

Ebandun: An Epic Poem in Twelve Parts (Bk III)

by [William G. Carpenter](#) (August 2021)



"The monarch crossed himself, as did his men."

III. Three Kings

Alfred and his thanes fight their way to the stables. Ealhswith prepares to take the children to Frome. The surviving guests flee across the Avon, but Alfred turns back to confirm Ealhswith's escape. He and a small band hurry to Frome. At the abbey they are spotted by Danes and pursued.

King Alfred wrestled on his coat of mail
and joined the Somersetans in the doorway.
Pale smoke blanketed the yard,
transpierced by flames gleaming in blades and helms
like fallen stars buried in deep water.
Amid the murk, the Athulfing discerned
a straggling palisade of Wiltshire spearmen
anchored on his mailed household guards.
The crash of arms and cries of pain and hatred,
perhaps because the darkness shrank the scene,
conjured in Alfred's mind the Roman folk
drunk on the liquor spilled in the arena.

"My God," he said. But now was not the time
to ask what sin, what vicious satisfaction,
had blinded him and his to an obvious peril.
"Caput porcinum!" the monarch cried. [\[1\]](#)

"Caput porcinum," his thane repeated,
"for our Lord's feast! Arm, you novice miners!
We'll drive a bloody shaft to the king's stables!"

"Not so, Lord," a countermanding word
rumbled below the shouts and clanking iron.
Old Cyma spoke, King Athulf's Wiltshire thane, [\[2\]](#)
seconded by Ealhstan and Mildred.

"We claim the precedence," asserted Cyma.
Into the smoking flood the gray thanes plunged,
then Athelnoth and two of Addi's guardsmen,
succeeded by young Alfred and his bishop.[\[3\]](#)
The other guests, who dreaded lest their *dryhten*[\[4\]](#)
should die alone, now exited the hall,
while overhead the flame-cheeked billows shrouded
the moonless tomb of the Lord's festal night.

"For Athelwulf and Christ!" Lord Cyma called,
a wisp of mist dissolving at his lips.
A hundred Saxon throats threw back the slogan,
but twenty score invaders bellowed, "Har!"
another name for Grim, the hooded one.
Thrusting himself among the thronging Danes,
beating his feet against the frozen floor,
the elder penetrated several steps
before the devils landed one good hit.
Shoving with his shield, the Wiltshireman
parted a pirate's windpipe with his tip
and nimbly blocked and hacked at arms and limbs
deployed to check or hinder his attack,
till, staggered by an axe-blow to the helm
and a bold stroke that unhinged his jaw,
the warrior forgot to ward the oar
a steersman swung straight at his naked neck.

His arms hung from his hands, his lean legs failed,
but Mildred rushed his shield against the sailor,
bore the man down, and drove through several more,
as Ealhstan and Athelnoth, his flankers,
bustled to blunt the blades the thane thrust past.
The thread of Wiltshiremen and royal guards,
now blown and bloody, cautiously backed in
to point and push the boar's rooting snout,
the cleft between their folding wings now filled
with clerks and ladies gripping glinting flames.

Marshaled by Mildred's banging boss and brand,
the band of Saxons bit into the body
more like an auger gnawing round its nib
than the keen edge of a maul-walloped wedge.
A slipping sailor stabbed his outstretched sword
through Mildred's foot, fixing him where he flailed.

The thane gave back a lacerated loin,
but mangled mail clung to searching steel,
the veteran could not retract his blade,
and the burst brigand, buckling as he bowed,
drew the *guprinc* over his nailed shoe. [\[5\]](#)
A sudden sidestroke sundered hand from wrist,
and the gore poured as Mildred, in a muddle,
brusquely covered the cursing northerner.

Ealhstan flung forward, but his fury
could not fend off the flash that freed his friend's
illustrious headdress from his prostrate trunk.
The last of Athulf's Wiltshire ministers
piloted his point at eyes and ears
and twiddled teeth and noses with his shield
before a foreign oarsman speared his side.

Down he drooped and doused the iron ground,
but Athelnoth and Alfred understood,
hustling to advance the Saxon sally,
the aged thanes had carved the corridor
that Athelnoth designed full half the way
to Alfred's burning barn, from which, they hoped,
their coursers might spirit them from this hell.
The king had grunted "Lord" at every blow
he dealt and every buffet he endured.
A miracle it was to have come so far.
"We need another miracle," he muttered.

