

# BEAST!

There's a beast a black beast  
a big bounding black beast  
that runs with the wind on the moor  
eyes that gleam a green gleam  
a green glimmering gleam  
she's spattered in red tooth and claw

there's a stream a swift stream  
a moon-silver swift stream  
that runs through the vale to the Taw  
in the silt the soft silt  
the soft slathering silt  
is the pad of a velvet clad paw

there's a bleat a brief bleat  
a brief blathering bleat  
and gobful of fleece fills her jaw  
then a crack then a crunch  
as she grabs a late lunch  
and a sheep stills the pang in her maw

BILL Had a full grown ewe killed last night

GILL We've lost four in the same way but we've never seen the animal

BILL Just footprints down by the stream

GILL I've lost stock worth more than a thousand pounds already

There's a beast a black beast  
a big bounding black beast  
That's killing our sheep by the score  
At the end of each night  
we area met with the sight  
Of our livelihood covered in gore

BILL Know what I reckon? Poachers' dogs... lurchers

GILL If it was a dog or a fox ..all the sheep'd be in one corner

Let the valley resound  
to the cry of the hound  
Let slip the dogs of war  
Never mind foxes  
this killers of flocks is  
The quarry we're now hunting for

There's a beast a black beast  
a big bounding black beast

that runs with the wind on the moor  
eyes that gleam a green gleam  
a green glimmering gleam  
she's spattered in red tooth and claw

HER            You seen anything?

HIM            Sorry Madam?

HER            Anything there?

HIM            And you are?

HER            We heard you were here.

HIM            We?

HER            Mr Ley tells me there was another kill last night.

HIM            You're not a farmer.

HER            Much of the moor is mine.

HIM            Is that so

HER            How many men

HIM            I'm really not at liberty. If you'll excuse me Miss.

HER            Not Miss

HIM            Mrs.

HER            Ms.

HIM            Sorry?

HER            Ms.

HIM            Of course.

HER            Where are you accommodated?

HIM            I'm sorry Miss, Ms, that's an operational matter.

HER            It's not a dog is it?

HIM            I've nothing to say.

HER            Mr Ley says no dog kills like that.

HIM            You know Mr Ley well?

HER            Breaking the neck. Tearing out the throat

HIM Quite so

HER Eric has suffered terrible losses.

HIM Eric?

HER Mr Ley

HIM Of course

HER 90 sheep and climbing.

HIM Indeed

HER Could ruin him

HIM We're here to make sure it doesn't

HER So the Beast – the so-called Beast. Have you seen it?

HIM I really couldn't say.

HER Or any of your men?

HIM Are you a journo?

HER A what?

HIM Journalist. Are you?

HER No. No I'm not.

HIM Poking noses. Gloating.

HER I'm not a journalist.

HIM You ask a lot of questions.

HER I care about what happens on the moor.

HIM You don't sound like you're from round here.

HER And yet I am. Born and bred. Appearances can be deceptive.

HIM I must ask you to leave.

HER Must you?

HIM Yes

HER Leave where?

HIM The farm. The area. My men are out there waiting. Their guns are loaded. This is a dangerous place to be.

HER           Waiting for what?

HIM           Officially it's a dog.

HER           And unofficially?

HIM           Madam. I don't know who you are. I'm trying not to be rude. But you must leave.

HER           These are my moors.

HIM           And we're making them safe for you.

HER           How dull. How very dull.

HIM           Madam...

HER           I could be of use. I've seen it.

HIM           So have a lot of people apparently.

HER           But I have. I know where you'll find it.

HIM           This isn't the first hunt I've been on.

HER           Let me show you.

HIM           We've been thoroughly briefed.

HER           Have you now?

                  You come with me, I'll show you its path.

HIM           I'm on duty.

HER           Meet me tomorrow.

HIM           No Madam.

HER           The Hilltop there. Above the woods. You'll see all you need to see.

HIM           No madam.

HER           13 hundred hours.

JOHNNY       I knew it had been round Exmoor.

                  I listened to the people round Bratton reckoned some people had actually seen it from a distance.

