a boat resembles stories from other societies, in particular the biblical narrative of Noah, his family, and God.

Another reason why *The Epic of Gilgamesh* evolved from its original form was that it, like all epics, was sung long before it was written, and storytellers adapted the episodes and characters

to fit their new audiences. The earliest written form of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* uncovered by archaeologists dates from about 600 B.C., a time when many Middle Eastern societies were disappearing and just before many others would fall under the influence of Greek civilization, later to become provinces of the Roman Empire.

Reading the Selections

These excerpts deal with two themes: one, that mortals cannot insult the gods and goddesses without punishment, and two, that humans are destined to die. Ishtar, the goddess of love, attempts to seduce Gilgamesh, who spurns her overtures by recalling how she ruined other humans. Furious at Gilgamesh, Ishtar asks her father to send the Bull of Heaven to kill Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh and Enkidu, the former wildman who had become civilized and had fought Gilgamesh before becoming his close companion, kill the bull. The gods and goddesses decide that Enkidu must die for this transgression. As Enkidu lies dying, he dreams of walking through the “house of dust,” where he encounters dead kings and priests and various deities. Homer and many other writers later copy this device of transporting their heroes into the world of the dead to speak with the great men and, sometimes, women of history, as a way to glorify the past and allow the characters to be told of future events by the dead.

Gilgamesh’s grief over the death of Enkidu reveals the Sumerian way of death. Gilgamesh orders his artisans to memorialize Enkidu with a statue—one that may have very well existed at some time in Sumerian history. Touched by Enkidu’s death, Gilgamesh recognizes his own mortal nature but refuses to accept his final fate. He sets out to find Utnapishtim, to whom the gods have given everlasting life and who, Gilgamesh hopes, will answer his questions about immortality. Gilgamesh, on his journey, has many adventures, among them meeting Siduri who keeps a vineyard and advises Gilgamesh to enjoy life now for he is destined to die. When Gilgamesh finally meets Utnapishtim, he is told that nothing is permanent; thus life is not everlasting. Gilgamesh asks Utnapishtim why the gods gave him immortality, and the old man replies that he will reveal a secret about the gods and proceeds to tell The Story of the Flood. Utnapishtim’s account of the flood is similar to the one in the Holy Scriptures, which should not be surprising since many societies located near rivers suffered from flooding and such stories eventually became part of the folklore.



Ishtar and Gilgamesh, and the Death of Enkidu

Gilgamesh washed out his long locks and cleaned his weapons; he flung back his hair from his shoulders; he threw off his stained clothes and changed them for new. He put on his royal robes and made them fast. When Gilgamesh had put on the crown, glorious Ishtar lifted her eyes, seeing the beauty of Gilgamesh. She said, “Come to me Gilgamesh, and be my bridegroom; grant me seed of your body, let me be your bride and you shall be my husband. I will harness for you a chariot of lapis lazuli and of gold, with wheels of gold and horns of copper; and you shall have mighty demons of the storm for draft-mules. When you enter our house in the fragrance of cedar-wood, threshold and throne will kiss your feet. Kings, rulers, and princes will bow down before you; they shall bring you tribute from the mountains and the plain. Your ewes shall drop twins and your goats triplets; your pack-ass shall outrun mules; your oxen shall have no rivals, and your chariot horses shall be famous far-off for their swiftness.”

Gilgamesh opened his mouth and answered glorious Ishtar, “If I take you in marriage, what gifts can I give in return? What ointments and clothing for your body? I would gladly give you bread and all sorts of food fit for a god. I would give you wine to drink fit for a queen. I would pour out barley to stuff your granary; but as for making you my wife—that I will not. How would it go with me? Your lovers have found you like a brazier which smoulders in the cold, a backdoor which keeps out neither squall of wind nor storm, a castle which crushes the garrison, pitch that blackens the bearer, a water-skin that chafes the carrier, a stone which falls from the parapet, a battering-ram turned back from the enemy, a sandal that trips the wearer. Which of your lovers did you ever love for ever? What shepherd of yours has pleased you for all time? Listen to me while I tell the tale of your lovers. There was Tammuz, the lover of your youth, for him you decreed wailing, year after year. You loved the many-coloured roller, but still you struck and broke his wing; now in the grove he sits and cries, ‘Kappi,