As Godrum saw from where he sat, his stallion
stalled in the stogged, vociferating mob,

his mass of warriors could not get at
an enemy thus crushed among their friends.
Contented that the newborn moon had set
as forecast, scurrying abaft the sun,
he glimpsed only a string of bobbing helms
slithering through the chop of smoke and steel.
Meanwhile, monks and women hurled themselves
into the gallery that gaped before them,
stumbling on unseen, unstiffened corpses,
sluicing their shoes in uncongealed grume,
one hand gripping a neighbor's fur-clad elbow,
the other brandishing a one-edged blade.
Inimical to law and love and form,
it seemed a feast or liturgy of nothing,
the next-to-nothing out of which our Father
concocted all good things in earth and heaven.

The last to leave the hall, old Bishop Tunbert, [\[6\]](#)
whose lifting hairs flared with the rooftop's fire,
lingered to sing a hymn to Christ the King,
who'd parted this flood of fiends with his arm
as once he spread the waves to rescue Moses.
"The Lord," he intoned, "is a man of war—" [\[7\]](#)
Wigred and Wulfred, thanes Wulfheard had charged [\[8\]](#)
to bring the bishop safely home to Hampshire,
grappled his gaunt bones and bore him onward.
Behind their backs, a Wiltshire soldier toppled.
From where he lay in pain, the *beorn* saw [\[9\]](#)
a bear-cloaked lord, framed by the hall's dark doorway,
clasping a black, shapeless mass to his chest.



In town, the royal offspring sat on horseback,
each curtained by a guardsman's mailed arms.
Oppressed, the king's lady, Ealhswith,
raised her rushlight to examine Edward,

then beamed assurance into the dazed eyes
of Athelgeofu and little Elfthryth[10]
and hardness into the eyes of their young warders.
She peered with fear at steadfast Athelflaed,
her eldest, and the eldest of her girls.
Hearing a shout go up beyond the houses,
which instantly a roaring answer whelmed,
she turned to see a raft of ugly smoke
sprawling and bulging over Athulf's lodge,
its nether parts inflamed by glaring thatch.

"Let's go," said Addi, tapped to head this band,
"at this point we can only save ourselves."
The lady held her dim wand to his chin.
Hand in hand, they'd scrambled from the hall,
evaded Godrum's gathering heathen horde,
and roused the cubs and Hilda at the inn.
Her other hand rose to her breast and touched
the chain from which her silver sieve had fallen.

"Shall I abandon Alfred?" she replied.
"For all I know, the Danes have slain my kinfolk,
and he and these poor lambs are all my flesh."

The bearded hoard-guard said, "I too, dear lady,[11]
would rather fight and fall by my lord's side.
It shames a *scealc* to be sent away." [12]
He cast a glance that compassed her five children.

"I've never seen him fight," said Ealhswith.
"The next time we embrace, we shall be changed." [13]



The bishop and a guardsman, Beornstan,
whose faces fires broiled from above,
were fetching frightened equines from their furnace
when they encountered Halga's godlike son. [14]

His shoes were scarlet goat hide, scarlet leggings molded his calves, and flames of fire flicked like twin worms in the steep curves of his helmet.

“Surrender, you who stain the sacrifice,” [\[15\]](#) demanded Hemming’s seed, “of blood and pain the sons of Dan tender to Father Grim!” [\[16\]](#)

Sending two asses scrambling for the door, the Saxons moved to spit that apparition. Beornstan went in with spearhead blazing, but Halga’s scion turned his thrust aside and laid him out with one bat of his axe. Closing, clerk and captain poked and parried as miserable horses shrieked and kicked. The dung-smoke rankled the prelate’s eyes. He blinked. Something streaked between his feet.

“Is the monk nicked?” the fresh devil laughed, [\[17\]](#) as Athelheah fell back and fell to coughing. “May I despise the man that hates my Lord,” [\[18\]](#) he gasped, and flicked a dirk, which Hrothulf caught. “Your Lord is weak, O saint,” the Dane declared, but like a thunderbolt, a burning rafter crashed in a swarm of sparks before his eyes. The startled fiend recoiled, dropped his ward, and slapped at embers clinging to his lap. Hauling the hurt hall-guard by his corselet, and muttering impassioned thanks to Aldhelm, [\[19\]](#) the prelate labored into the dire air.

