Riddle 65 : a commentary
Kendall, J

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Riddle 65 (or 63)

Please check bio – we usually keep these quite short, but feel free to add a note below if you’d like to plug a particular publication:

Riddle 65’s translation comes to us from Judy Kendall, Reader in English and Creative Writing at Salford University. She’s especially interested in poetic composition, visual text and translation, both in an academic context and from the standpoint of a creative practitioner. You can see her creative record of the process of translating an Old English riddle in ‘brief brief: a riddle’ in Amsterdam’s Versal Literary & Arts Journal issue 12, http://www.versaljournal.org/index/#/versal12/.

Cwico wæs ic, ne cwæð ic wiht,  cwele ic efne seþeah
Ær ic wæs, eft ic cwom.      Æghwa mec reafað,
hafað mec on headre,      ond min heafod scireþ,
biteð mec on bær lic,      briceð mine wisan.
Monnan ic ne bite,      nympþe he me bite;
þara monige      þe mec bitað.

Quick to life I was, I did not quip at all, yet even so I’m quelled. Before I was, renewed I came. I’m everybody’s quarry, they hold me in fetters, and hack off my head, bite my stripped body, snap my stalk. I will not bite a man, unless he bites me; many are they that bite me.

Possible Solutions: Onion, Leek, Chives