kappi, my wing, my wing.' You have loved the lion tremendous in strength: seven pits you dug for him, and seven. You have loved the stallion magnificent in battle, and for him you decreed whip and spur and a thong, to gallop seven leagues by force and to muddy the water before he drinks; and for his mother Silili lamentations. You have loved the shepherd of the flock; he made meal-cake for you day after day, he killed kids for your sake. You struck and turned him into a wolf; now his own herd-boys chase him away, his own hounds worry his flanks. And did you not love Ishullanu, the gardener of your father's palm-grove? He brought you baskets filled with dates without end; every day he loaded your table. Then you turned your eyes on him and said, 'Dearest Ishullanu, come here to me, let us enjoy your manhood, come forward and take me, I am yours.' Ishullanu answered, 'What are you asking from me? My mother has baked and I have eaten; why should I come to such as you for food that is tainted and rotten? For when was a screen of rushes sufficient protection from frosts?' But when you had heard his answer you struck him. He was changed to a blind mole deep in the earth, one whose desire is always beyond his reach. And if you and I should be lovers, should not I be served in the same fashion as all these others whom you loved once?"

When Ishtar heard this she fell into a bitter rage, she went up to high heaven. Her tears poured down in front of her father Anu, and Antum her mother. She said, "My father, Gilgamesh has heaped insults on me, he has told over all my abominable behaviour, my foul and hideous acts." Anu opened his mouth and said, "Are you a father of gods? Did not you quarrel with Gilgamesh the king, so now he has related your abominable behaviour, your foul and hideous acts?"

Ishtar opened her mouth and said again, "My father, give me the Bull of Heaven to destroy Gilgamesh. Fill Gilgamesh, I say, with arrogance to his destruction; but if you refuse to give me the Bull of Heaven I will break in the doors of hell and smash the bolts; there will be confusion of people, those above with those from the lower depths. I shall bring up the dead to eat food like the living; and the hosts of dead will outnumber the living." Anu said to great Ishtar, "If I do what you desire there will be seven years of drought throughout Uruk when corn will be seedless husks. Have you saved grain enough for the people and grass for the cattle?" Ishtar replied, "I have saved grain for the people, grass for the cattle; for seven years of seedless husks there is grain and there is grass enough."

When Anu heard what Ishtar had said he gave her the Bull of Heaven to lead by the halter down to Uruk. When they reached the gates of Uruk the Bull went to the river; with his first snort cracks opened in the earth and a hundred young men fell down to death. With his second snort cracks opened and two hundred fell down to death. With his third snort cracks opened, Enkidu doubled over but instantly recovered, he dodged aside and leapt on the Bull and seized it by the horns. The Bull of Heaven foamed in his face, it brushed him with the thick of its tail. Enkidu cried to Gilgamesh, "My friend, we boasted that we would leave enduring names behind us. Now thrust in your sword between the nape and the horns." So Gilgamesh followed the Bull, he seized the thick of its tail, he thrust the sword between the nape and the horns and slew the Bull.

When they had killed the Bull of Heaven they cut out its heart and gave it to Shamash, and the brothers rested.

But Ishtar rose up and mounted the great wall of Uruk; she sprang on to the tower and uttered a curse: "Woe to Gilgamesh, for he has scorned me in killing the Bull of Heaven." When Enkidu heard these words he tore out the Bull's right thigh and tossed it in her face saying, "If I could lay my hands on you, it is this I should do to you, and lash the entrails to your side." Then Ishtar called together her people, the dancing and singing girls, the prostitutes of the temple, the courtesans. Over the thigh of the Bull of Heaven she set up lamentation.

But Gilgamesh called the smiths and the armourers, all of them together. They admired the immensity of the horns. They were plated with lapis lazuli two fingers thick. They were thirty pounds each in weight, and their capacity in oil was six measures, which he gave to his guardian god, Lugulbanda. But he carried the horns into the palace and hung them on the wall. Then they washed their hands in Euphrates, they embraced each other and went away. They drove through the streets of Uruk where the heroes were gathered to see them, and Gilgamesh called to the singing girls, "Who is most glorious of the heroes, who is most eminent among men?" "Gilgamesh is the most glorious of heroes, Gilgamesh is most eminent among men." And now there was feasting, and celebrations and joy in the palace, till the heroes lay down saying, "Now we will rest for the night."

