

2315

Grief and anguish filled him o'er Ruediger thus slain,
Nor might at all the hero the flowing tears restrain.
"Alack for faithful helper that death from me hath torn.
King Etzel's trusty liegeman never may I cease to mourn.

2316

"Canst thou, Master Hildebrand, true the tidings say,
Who might be the warrior that Ruediger did slay?"
"That did the doughty Gernot with mighty arm," he said:
"Eke at hand of Ruediger lieth the royal hero dead."

2317

Spake he again to Hildebrand: "Now let my warriors know,
That straightway they shall arm them, for thither will I go.
And bid to fetch hither my shining mail to me.
Myself those knights will question of the land of Burgundy."

2318

"Who here shall do thee service?" spake Master Hildebrand;
"All that thou hast yet living, thou seest before thee stand.
Of all remain I only; the others, they are dead."
As was in sooth good reason, filled the tale his soul with dread,

2319

For in his life did never such woe to him befall.
He spake: "Hath death so reft me of my warriors all,
God hath forsaken Dietrich, ah me, a wretched wight!
Sometime a lofty monarch I was, high throned in wealth and
might."

2320

"How might it ever happen?" Dietrich spake again,
"That so worthy heroes here should all be slain
By the battle-weary strangers thus beset?
Ill fortune me hath chosen, else death had surely spared them yet.

2321

"Since that fate not further to me would respite give,
Then tell me, of the strangers doth any longer live?"
Answered Master Hildebrand: "God wot, never one
Save Hagen, and beside him Gunther lofty king alone."