Between the sheds, the mailed chief of fiends found Alfred and knew Attila had failed. “To me!” he cried, dismounting in the mud. “Men, the enemy’s mean, murdering queen!” As sailors surged against the scrum of shields, Utta pushed his way to Alfred’s side, where Osric fought, then lunged to stick the devil,

but Nyklot interdicted him, a brace
of Abotrites bashed him with both bosses,
and Utta flopped bodily into the snarl.
Relinquishing his shield, he wriggled rearwards,
clenching his worm-flecked weapon in his fist.
He raised his eyes to thank his heavenly shepherd,
but fathomed only flushing flanks of smoke.

Alfred had last seen the shipless steersman
a-jogging up the Fosse Way towards Thames head.
He loathed his pledges, breached as soon as broached,
and his repulsive lust to foster slaughter.
Osric reached in close, alike athirst
to compensate the king-killer's crimes,
but murdered Godfred's offspring wheeled free.

"The prancing pagan," scoffed the Saxon prince,
but Harald's father flashed his Hunnish staff, [\[20\]](#)
slashing Halmund's hamstring near the knee.
He crumpled in the muck, where heathens hewed him.

"The sinking Saxon," sneered the oarsmen's lord.
Though weariness burned in his limbs, the king
begged to buy his butchered boardmate's blood.
He growled at Godrum, "Devil out of hell,
where fire never fades nor dragon dims!" [\[21\]](#)
His teeth gleaming, Godfred's grandson backed
into a barn, where smothered cattle cured.

"Devil in hell, with you, you mean," said Gorm
as Alfred flogged his blade, and when he flagged
the Dane withdrew further into the shade,
and thus slammed the slogging, gasping king:

*How holy he who humbly halved his home; [\[22\]](#)
lavish the lord who left his lamb his love. [\[23\]](#)*

"Devil!" Alfred yelled and wildly swung
as oxidized ox-hair galled his craw.

“Onward, bird,” the priest of Woden taunted.
The pirate pounced with unexpected power,
as when a gust of autumn winds, exploding
from the blue abyss of the far-northern heaven,
tumbles a struggling flock across the heights.
Into the night retreated Ingeld’s seed,
half-blind, his hilt-hand slick, his flesh on fire,
bruises burgeoning under ruptured rings.
The mariner attacked with rapid taps
and voiced a further verse to vex his victim:

*The *suinahirpir sobs. Who serves his sow?* [\[24\]](#)

But Alfred struck another vein of strength.
Again the pagan prudently recoiled
when through the clang the Saxon captain, hacking,
picked up a supplication, “Lord, Lord!”
Athelnoth galloped in with Smoke in tow,
the king’s hunter, a tall gray, uncut.
Shoving the sailors’ skipper in the slush,
the Saxon caught the saddle, leapt, and fled
according to the Frankish exercise
his brother’s men had taught him as a youth.
Behind them followed mounted Athelheah
with Halga hotly hectoring him on foot.

“The other cheek, bishop!” taunted Halga. [\[25\]](#)
He halted next to Harald’s haunted father,
who squatted, puffing noisily, in the muck.
Together they watched Alfred disappear
beyond the guttering glamour of the flames.
Old Godrum called, “I’ve got your glory, boy!”

They thundered unhindered over the bridge,
held only by a pair of prone Saxons,
and pulled up on the bank, where three roads split.

“Lords and ladies,” Alfred said, his stallion

ramping under his hams, "this is no raid.
Wulfhere! He must be winging down to Wilton.
We'll meet your musters there in seven days.
Athelnoth, get word to watchful Odda. [\[26\]](#)
Osric and you others, come with me."

The thanes said nothing. Not-far hoofbeats rattled,
their warning fretting the ash-freighted air,
but no star or planet pierced the murk
to prove a purer sphere endured from which
a purer mind might know our earthly toil.

"The heir is in God's hands," the bishop said.
"Send me. Send Utta." Athulf's son replied,
"I need you to collect the men of Sherborne."
A briefer quiet followed, cruelly torn
by a blood-clotting cry across the river,
accruing judgment on the Saxon captains.

"We await your word," said Athelnoth, resigned.
"God keep our king," the other leaders murmured.
They turned their horses west and south and east.

