

BALLADE OF A VAIN REGRET

"Saint George's Worm was no great shakesto slay;  
I'd kill a worm, if one came here today:  
Fafnir fell to Nithing. I'm as deft  
As Siegfried; and my sword yearns for its prey.  
Oh, darn! Why aren't there any dragons left?

"The Dragon of Yberye to no avail  
Had human brains. Sir Fouke chopped off his tail!  
I have a dagger with a deadly heft  
Like Beowulf's. I'd stab through dragon's mail!  
Oh, darn! Why aren't there any dragons left?

"A dragon disturbed Sir Rustum's sleep, and so  
(As I would) Rustum slew him with a blow!  
Smaug was not arrow-proof; Bard's arrow reft  
His heart. Beware my fatal shaft and bow!  
Oh, darn! Why aren't there any dragons left?

Envoi

"Draconius Supremus here. You stagger  
To find I've chopped your sword and bow and dagger?  
Well, I eat little men who cry, bereft,  
Oh, darn! Why aren't there any dragons left?"

(Exit Little Man, running).

BY ANNE OF BRIAR DITCH (ANNE ETKIN )



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