                  I was talking to a chap named Jimmy Lockwood... he reckons they've seen it out Muddiford way ... he don't breathe a word about where he walks like cos Jimmy a real country boy walks around all these woods ... and he said he's seen all these animal droppings, says he's never seen droppings like it

and Jed Wilson real old friend of mine he was out top of Shirwell and he heard these things and all of a sudden these animals they just took off and he could hear them smacking through the wood he never heard anything like it

and of course you take these tales with a pinch of salt...  
anyway it were about June 15<sup>th</sup> three year ago  
I was out top of Roborough near Shirwell going across the fields and I come to the short field and I look to me left and I see this animal going along the side of the hedge... what is that...

come right in front of me - it was only about 200 yards away and Christ I tell you what I could feel the back of me neck standing up...

it stared at me and I had this stick in my hand and I thought what am I going to do - you know it was really scary

I had this stick and I smacked it on this branch as hard as I could to make the loudest noise I could.. and he just took off and it was like lightening.. gone..

I couldn't believe it but it's the honest to god's truth

It had a long tail right to the ground  
and its belly went up n the middle like a dog  
but its head  
its head was like a cat  
it was a big animal no doubt

people say there's more than one  
I reckon there's gotta be

|     |                                               |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|
| MA  | it's time                                     |
| BOY | reading                                       |
| MA  | what?                                         |
| BOY | reading                                       |
| MA  | reading?                                      |
| BOY | reading                                       |
| MA  | what                                          |
| BOY | Beowulf beast-slayer<br>mother-monster killer |
| MA  | it's time                                     |
|     | there's cows need milked                      |

BOY            It's back

MA             back?

BOY            gert-great blood-bolt beast is back

MA             never

BOY            seen it

MA             seen it?

BOY            on the news

MA             you're not to watch no news

BOY            father did

MA             right enough your father did  
looked what happened to him

                 he got ideas

                 it's time

BOY            soldiers

MA             soldiers?

BOY            seen 'em

MA             on the news?

BOY            on the moor

MA             the moor?

BOY            the moor

MA             you're not to go near no moor

BOY            father did

                 it's time

MA             time?

BOY            time

MA             you're not to go

BOY            it's time

MA             there's sheep need sheared

BOY            it's time

HIM I wasn't going to come.

HER But you did. With impressive precision.

HIM Nothing last night. Knew we were there. So if you can help.

HER It comes in off the moor.

HIM You reckon?

HER I know.

From up here you can see how it operates.

Look. You see Drewstone. Eric's farm - Mr Ley. It's the roof catching the sunlight, down the valley, got it?

HIM I know Drewstone. It's where we're billeted.

HER All of you? A tight fit.

HIM In the barn.

HER See those deer look.

HIM Sure

HER All kinds of cover... copses, woodland, hedgerows.

HIM We've crawled through most of it.

HER Now this way, look. These five valleys coming down into this main one from off the moor - all wooded. They all come from right off the moor and they link up down here... the old railway track runs along the bottom.

Up there that's Two Barrows, way up over is Sportsman's Inn.

There's my deer again.

HIM Your deer are they?

HER In a manner of speaking.

Early morning you might see 30, 40 of them out in the open but during the day they keep mostly out of sight - see they're moving off into the woodland. Now this, across the land we're looking at, this is their main track from the moor.

And it's the same for this creature. It's easy to keep hidden and come down off the moor ...all the way to Drewstone...

HIM You've seen it.

HER I have.

HIM So what is it we're hunting.

HER I don't know.

HIM But you've seen it.

HER I know what I've seen but I don't know what you're hunting.

HIM Are you wasting my time.

HER You seem to know what you're hunting.

HIM We're not going to feed the rumour-mill. So it's a dog. A wild-dog.

HER But you've hunted.

HIM I've hunted.

HER All over the world. Big cats. In Africa.

HIM That's right.

HER South America.

HIM Yes as it happens.

HER The Falklands.

HIM Not funny.

HER You've seen dead sheep.

HIM I've seen a lot of dead things.

HER But sheep. Dead sheep.

HIM I know how a big cat kills. It's very different from a dog. So far the sheep I've seen, they weren't killed by a dog. There's not all the bite marks, mouthfuls of flesh. No, it's clean. It's gone for the throat. And then the flesh has been stripped away. Rasped off the bone, I'd say.

HER Tracks?

HIM Nothing definite. That I don't understand. There's mud enough. It's rained enough. Nothing I can identify.

HER She's a fine creature.

HIM She?

HER She. Powerful.

HIM Gotta be.



HER With a paw that goes this way and one that goes that.

HIM You're taking the piss.

HER No, that's part of a story. I'm not taking the piss.

HIM I'm not interested in stories. I want this thing dead.