The king surveyed the body that remained,
each man equipped with a notched sword and shield.
Silently they circled back to the inn,
unwittingly retracing Addi's track
and mocked, unwittingly, by wakeful birds.
The shop exhaled a stench of blood and ale.
A child's body curled beside the hearth,
the lad who manned the kettle, fork in hand.
Utta found the host, his spear beside him.
A maid lay on a table, her throat cut.
The Athulfing said nothing, stunned by woe,
but Osric read his thoughts and growled, "Foul devils." [\[27\]](#)

They climbed the steep ladder to the loft.
A man and woman lolled side by side,

his fleshy hand enveloping her small one.
Three perforated children sprawled where devils
flung them, in their fury, on the flooring.
The monarch crossed himself, as did his men.

“The Lord has spared us,” Alfred muttered numbly.
Utta eyed the anointed one with dread,
but Osric, nodding, grimly pursed his lips.
Young Edward’s end, repeated through the shires,
would quell the heart’s heat in every chest.

Outside they met a squad of mailed shadows,
whose breath flicked like gold flame in the glare.
“A princely cap you’ve snatched,” said one marauder
to Alfred, who stuck him through the throat.
The Saxons shipped those sailors out to Sheol,
though Cynewulf and Bald defrayed their freight.

Recovering their steeds, the shaken *freca*[\[28\]](#)
now flew along the black, unmoving flood,
the black, misshapen willow trees and elms
uprising horribly against the ceiling,
not halting till they crossed Lacock in flames.
“*Dominus vobiscum!*” Alfred cried.

On they galloped, gulping the curving trail,
now frozen mud, now broken ice and pools,
evading or dispersing clumps of shapes.
They passed through mild islands in the air,
which burned and burning barns and houses warmed,
where clouds of ashes blew like ghostly snow.
Melksham burned, and Holt, but on they rode,
and now a sanguine aura blushed to westward,
reflected like a dawdling midnight sun
by heaven’s prisoning tent. Bradford burned,
where King Cenwalh mauled a British host.[\[29\]](#)
The glow gleamed on a swatch of old iron
where Alfred knelt and recognized a friend.

“They travel quick as spirits,” murmured Osric.

Beyond the town, beyond the flames and cries,
a luster glistened dimly on the crust
along the blackness where free water flowed.
They rinsed their faces, let the horses drink;
the current numbed their cuts and cooled their eyes.
Then on they came, through country ruled by wolves,
ascending into untouched Somerset,
or so they hoped, in their unhopeful souls.

But soon a new effulgence drew them on.
Dismounting, they approached behind the street
from where they saw a troop of fiends on horseback.[\[30\]](#)
A woman clutched a devil’s bright blue shoe—
his tool hewed through her entreating limbs.
Utta started up, but Osric stopped him.
Nearby, a wavering shriek cut through the smoke
and raised the filaments along their napes.
A fiend hoisted a baby on his spear,
the piteous creature, dyed red in the light,
the standard standard of the gods of war.
A pebble struck the devil’s flaming helm
and the tall stalk and ruby burden toppled.
The foreign *feond*’s fellows laughed aloud.[\[31\]](#)

“Ceadwalla’s Christian Britons frolicked so,”
the seed of Ingeld noted to his men,
“to signalize their triumph over Edwin.”[\[32\]](#)

They reached the abbey gate, which hovels flanked.[\[33\]](#)
From there, across the firelit yard, they saw
a fiend with copper locks mocking the monks
that cowered under John the Baptist’s church.
When his companion thrust a cross in a clerk’s
face, young Alfred’s heart sank in his stomach.
He knew the foes liked forcing folk to pick
twixt bodily and spiritual damage,

but in his years of struggling with their armies,
he hadn't seen such malice in the flesh.

"In Aldhelm's ancient house," King Alfred gasped.
"Shall we go after Athelnoth?" asked Utta.
"I must be sure," young Edward's father said.
They crept discretely to the women's yard,
where pirates pawed the sisterhood for loot.
Poor Ealhswith was not among their prey,
but Octa poised to rush against the rowers.