When the daylight came Enkidu got up and cried to Gilgamesh, "Oh my brother, such a dream I had last night. Anu, Enlil, Ea and heavenly Shamash took counsel together, and Anu said to Enlil, 'Because they have killed the Bull of Heaven, and because they have killed Humbaba who guarded the Cedar Mountain one of the two must die.' Then glorious Shamash answered the hero Enlil, 'It was by your command they killed the Bull of Heaven, and killed Humbaba, and must Enkidu die although innocent?' Enlil flung round in rage at glorious Shamash, 'You dare to say this, you who went about with them every day like one of themselves!'"

So Enkidu lay stretched out before Gilgamesh; his tears ran down in streams and he said to Gilgamesh, "O my brother, so dear as you are to me, brother, yet they will take me from you." Again he said, "I must sit down on the threshold of the dead and never again will I see my dear brother with my eyes."

While Enkidu lay alone in his sickness he cursed the gate as though it was living flesh, "You there, wood of the gate, dull and insensible, witless, I searched for you over twenty leagues until I saw the towering cedar. There is no wood like you in our land. Seventy-two cubits high and twenty-four wide, the pivot and the ferrule and the jambs are perfect. A master craftsman from Nippur has made you; but O, if I had known the conclusion! If I had known that this was all the good that would come of it, I would have raised the axe and split you into little pieces and set up here a gate of wattle instead. Ah, if only some future king had brought you here, or some god had fashioned you. Let him obliterate my name and write his own, and the curse fall on him instead of on Enkidu."

With the first brightening of dawn Enkidu raised his head and wept before the Sun God, in the brilliance of the

sunlight his tears streamed down. "Sun God, I beseech you, about that vile Trapper, that Trapper of nothing because of whom I was to catch less than my comrade; let him catch least; make his game scarce, make him feeble, taking the smaller of every share, let his quarry escape from his nets."

When he had cursed the Trapper to his heart's content he turned on the harlot. He was roused to curse her also. "As for you, woman, with a great curse I curse you! I will promise you a destiny to all eternity. My curse shall come on you soon and sudden. You shall be without a roof for your commerce, for you shall not keep house with other girls in the tavern, but do your business in places fouled by the vomit of the drunkard. Your hire will be potter's earth, your thievings will be flung into the hovel, you will sit at the cross-roads in the dust of the potter's quarter, you will make your bed on the dunghill at night, and by day take your stand in the wall's shadow. Brambles and thorns will tear your feet, the drunk and the dry will strike your cheek and your mouth will ache. Let you be stripped of your purple dyes, for I too once in the wilderness with my wife had all the treasure I wished."

When Shamash heard the words of Enkidu he called to him from heaven: "Enkidu, why are you cursing the woman, the mistress who taught you to eat bread fit for gods and drink wine of kings? She who put upon you a magnificent garment, did she not give you glorious Gilgamesh for your companion, and has not Gilgamesh, your own brother, made you rest on a royal bed and recline on a couch at his left hand? He has made the princes of the earth kiss your feet, and now all the people of Uruk lament and wail over you. When you are dead he will let his hair grow long for your sake, he will wear a lion's pelt and wander through the desert."

When Enkidu heard glorious Shamash his angry heart grew quiet, he called back the curse and said, "Woman, I promise you another destiny. The mouth which cursed you shall bless you! Kings, princes and nobles shall adore you. On your account a man though twelve miles off will clap his hand to his thigh and his hair will twitch. For you he will undo his belt and open his treasure and you shall have your desire; lapis lazuli, gold and carnelian from the heap in the treasury. A ring for your hand and a robe shall be yours. The priest will lead you into the presence of the gods. On your account a wife, a mother of seven, was forsaken."

As Enkidu slept alone in his sickness, in bitterness of spirit he poured out his heart to his friend. "It was I who cut down the cedar, I who levelled the forest, I who slew Humbaba and now see what has become of me. Listen, my friend, this is the dream I dreamed last night. The heavens roared, and earth rumbled back an answer; between them stood I before an awful being, the somber-faced man-bird; he had directed on me his purpose. His was a vampire face, his foot was a lion's foot, his hand was an eagle's talon. He fell on me and his claws were in my hair, he held me fast and I smothered; then he transformed me so that my arms became wings covered with feathers. He turned his stare towards me, and he led me away to the palace of Irkalla, the Queen of Darkness, to the house from which none who enters ever returns, down the road from which there is no coming back.

