

Gilgameš and ʘuwawa

(Sumerian text, 3rd Millennium BC, University of Oxford translation, The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature)

Version A

Now the lord once decided to set off for the mountain where the man lives. Lord Gilgameš decided to set off for the mountain where the man lives. He spoke to his slave Enkidu:

"Enkidu, since a man cannot pass beyond the final end of life, I want to set off into the mountains, to establish my renown there. Where renown can be established there, I will establish my renown, and where no renown can be established there, I shall establish the renown of the gods."

His slave Enkidu answered him: "My lord, if today you are going to set off into the mountains, Utu should know about it from us. If you are going to set off into the Mountains of Cedar-felling, Utu should know about it from us. Utu, youthful Utu, should know about it from us. A decision that concerns the mountains is Utu's business. A decision that concerns the Mountains of Cedar-felling is the business of youthful Utu. Utu should know about it from us."

Gilgameš took hold of a white kid. He clasped a brown kid, a sacrificial animal, close to his breast. In his hand he held a holy staff before his nose, as he addressed Utu of heaven:

"Utu, I am going to set off into the mountains! May you be my helper! I am going to set off into the Mountains of Cedar-felling! May you be my helper!"

From heaven Utu replied to him: "Young man, you are noble already in your own right -- but what would you want with the mountains?"

"Utu, I have something to say to you, a word in your ear! I greet you -- please pay attention! In my city people are dying, and hearts are full of distress. People are lost, that fills me with wretched dismay. I craned my neck over the city wall: corpses in the water make the river almost overflow. That is what I see. That will happen to me too, that is the way things go. No one is tall enough to reach heaven, no one can reach wide enough to stretch over the mountains. Since a man cannot pass beyond the final end of life, I want to set off into the mountains, to establish my renown there. Where renown can be established there, I will establish my renown, and where no renown can be established there, I shall establish the renown of the gods."

Utu accepted his tears as a fitting gift. As befits a compassionate person, he turned to him full of compassion: "Now there are seven warriors, sons of a single mother. The first, their eldest brother, has lion's paws and eagle's talons. The second is a snake, The third is a dragon snake, The fourth blazes with fire The fifth is a snake, The sixth, a shackle that the rebel lands in the hills, beats at the flanks of the mountains like a battering flood, floodwater that destroys all. The seventh flashes like lightning, and no one can deflect its power}.

..... kingship Nisaba has bestowed on you in addition. They, and know the routes on earth. They will help you find the of the way. They should guide you to the place in the mountains where the boats have to be pulled from the water! The warrior, youthful Utu, gave these seven to Gilgameš. These seven the warrior, youthful Utu, gave to Lord Gilgameš. The feller of cedars was filled with joy, Lord Gilgameš was filled with joy."

In his city he had the horn sounded for single men, similarly for two together he made them call out. "Let him who has a household go to his household! Let him who has a mother go to his mother! Let bachelor males, types like me, fifty of them, join me at my side!"

Whoever had a household went to his household. Whoever had a mother went to his mother. Bachelor males, types like him, there were fifty, joined him at his side. He made his way to the blacksmith's, and had them cast weapons and axes, the strength of warriors. Then he made his way to the deeply shaded plantations, where he had ebony trees felled, and *halub* trees, apricot trees, and box trees. He to his fellow-citizens who were going with him. Warriors, sons of a single mother The first, their eldest brother, has lion's paws and eagle's claws. They will guide him to the place in the mountains where the boats have to be pulled from the water.

He crossed the first mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the second mountain range, but the cedars did not catch his attention. He crossed the third mountain range, but the cedars did not catch his attention. He crossed the fourth mountain range, but the cedars did not catch his attention. He crossed the fifth mountain range, but the cedars did not catch his attention. He crossed the sixth mountain range, but the cedars did not catch his attention. He crossed the third mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the fourth mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the fifth mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the sixth mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there.

