

The Story of Enkidu & Shamhat Within the Epic Poem of Gilgamesh (Alternative Translations)

R. Campbell Thompson

The girl, displaying her bosom,
Shew'd him her comeliness, (yea) so that he of her beauty
possess'd him,
Bashful she was not, (but) ravish'd the soul of him,
loosing her mantle,
So that he clasp'd her, (and then) with the wiles of a
woman she plied him,
Holding her unto his breast.

(’Twas thus that) Enkidu dallied

Six days, (aye) seven nights, with the courtesan-girl in his
mating.

Sated at length with her charms, he turn'd his face to his
cattle,

O the gazelles, (how) they scamper'd away, as soon as
they saw him!

Him, yea, Enkidu,—fled from his presence the beasts of
the desert!

E. A. Speiser

The lass beheld him, the savage-man,
The barbarous fellow from the depths of the steppe:
‘There he is, O lass! Free thy breasts,
Bare thy bosom that he may possess thy ripeness!
Be not bashful! Welcome his ardor!
As soon as he sees thee, he will draw near to thee.
Lay aside thy cloth that he may rest upon thee.
Treat him, the savage, to a woman’s task!
Reject him will his wild beasts that grew up on his steppe,
As his love is drawn unto thee.’
The lass freed her breasts, bared her bosom,
And he possessed her ripeness.
She was not bashful as she welcomed his ardor.
She laid aside her cloth and he rested upon her.
She treated him, the savage, to a woman’s task,
As his love was drawn unto her.

After six days and seven nights Enkidu comes forth,
He set his face toward his wild beasts.

N. K. Sandars

She was not ashamed to take him, she made herself naked
and welcomed his eagerness; as he lay on her murmuring
love she taught him the woman’s art. For six days and
seven nights they lay together, for Enkidu had forgotten his
home in the hills; but when he was satisfied he went back
to the wild beasts. Then, when the gazelle saw him, they
bolted away; when the wild creatures saw him, they fled.

Nigel Dennis

[She] bares her breasts and drops her skirt;

And the lion and panther go their way,

And the deer trot by to drink their fill.

But Enkidu starts, and snuffs the air,

The air of Ishtar, the temple whore;

And his hands go out, his fingers search:

And she takes his hands and presses close

And guides him into the seat of love

While the animals drink at the water hole.

[. . .]

For six days and for seven nights

Enkidu harries the seat of love;

For six days and for seven nights

The savage learns, the whore instructs;

Enjoying his eagerness,

Destroying his innocence,

Teaching him secrets

Unknown to beasts;

Until on the seventh morning,

Like a sower that has emptied his sack

And is tired of his long seeding

And longs for the water-pitcher and the reed-bed,

Enkidu withdraws from Ishtar’s field

And takes the path to the water-hole.

But Ishtar’s sweat runs down his skin

And human tricks run through his head;

The lion roars, the panther screams;

The nosing deer pick up the stench:

And when Enkidu bends to drink

Then every brute runs for his life;

Runs to the hills to lose his stink . . .

Maureen Gallery Kovacs

Shamhat unclutched her bosom, exposed her sex, and he

took in her voluptuousness.

She was not restrained, but took his energy.

She spread out her robe and he lay upon her,

she performed for the primitive the task of womankind.

His lust groaned over her;

for six days and seven nights Enkidu stayed aroused, and

had intercourse with the harlot

until he was sated with her charms.

But when he turned his attention to his animals,

the gazelles saw Enkidu and darted off,

the wild animals distanced themselves from his body.

Stephanie Dalley

Shamhat loosened her undergarments, opened her legs

and he took in her attractions

She did not pull away. She took wind of him,

Spread open her garments, and he lay upon her.

She did for him, the primitive man, as women do.

His love-making he lavished upon her.

For six days and seven nights Enkidu was aroused and

poured himself into Shamhat.

When he was sated with her charms,

He set his face towards the open country of his cattle.

The gazelles saw Enkidu and scattered,

The cattle of open country kept away from his body.

Jenny Lewis

Shamhat was sitting | quiet by the pool’s edge

Watching the flickering | fish in the shallows

When all of a sudden | he stood before her

The wild man was suddenly | standing before her.

The *hierodule* gasped | as he bent to touch her

Stroking her hair | like the fur of an animal

Stroking her thighs | like the flanks of an animal

As he caressed her | he sang to her softly.

Inanna looked down | blessing the lovers

Six nights, seven days | their bodies were joined

Six nights, seven days | their flesh was one flesh

Six nights, seven days | their spirits were one.

On day number seven | they rested together

Then Enkidu set off | to re-join his herd

But now gazelles ran | flung fearful glances

Hoof-beats soon distant | a patter of thunder.

Philip Terry

The mag | azone | girl see | he the | man be | fore cul |

ture+++

the wild | action | man from | the far | mountain

“Here be | the man | party | girl get | ready | for a | kiss

+++

Open | you leg | show WILD | MAN you | love box

Hold no | thing back | make he | breathe hard

When he | see you | he mouth | will op | en . . .

Then he | will come | close to | take a | look+++

Take off | you skirt | so he | can . . . | screw you

Make this | man be | fore cul | ture know | what a | girl

can | do . . .

The an | imal | who grow | up in | the wild | will run |

away | and de | sert he

He will | push he | body | in to | you love | box . . .”

The mag | azone | girl take | off she | pants and | open |

she leg | and he | strike+++ | like a | thunder | storm

+++

She do | not hold | back she | make he | breathe hard

She spread | out she | skirt . . . | so he | can lie | on-top

She make | the man | before | culture | know what | a wo |

man | can do

He have |+++++++| a hard | on+++

He have |+++++++| a sec | ond hard | on+++

+++++++|+++++++| a third |+++++++|+++++++

He come | all ov | er she | face+++

+++++++| all ov | er she | +++ hair

+++++++| all ov | er she | breast+++

Six day | and se | ven night | WILDMAN | screw-the |

sex-girl