"There is the house whose people sit in darkness; dust is their food and clay their meat. They are clothed like birds with wings for covering, they see no light, they sit in darkness. I entered the house of dust and I saw the kings of the earth, their crowns put away for ever; rulers and princes, all those who once wore kingly crowns and ruled the world in the days of old. They who had stood in the place of the gods like Anu and Enlil, stood now like servants to fetch baked meats in the house of dust, to carry cooked meat and cold water from the water-skin. In the house of dust which I entered were high priests and acolytes, priests of the incantation and of ecstasy; there were servers of the temple, and there was Etana, that King of Kish whom the eagle carried to heaven in the days of old. I saw also Samuqan, god of cattle, and there was Ereshkigal the Queen of the Underworld; and Belit-Sheri squatted in front of her, she who is recorder of the gods and keeps the book of death. She held a tablet from which she read. She raised her head, she saw me and spoke: "Who has brought this one here?" Then I awoke like a man drained of blood who wanders alone in a waste of rushes; like one whom the bailiff has seized and his heart pounds with terror."

Gilgamesh had peeled off his clothes, he listened to his words and wept quick tears, Gilgamesh listened and his tears flowed. He opened his mouth and spoke to Enkidu: "Who is there in strong-walled Uruk who has wisdom like this? Strange things have been spoken, why does your heart speak strangely? The dream was marvellous but the terror was great; we must treasure the dream whatever the terror; for the dream has shown that misery comes at last to the healthy man, the end of life is sorrow." And Gilgamesh lamented, "Now I will pray to the great gods, for my friend had an ominous dream."

This day on which Enkidu dreamed came to an end and he lay stricken with sickness. One whole day he lay on his bed and his suffering increased. He said to Gilgamesh, the friend on whose account he had left the wilderness, "Once I ran for you, for the water of life, and I now have nothing." A second day he lay on his bed and Gilgamesh watched over him but the sickness increased. A third day he lay on his bed, he called out to Gilgamesh, rousing him up. Now he was weak and his eyes were blind with weeping. Ten days he lay and his suffering increased, eleven and twelve days he lay on his bed of pain. Then he called to Gilgamesh, "My friend, the great goddess cursed me and I must die in shame. I shall not die like a man fallen in battle; I feared to fall, but happy is the man who falls in the battle, for I must die in shame." And Gilgamesh wept over Enkidu. . . .

He touched his heart but it did not beat, nor did he lift his eyes again. When Gilgamesh touched his heart it did not beat. So Gilgamesh laid a veil, as one veils the bride, over his friend. He began to rage like a lion, like a lioness robbed of her whelps. This way and that he paced round the bed, he tore out his hair and strewed it around. He dragged off his splendid robes and flung them down as though they were abominations.

In the first light of dawn Gilgamesh cried out, "I made you rest on a royal bed, you reclined on a couch at my left hand, the princes of the earth kissed your feet. I will cause

all the people of Uruk to weep over you and raise the dirge of the dead. The joyful people will stoop with sorrow; and when you have gone to the earth I will let my hair grow long for your sake, I will wander through the wilderness in the skin of a lion." The next day also, in the first light, Gilgamesh lamented; seven days and seven nights he wept for Enkidu, until the worm fastened on him. Only then he gave him up to the earth, for the Anunnaki, the judges, had seized him.



The Search for Everlasting Life

Bitterly Gilgamesh wept for his friend Enkidu; he wandered over the wilderness as a hunter, he roamed over the plains; in his bitterness he cried, "How can I rest, how can I be at peace? Despair is in my heart. What my brother is now, that shall I be when I am dead. Because I am afraid of death I will go as best I can to find Utnapishtim whom they call the Faraway, for he has entered the assembly of the gods." So Gilgamesh travelled over the wilderness, he wandered over the grasslands, a long journey, in search of Utnapishtim, whom the gods took after the deluge; and they set him to live in the land of Dilmun, in the garden of the sun; and to him alone of men they gave everlasting life.

At night when he came to the mountain passes Gilgamesh prayed: "In these mountain passes long ago I saw lions, I was afraid and I lifted my eyes to the moon; I prayed and my prayers went up to the gods, so now, O moon god Sin, protect me." When he had prayed he lay down to sleep, until he was woken from out of a dream. He saw the lions round him glorying in life; then he took his axe in his hand, he drew his sword from his belt, and he fell upon them like an arrow from the string, and struck and destroyed and scattered them.