When he had crossed the seventh mountain range, there his intuition led him to find the cedars. He did not need to ask, nor did he have to search any further. Lord Gilgameš began to chop at the cedars, while Enkidu lopped off their branches, to Gilgameš. While Enkidu their branches and his fellow-citizens to, Enkidu stacked them in piles. *Ħuwawa* He loosed his terrors against while Enkidu cut up the timbers, and the widows' sons who had come with him heaped them up in piles. Since, because of the, *Ħuwawa* had been scared in his lair by Gilgameš, he began to radiate his terrors

Gilgameš was overcome by sleep, and it affected Enkidu as a powerful longing. His fellow-citizens who had come with him flailed around at his feet like puppies. Enkidu awoke from his dream, shuddering from his sleep. He rubbed his eyes, there was eery silence everywhere. He touched Gilgameš, but could not rouse him. He spoke to him, but he did not reply.

"You who have gone to sleep, you who have gone to sleep! Gilgameš, young lord of Kulaba, how long will you sleep for? The mountains are becoming indistinct as the shadows fall across them, the evening twilight lies over them. Proud Utu has already gone to the bosom of his mother Ningal. Gilgameš, how long will you sleep for? The sons of your city who came with you should not have to wait at the foot of the hills. Their own mothers should not have to twine string in the square of your city."

He thrust that into his right ear, he covered him with his aggressive words as if with a cloth, laid them out like linen. He gathered in his hand a cloth with thirty shekels of oil on it and smothered it over Gilgameš's chest. Then Gilgameš stood up like a bull on the great earth. Bending his neck downwards, he yelled at him:

"By the life of my own mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! Am I to become again as if I were slumbering still on the lap of my own mother Ninsumun?"

A second time he spoke to him: "By the life of my own mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! Until I discover whether that person was a human or a god, I shall not direct back to the city my steps which I have directed to the mountains."

The slave, trying to ameliorate the situation, trying to make life appear more attractive, answered his master:

"My master, you have not yet really seen that person, he should not vex you. But he vexes me, me, who have seen him before. His pugnacious mouth is a dragon's maw, his face is a lion's grimace. His chest is like a raging flood, no one dare approach his brow, which devours the reedbeds. A man-eating lion, he never wipes away the blood from his slaver a lion eating a corpse, he never wipes away the blood. Travel on, my master, up into the mountains! But I shall travel back to the city. If I say to your mother about you "He is alive!", she will laugh. But afterwards I shall say to her about you "He is dead!", and she will certainly weep over you bitterly."

"Look, Enkidu, two people together will not perish! A grappling-pole does not sink! No one can cut through a three-ply cloth! Water cannot wash someone away from a wall! Fire in a reed house cannot be extinguished! You help me, and I will help you, what can anyone do against us then? When it sank, when it sank, when the Magan boat sank, when the *magilum* barge sank, then at least the life-saving grappling-pole of the boat was rescued! Come on, let's get after him and get a sight of him!"

"If we go after him, there will be terror! There will be terror. Turn back! There will be blood! There will be blood! Turn back!"

"Whatever you may think, come on, let's get after him!"

Before a man can approach within even sixty times six yards, Ҳuwawa has already reached his house among the cedars. When he looks at someone, it is the look of death. When he shakes his head at someone, it is a gesture full of reproach. When he speaks to someone, he should not prolong his words: "You may still be a young man, but you will never again return to the city of your mother who bore you!"

Fear and terror spread through Gilgameš's sinews and his feet. He could not move his feet on the ground, the big toenails of his feet stuck to the path. At his side

(Ҳuwawa addressed Gilgameš:) "So come on now, you heroic bearer of a sceptre of wide-ranging power! Noble glory of the gods, angry bull standing ready for a fight! Your mother knew well how to bear sons, and your nurse knew well how to nourish children on the breast! Don't be afraid, rest your hand on the ground!"