"Can I behold such wickedness?" he murmured
as Athelred's successor gripped his wrist.[\[34\]](#)
"You can behold," said Alfred, "and you will.
Our times are worse than those Orosius knew.
When Alaric the Goth broke into Rome,
he robbed and hewed the Romans in their thousands,
yet he protected Paul's and Peter's churches
as sanctuaries for our Savior's sheep.[\[35\]](#)
The Most High, it seems, has other plans
for Father Cerdic's posterity.[\[36\]](#)
Yet this is not the worst of what has been.
The desperate Cantabrians, besieged
by Roman troops on Mount Medullius,
destroyed themselves by poison, fire, and iron.[\[37\]](#)
When Drusus whipped the Suebi and Cherusci,
their women, walled behind the towering wains,
to spare their lambs the pangs of servitude
brained them and bowled their corpses at the invaders.[\[38\]](#)

"Far worse if we were butchering our own,
as Roman Marius and Sulla did
in civil wars too terrible to tell,[\[39\]](#)
or as the fabled Frankish fighters did
when furious Brunhild spurred the eastern kings,
her husband, son, her grandsons and great-grandson,
to visit her sister's death on western lands;[\[40\]](#)
when Charles the Hammer smashed the western host

in three God-given victories that sealed
his lordship over all the Frankish realms; [41]
when Louis's Bavarians licked Lothar's
host at fratricidal Fontenoy
and young Charles, later our Judith's father,
scattered Pippin's fractious Aquitanians; [42]
and when, at Andernach, not long ago,
tricking out his men-at-arms as phantoms,
the younger Louis crushed his uncle Charles—
a drubbing Charles paid the Danes to avenge. [43]

“Thank God, we Saxons never stooped so low,
for when my brother filched our father's crown, [44]
Saint Swithun urged them to disjoin the kingdoms
rather than loose a flood of Saxon blood—
whence Athulf kicked his heels in Canterbury
while Athelbald kinged it at Winchester,
until our father's death permitted him
to reweld the wheel his sin had split.”

Young Octa made no answer but obeyed.
The Saxons stole away like careful voles,
but sailors saw them sneaking through the gate.
Astraddle their exhausted mounts they fled,
pelting towards the shelter of the woods
with Toca's Himmerlanders in pursuit.
A whirling weapon whooshed past Alfred's ear,
and Utta, close ahead of him, was struck
and swung in one motion down from his saddle.
On they labored, steaming horses wheezing,
when Alfred, turning, seemed to glimpse a black
spike suddenly sprouting from Osric's chest.

“God save you, friend,” he muttered, “from the devils,
if not in this engagement, then the next.”
They cranked again and traced a narrow track,
but Octa's courser tripped and pitched his master
hard against an oak. The guardsman rose,

but instantly, as if whipped up from nothing,
the mariners surrounded him, their arms
invisible in the dense, starless darkness.
Swerving, the seed of Athelwulf returned [\[45\]](#)
to bolster the beloved boy where hoofbeats
thumped the earth and steel scraped and crashed.

“Ride, *cyning!*” the *cniht* cried from the depths. [\[46\]](#)
The king perceived a fiend light from his mount
and called to Octa somewhere down below,
“Fight and live, friend, for your tough grandfather, [\[47\]](#)
the victor over Weland by the Itchen!” [\[48\]](#)

The Saxon felt a weapon scratch his back.
He swung and struck, but a fiend’s axe plunged
its whetted bill into his gushing thigh.
The stallion reared, and Alfred, shooting upwards,
with cheek and brow discovered flying iron.
Descending, he conceived a body sprawling
headless and faceless on the forest floor.
Lord, he thought, the Saxon realm is lost,
and fleeing from the misery that gripped him
like a sinewy wrestler out of hell,
alone the Saxon spurred into the brush
where switches whipped his bleeding face and hands.
“Where is God?” cried anguished Odovacar
when the Ostrogoth’s sword clove through his trunk. [\[49\]](#)
King Alfred thought of Mithridates, fleeing
Pompey, his forty thousand killed or caught,
despairing of his doubtful deities
and starting at the stirring things of night. [\[50\]](#)

Our Father Grim, the Athulfing recalled,
escaping from the shipwreck of that fight,
embarked on his far-northern odyssey
to seek a homeland for his beaten folk.
But where could his defeated Saxons run?
The pirates held the whole bulk of Britain,

save a few British kingdoms north and west.