There was the garden of the gods; all round him stood bushes bearing gems. Seeing it he went down at once, for there was fruit of carnelian with the vine hanging from it, beautiful to look at; lapis lazuli leaves hung thick with fruit, sweet to see. For thorns and thistles there were haematite and rare stones, agate, and pearls from out of the sea. While Gilgamesh walked in the garden by the edge of the sea Shamash saw him, and he saw that he was dressed in the skins of animals and ate their flesh. He was distressed, and he spoke and said, "No mortal man has gone this way before, nor will, as long as the winds drive over the sea." And to Gilgamesh he said, "You will never find the life for which you are searching." Gilgamesh said to glorious Shamash, "Now that I have toiled and strayed so far over the wilderness, am I to sleep, and let the earth cover my head for ever? Let my eyes see the sun until they are dazzled with looking. Although I am no better than a dead man, still let me see the light of the sun."

Beside the sea she lives, the woman of the vine, the maker of wine; Siduri sits in the garden at the edge of the

Then Gilgamesh issued a proclamation through the land, he summoned them all, the coppersmiths, the goldsmiths, the stone-workers, and commanded them, "Make a statue of my friend." The statue was fashioned with a great weight of lapis lazuli for the breast and of gold for the body. A table of hard-wood was set out, and on it a bowl of carnelian filled with honey, and a bowl of lapis lazuli filled with butter. These he exposed and offered to the Sun; and weeping he went away.

sea, with the golden bowl and the golden vats that the gods gave her. She is covered with a veil; and where she sits she sees Gilgamesh coming towards her, wearing skins, the flesh of the gods in his body, but despair in his heart, and his face like the face of one who has made a long journey. She looked, and as she scanned the distance she said in her own heart, "Surely this is some felon; where is he going now?" And she barred her gate against him with the cross-bar and shot home the bolt. But Gilgamesh, hearing the sound of the bolt, threw up his head and lodged his foot in the gate; he called to her, "Young woman, maker of wine, why do you bolt your door; what did you see that made you bar your gate? I will break in your door and burst in your gate, for I am Gilgamesh who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven, I killed the watchman of the cedar forest, I overthrew Humbaba who lived in the forest, and I killed the lions in the passes of the mountain."

Then Siduri said to him, "If you are that Gilgamesh who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven, who killed the watchman of the cedar forest, who overthrew Humbaba that lived in the forest, and killed the lions in the passes of the mountain, why are your cheeks so starved and why is your face so drawn? Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey? Yes, why is your face burned from heat and cold, and why do you come here wandering over the pastures in search of the wind?"

Gilgamesh answered her, "And why should not my cheeks be starved and my face drawn? Despair is in my heart and my face is the face of one who has made a long journey, it was burned with heat and with cold. Why should I not wander over the pastures in search of the wind? My friend, my younger brother, he who hunted the wild ass of the wilderness and the panther of the plains, my friend, my younger brother who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven and overthrew Humbaba in the cedar forest, my friend who was very dear to me and who endured dangers beside me, Enkidu my brother, whom I loved, the end of mortality has overtaken him. I wept for him seven days and nights till the worm fastened on him. Because of my brother I am afraid of death, because of my brother I stray through the wilderness and cannot rest. But now, young woman, maker of wine, since I have seen your face do not let me see the face of death which I dread so much."

She answered, "Gilgamesh, where are you hurrying to? You will never find that life for which you are looking. When the gods created man they allotted to him death, but life they retained in their own keeping. As for you, Gilgamesh, fill your belly with good things; day and night, night and day, dance and be merry, feast and rejoice. Let your clothes be fresh, bathe yourself in water, cherish the little child that holds your hand, and make your wife happy in your embrace; for this too is the lot of man."

But Gilgamesh said to Siduri, the young woman, "How can I be silent, how can I rest, when Enkidu whom I love is dust, and I too shall die and be laid in the earth. You live by the sea-shore and look into the heart of it; young woman, tell me now, which is the way to Utnapishtim, the son of Ubara-Tutu? What directions are there for the passage; give me, oh, give me directions. I will cross the Ocean if it is possible; if it is not I will wander still farther in the wilderness." The wine-maker said to him, "Gilgamesh, there is no crossing the Ocean; whoever has come, since the days of old, has not been able to pass that sea. The Sun in his glory crosses the Ocean, but who beside Shamash has ever crossed it? The place and the passage are difficult, and the waters of death are deep which flow between. Gilgamesh, how will you cross the Ocean? When you come to the waters of death what will you do? But Gilgamesh, down in the woods you will find Urshanabi, the ferryman of Utnapishtim; with him are the holy things, the things of stone. He is fashioning the serpent prow of the boat. Look at him well, and if it is possible, perhaps you will cross the waters with him; but if it is not possible, then you must go back."