Gilgameš rested his hand on the ground, and addressed Ҳuwawa: "By the life of my own mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! No one really knows where in the mountains you live, they would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, I have brought you En-me-barage-si, my big sister, to be your wife in the mountains."

And again he addressed him: "By the life of my mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! No one really knows where in the mountains you live; they would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, I have brought you Ma-tur, my little sister, to be your concubine in the mountains. Just hand over your terrors to me! I want to become your kinsman!"

Then Ҳuwawa handed over to him his first terror. Gilgameš's fellow-citizens who had come with him began to lop off the branches and bundle them together, so as to lay them down at the foot of the hills.

And again he addressed him: "By the life of my mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! No one really knows where in the mountains you live, they would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, I have brought to the mountains for you Couldn't I get close to you and your family? Just hand over your terrors to me! I want to become your kinsman!" Then ̕uwawa handed over to him his second terror. Gilgameš's fellow-citizens who had come with him began to lop off the branches and bundle them together, so as to lay them down at the foot of the hills.

And a third time he addressed him: "By the life of my mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! No one really knows where in the mountains you live, they would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, I have brought to the mountains for you some *eša* flour, the food of the gods and a waterskin of cool water. Couldn't I get close to you and your family? Just hand over your terrors to me! I want to become your kinsman!" Then ̕uwawa handed over to him his third terror. Gilgameš's fellow-citizens who had come with him began to lop off the branches and bundle them together, so as to lay them down at the foot of the hills.

And a fourth time he addressed him: "By the life of my mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! No one really knows where in the mountains you live, they would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, I have brought to for you some big shoes for big feet. Couldn't I get close to you and your family? Just hand over your terrors to me! I want to become your kinsman!" Then ̕uwawa handed over to him his fourth terror. Gilgameš's fellow-citizens who had come with him began to lop off the branches and bundle them together, so as to lay them down at the foot of the hills.

And a fifth time he addressed him: "By the life of my mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! No one really knows where in the mountains you live, they would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, I have brought to the mountains for you some tiny shoes for your tiny feet. Couldn't I get close to you and your family? Just hand over your terrors to me! I want to become your kinsman!" Then ̕uwawa handed over to him his fifth terror. Gilgameš's fellow-citizens who had come with him began to lop off the branches and bundle them together, so as to lay them down at the foot of the hills.

And a sixth time he addressed him: "By the life of my mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! No one really knows where in the mountains you live, they would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, I have brought you rock-crystal, *nir* stone and lapis lazuli, from the mountains. Couldn't I get close to you and your family? Just hand over your terrors to me! I want to become your kinsman!" Then ̕uwawa handed over to him his sixth terror. Gilgameš's fellow-citizens who had come with him began to lop off the branches and bundle them together, so as to lay them down at the foot of the hills.

When ̕uwawa had finally handed over to him his seventh terror, Gilgameš found himself beside ̕uwawa. He went up to him gradually} from behind, as one does with a snake. He made as if to kiss him, but then punched him on the cheek with his fist.

̕uwawa bared his teeth at him, furrowing his brows at him. ̕uwawa addressed Gilgameš: "Hero, to act falsely!" The two of them on him the warrior from his dwelling. said to him, "Sit down!" ̕uwawa from his dwelling. said to him, "Sit down!" The warrior sat down and began to weep, shedding tears. ̕uwawa sat down and began to weep, shedding tears. ̕uwawa plea to Gilgameš. He threw a halter over him as over a captured wild bull. He tied up his arms like a captured man. ̕uwawa wept,

He tugged at Gilgameš's hand. "Gilgameš, let me go!" "I want to talk to Utu!" "Utu, I never knew a mother who bore me, nor a father who brought me up! I was born in the mountains, you brought me up! Yet Gilgameš swore to me by heaven, by earth, and by the mountains."