Young Alfred's blood congealed on his cheek.
His soul, it seemed, would shortly float to heaven,
there to rejoin old Osric, Halmund, Octa,
Utta, who was kin to Jaruman,
Mildred and Cyma, Cynewulf and Bald,
and all the Christian Saxons who had perished
this midnight of the Lord's Epiphany.[\[51\]](#)
"O see, O blameless Savior," he exclaimed,
raising his eyes from the smooth azure pavers,
"see how I've led your faithful people here,
your people, who have died to show your glory!"
The angels would enroll him in a school,
there to wait out the dregs of the Sixth Age
delighting in the Word with saints and kings.[\[52\]](#)
He let the reins drop and drooped in his saddle,
hearing the hymn of David, son of Ruth.

*And may I dwell in the Lord's on þinum huse
swipe lange tiid oð lange ylde.*[\[53\]](#)

Snorting, Smoke slowed to a halt where the sharp
fume of swine suffused the air and sleeping
suidae bellyached in their pens.
The seed of Cerdic harkened to their grumblings.
My mother bore me in her womb, he reasoned—
from where, and how, I came there, who can say?
At once, three darkling figures fronted him,
their iron spearheads thrusting in his face.
"Forgive me, Father, I have sinned," he murmured.[\[54\]](#)
He heard a careful check expressed in Welsh.

[\[1\]](#) boar's head formation (L)

[\[2\]](#) K. Athelwulf d. 858

- [3] Athelheah 9th bp. of Sherborne
- [4] lord (OE)
- [5] war-man (OE)
- [6] Tunbert 19th bp. of Winchester; Wini 1st bp. cons. 662
- [7] Ex. 15:3
- [8] ald. of Hampshire
- [9] hero (OE)
- [10] her youngest daughters
- [11] hlæfdige (OE)
- [12] soldier (OE)
- [13] 1 Cor. 15:51
- [14] Hrothulf s. of Halga s. of Harald s. of K. Hemming d. 812
- [15] *kupablot (OE)
- [16] *Krim (OE)
- [17] *mokr (OE)
- [18] Ps. 139:21
- [19] Aldhelm 1st bp. Sherborne acc. 705
- [20] Charles the Great's gift to K. Offa of Mercia
- [21] Mark 9:44
- [22] division of realm
- [23] K. Athelbald's marriage to f.'s wid.; home, *haim (OE); love, *liuf (OE)
- [24] swineherd (OE); sow, *siur (OE)

- [\[25\]](#) *biskub (0E)
- [\[26\]](#) ald. of Devon
- [\[27\]](#) deoflas (0E)
- [\[28\]](#) warriors (0E)
- [\[29\]](#) K. Cenwalh acc. 643; Bradford 652
- [\[30\]](#) Frome
- [\[31\]](#) devil (0E)
- [\[32\]](#) Heathfield 633
- [\[33\]](#) Frome abbey est. ca. 685
- [\[34\]](#) K. Athelred d. 871; æftergenga (0E)
- [\[35\]](#) 410; Orosius bk. vii
- [\[36\]](#) Cerdic k. of W. Saxons acc. 519
- [\[37\]](#) Orosius bk. vi
- [\[38\]](#) Orosius bk. vi
- [\[39\]](#) Orosius bk. v
- [\[40\]](#) Brunhild w. of K. Sigebert I d. 575, m. of K. Childebert II d. 596, gdm. of K. Theudebert II d. 612 & K. Theuderich II d. 613, gt.-gdm. of K. Sigebert II d. 613; Galswintha da. of Athanagild k. of Visigoths d. 567
- [\[41\]](#) Duke Charles d. 741
- [\[42\]](#) Fontenoy 841
- [\[43\]](#) Andernach 876; K. Louis the Saxon d. 882; Emp. Charles the Bald d. 877
- [\[44\]](#) K. Athelbald d. 860; K. Athelwulf d. 858

[\[45\]](#) K. Athelwulf d. 858

[\[46\]](#) attendant (OE)

[\[47\]](#) Athelwulf ald. Berkshire d. 871

[\[48\]](#) 860

[\[49\]](#) K. Odovacar d. 493; K. Theodoric d. 526

[\[50\]](#) Orosius bk. vi

[\[51\]](#) Jan. 6, 878

[\[52\]](#) Sixth Age: from Incarnation to Return

[\[53\]](#) Ps. 22; in thy house forever (OE)

[\[54\]](#) Luke 15:21

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William G. Carpenter taught literature at various universities and currently practices law in Minneapolis. His translation of *The Dream of the Rood* was published in the *Sewanee Theological Review. Ebandun: Epic Poem* (Beaver's Pond Press, 2021), hardbound with illustrations by Miko Simmons, is available at