When Gilgamesh heard this he was seized with anger. He took his axe in his hand, and his dagger from his belt. He crept forward and he fell on them like a javelin. Then he went into the forest and sat down. Urshanabi saw the dagger flash and heard the axe, and he beat his head, for Gilgamesh had shattered the tackle of the boat in his rage. Urshanabi said to him, "Tell me, what is your name? I am Urshanabi, the ferryman of Utnapishtim the Faraway." He replied to him, "Gilgamesh is my name, I am from Uruk, from the house of Anu." Then Urshanabi said to him, "Why are your cheeks so starved and your face drawn? Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey; yes, why is your face burned with heat and with cold, and why do you come here wandering over the pastures in search of the wind?"

Gilgamesh said to him, "Why should not my cheeks be starved and my face drawn? Despair is in my heart, and my face is the face of one who has made a long journey. I was burned with heat and with cold. Why should I not wander over the pastures? My friend, my younger brother who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven, and overthrew Humbaba in the cedar forest, my friend who was very dear to me, and who endured dangers beside me, Enkidu my brother whom I loved, the end of mortality has overtaken him. I wept for him seven days and nights till the worm fastened on him. Because of my brother I am afraid of death, because of my brother I stray through the wilderness. His fate lies heavy upon me. How can I be silent, how can I rest? He is dust and I too shall die and be laid in the earth for ever. I am afraid of death, therefore, Urshanabi, tell me which is the road to Utnapishtim? If it is pos-

sible I will cross the waters of death; if not I will wander still farther through the wilderness."

Urshanabi said to him, "Gilgamesh, your own hands have prevented you from crossing the Ocean; when you destroyed the tackle of the boat you destroyed its safety." Then the two of them talked it over and Gilgamesh said, "Why are you so angry with me, Urshanabi, for you yourself cross the sea by day and night, at all seasons you cross it." "Gilgamesh, those things you destroyed, their property is to carry me over the water, to prevent the waters of death from touching me. It was for this reason that I preserved them, but you have destroyed them, and the *urnu* snakes with them. But now, go into the forest, Gilgamesh; with your axe cut poles, one hundred and twenty, cut them sixty cubits long, paint them with bitumen, set on them ferrules and bring them back."

When Gilgamesh heard this he went into the forest, he cut poles one hundred and twenty; he cut them sixty cubits long, he painted them with bitumen, he set on them ferrules, and he brought them to Urshanabi. Then they boarded the boat, Gilgamesh and Urshanabi together, launching it out on the waves of Ocean. For three days they ran on as it were a journey of a month and fifteen days, and at last Urshanabi brought the boat to the waters of death. Then Urshanabi said to Gilgamesh, "Press on, take a pole and thrust it in, but do not let your hands touch the waters. Gilgamesh, take a second pole, take a third, take a fourth pole. Now, Gilgamesh, take a fifth, take a sixth and seventh pole. Gilgamesh, take an eighth, and ninth, a tenth pole. Gilgamesh, take an eleventh, take a twelfth pole." After one hundred and twenty thrusts Gilgamesh had used the last pole. Then he stripped himself, he held up his arms for a mast and his covering for a sail. So Urshanabi the ferryman brought Gilgamesh to Utnapishtim, whom they call the Faraway, who lives in Dilmun at the place of the sun's transit, eastward of the mountain. To him alone of men the gods had given everlasting life.

Now Utnapishtim, where he lay at ease, looked into the distance and he said in his heart, musing to himself, "Why does the boat sail here without tackle and mast; why are the sacred stones destroyed, and why does the master not sail the boat? That man who comes is none of mine; where I look I see a man whose body is covered with skins of beasts. Who is this who walks up the shore behind Urshanabi, for surely he is no man of mine?" So Utnapishtim looked at him and said, "What is your name, you who come here wearing the skins of beasts, with your cheeks starved and your face drawn? Where are you hurrying to now? For what reason have you made this great journey, crossing the seas whose passage is difficult? Tell me the reason for your coming."

He replied, "Gilgamesh is my name. I am from Uruk, from the house of Anu." Then Utnapishtim said to him, "If you are Gilgamesh, why are your cheeks so starved and your face drawn? Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey? Yes, why is your face burned with heat and cold; and why do you come here, wandering over the wilderness in search of the wind?"

Gilgamesh said to him, "Why should not my cheeks be starved and my face drawn? Despair is in my heart and my face is the face of one who has made a long journey. It