Ḫuwawa clutched at Gilgameš's hand, and prostrated himself before him. Then Gilgameš's noble heart took pity on him. Gilgameš addressed Enkidu:

"Enkidu, let the captured bird run away home! Let the captured man return to his mother's embrace!"

Enkidu replied to Gilgameš: "Come on now, you heroic bearer of a sceptre of wide-ranging power! Noble glory of the gods, angry bull standing ready for a fight! Young Lord Gilgameš, cherished in Unug, your mother knew well how to bear sons, and your nurse knew well how to nourish children! One so exalted and yet so lacking in understanding judgment will be devoured by fate without him ever understanding that fate. The very idea that a captured bird should run away home, or a captured man should return to his mother's embrace! Then you yourself would never get back to the mother-city that bore you! A captured warrior set free! A captured high priestess to the *ĝipar*! A captured *gudug* priest restored to his wig of hair! ever, ever? his attention to his words"

Ḫuwawa addressed Enkidu: "Enkidu, you speak such hateful, hostile words against me to him! You hireling, who are hired for your keep! You who follow along after him, you speak such hateful words to him. Why do you speak such hateful words to him.

As Ḫuwawa spoke thus to him, Enkidu, full of rage and anger, cut his throat. He put his head in a leather bag.

They entered before Enlil. After they had kissed the ground before Enlil, they threw the leather bag down, tipped over his head, and placed it before Enlil. When Enlil saw the head of Ḫuwawa, he spoke angrily to Gilgameš:

"Why did you act in this way? Was it commanded that his name should be wiped from the earth? He should have sat before you! He should have eaten the bread that you eat, and should have drunk the water that you drink! He should have been honoured you! Ḫuwawa, he honoured!" From his seat, Enlil assigned Ḫuwawa's heavenly auras to

(The ms. tradition for lines 193-199 is extremely confused about the order in which the various auras are assigned; the following sequence is a compromise:)

He gave Ḫuwawa's first aura to the fields. He gave his second aura to the rivers. He gave his third aura to the reedbeds. He gave his fourth aura to the lions. He gave his fifth aura to the palace. He gave his sixth aura to the forests. He gave his seventh aura to Nungal(*the goddess of prisoners*).

{..... his terror the rest of the auras Gilgameš

Mighty one, Gilgameš, who is cherished! Be praised! Enkidu, be praised! Nisaba, be praised!} Ḫuwawa,! cherished,! Enkidu, be praised

Version B

"So come on now, you heroic bearer of a sceptre of wide-ranging power! Noble glory of the gods, angry bull standing ready for a fight! Young Lord Gilgameš, cherished in Unug!"

"In Unug people are dying, and souls are full of distress. People are lost, that fills me with dismay. I lean out over the city wall: bodies in the water make the river almost overflow. That is what I see: that people die thus, which fills me with despair, that the end of life is unavoidable, that the grave, the all-powerful underworld, will spare no one, that no one is tall enough to block off the underworld; that no one is broad

enough to cover over the underworld, the boundary that a man cannot cross at the final end of life. By the life of my own mother Ninsumun, and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! My personal god Enki, Lord Nudimmud, I will complete there. I will bring there."

His slave Enkidu answered him: "..... if you want to set off into the mountains, Utu should know about it from you. If you want to set off into the Mountains of Cedar-felling, Utu should know about it from you. A decision that concerns the mountains is Utu's business. A decision that concerns the Mountains of Cedar-felling is the business of youthful Utu."

Utu of heaven put on his lapis-lazuli diadem and came forward with head high. In his hand Gilgameš, the lord of Kulaba, held a holy staff before his nose: "Utu, I want to set off into the mountains! May you be my helper! I want to set off into the mountains of Cedar-felling! May you be my helper!"

4 lines missing

"The first The second The third The fourth The fifth The sixth beats at the flanks of the mountains like a battering flood. The seventh flashes like lightning, and no one can deflect its power. These shine in the heavens, but they know the routes on earth. In heaven they shine, raising, on earth they know the way even to Aratta. They know the destructive weather like the merchants. They know the mountain crannies like the pigeons. They will guide you to the place in the mountains where the boats have to be pulled from the water."

Gilgameš organised a levy in his city. In Kulaba he had the horn sounded. "Citizens! You who have a wife, go to your wife! You who have children, go to your children! Warriors, whether experienced or inexperienced, who have no wife, who have no children, let such people join me at my side as the companions of Gilgameš."

The king left the city. Gilgameš left Kulaba, to follow the route to the Mountains of Cedar-felling. He crossed the first mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the second mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the third mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the fourth mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the fifth mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. He crossed the sixth mountain range, but his intuition did not lead him to find the cedars there. When he had crossed the seventh mountain range, there his intuition led him to find the cedars.

Gilgameš began to chop at the cedars. His slave Enkidu worked on the branches for him. His fellow-citizens who had come with him stacked them in piles.

Then, as one warrior got closer to the other, the aura of *Ħuwawa* sped towards them like a spear. he rested there peacefully. He was asleep

3 lines missing

..... addressed: "You who have gone to sleep, you who have gone to sleep! Young Lord Gilgameš, how long will you sleep for? The mountains are becoming indistinct as the shadows fall across them, the evening"

Gilgameš awoke from his dream, shuddering from his sleep. He rubbed his eyes, there was eery silence everywhere. "By the life of my own mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! My personal god Enki, Lord Nudimmud!"

2 lines missing"

"I, he vexes me, the warrior whose face is a lion's grimace, and whose breast is like a raging flood. No one dare approach his brow, which devours the reedbeds. On his tongue, like that of a man-eating lion, the blood never dries. You do not have enough strength for the warrior, such is his might."

His slave Enkidu addressed him: "...."

"By the life of my own mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! My personal god Enki, Lord Nudimmud! Warrior, one would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, they have made some tiny shoes for your tiny feet. Here, they have made some big shoes for your big feet.*4 lines missing*
If you bring"

109-115. "By the life of my mother Ninsumun and of my father, holy Lugalbanda! My personal god Enki, Lord Nudimmud! Warrior, one would like to know where in the mountains you live. Here, they have made some tiny shoes for your tiny feet. Here, they have made some big shoes for your big feet."

2 lines fragmentary"

13 lines missing

They many piles on the hillside.

When Һuwawa had finally handed over to him his seventh aura, Gilgameš found himself beside Һuwawa. He punched him on the ear with his fist. Һuwawa furrowed his brows at him, baring his teeth at him. Gilgameš threw a halter over him, as over a captured wild bull. He tied him up by the elbows like a captured warrior.

The warrior began to weep, shedding tears. Һuwawa began to weep, shedding tears.

"Warrior, you lied! You have manhandled me, yet you had sworn an oath, by the life of your own mother Ninsumun and of your father, holy Lugalbanda. Your personal god Enki, Lord Nudimmud! And now you have thrown a halter over me as if over a captured wild bull, and have tied me up by the elbows like a captured warrior!"

..... Gilgameš's noble heart took pity on him. He addressed his slave Enkidu: "Come on, let us set the warrior free! He could be our guide! He could be our guide who would spy out the pitfalls of the route for us! He could be my! He could carry all my things!"

1 line fragmentary"

{His slave Enkidu replied to replied to Gilgameš: "..... so lacking in understanding! with no! with not! A captured warrior set free! A captured high priestess returned to the *ĝipar*! A captured *gudug* priest restored to his wig of hair! Who has ever, ever seen such a thing? He would be able to the mountain routes. He would be able to mix up the mountain paths. Then we would never get back to the mother-city that bore us!

4 lines missing"

Һuwawa replied to him: "The mother who bore me was a cave in the mountains. The father who engendered me was a cave in the hills. Utu left me to live all alone in the mountains!"

Gilgameš addressed Huwawa: "Come on,"

unknown no. of lines missing