HER Why?

HIM So where did you see it?

HER Why kill her?

HIM Are you going to tell me?

HER Not here. I've heard her here. I've never seen her here.

HIM Heard her, go on.

HER Calling. Howling. Like a banshee.

HIM What kind of a howl.

HER A wailing. A bit like a baby. Who's she calling to?

HIM Recently?

HER Over the years.

HIM You're playing with me.

HER Certainly not.

HIM I know when I'm being played with.

You said you would show me all I need to see.

HER How much more do you want?

HIM What I want is some clarity. I want to know what this thing is, where this thing is. And who you are.

HER I'm not really part of the picture am I. You don't need to know about me. You have a job to do.

HIM And I won't be distracted.

HER You'd better get back to your barn. To your men.

HIM You say that's the track this thing follows?

HER The same path as the deer.

HIM All the way down to Drewstone.

HER All the way.

HIM Then that's the path I'll take.  
I thank you for what you've shown me.

HER There's more.

HIM I have no doubt.

  

PERCE We met on market day.

KAT Friday.

PERCE Her name was...

KAT His name was...

PERCE Katherine

KAT Percy

  

KAT Oh scuse...

PERCE no excuse me

KAT oh... you go this way and I'll go that..

PERCE Yes...  
The very next Friday.

KAT Hello... I'll go...

PERCE This way and I'll go

KAT That...

PERCE Yes.

KAT In my morning break I used to take my tea flask to watch the auctions... it was noisy exciting...

PERCE In them days the livestock market was in town. You could hardly move on Fridays for trucks in all shapes and sizes, the smell of animals and groups of old boys catchin' up...  
Alright Jim?  
Alright Jack.

KAT Oh hello again.

PERCE Buying or selling?

KAT Sorry.

PERCE Buying or...

KAT Oh selling. Plants on the pannier market....my Dad's....just veg really. Brassicas mostly...you?

PERCE Ah. No. I don't grow much in the way of brass... ooh I see. No, no I'm selling – sheep and buying a few bits and pieces for myself...

KAT Cup of tea? You look cold.

PERCE Thanks. That's kind of you...  
After that we'd meet every Friday.

KATE Share some soup and sandwiches.

PERCE I told her about my life right up there on the moor...

KAT I told him about life down here near the river...

PERCE I didn't tell her everything.  
Then one Friday  
Katherine

KAT Kat. Mmm Cheese and Pickle

PERCE Kat. ..

KAT Do you fancy some parkin?

PERCE Will you marry me?

KAT I made it myself.

PERCE Yes?

KAT Yes. Here you are.

PERCE So will you?

KAT Yes.

PERCE Marry me.

KAT Yes

PERCE And come and live up on the moors

KAT Yes.

PERCE I should have told her then.  
Katherine - Kat?

KAT Yes?

PERCE But I didn't

Ma : It's time

Boy: Dreaming

Ma: What?

Boy: What?

Ma; Dreaming?

Boy: Beast

Ma: Beast?

Boy: gert great blood-bolt beast

Ma There's fences need fixed

Boy soldiers

Ma: soldiers?

Boy: gonna kill it. I know. Cos I seen 'em. Down the pub ( hold and look)

Ma: You're not to go near no pub

Boy: Father did

Ma Edgar

Boy [as Dad:] I'm going down the pub.  
I want my dinner on the table when I get back.  
I want the books sorted, the floor scrubbed and my bath ready...and stop that  
little tacker crying or you know what's coming to you..

Ma: You're not to go near no pub....

Boy: Father did.....a lot

with the light of life dancing in her eyes  
how can he resist

with the light of life playing in her eyes  
how can he resist

holds her in his arms  
captive to her charms  
how can he  
how can he resist

to say goodnight almost breaks his heart  
but he's a farmer boy he's got an early start

walking through the starlit night  
across the moor to home  
hears a sound a footfall on the ground  
he doesn't walk alone

a big black cat with a gleam in her eyes  
how can he resist  
a big black cat with a demon in her eyes

holds her in his arms  
captive to her charms  
how can  
how can he resist

and when the weekend comes again  
another dance  
another chance  
how can he resist

and when he's walking home again  
the night is late  
the black cat waits  
how can he  
how can he  
how can he resist

it isn't long before the pair are wed  
they bless the happy day  
their bliss is sealed in the bridal bed  
their love is here to stay

the big black cat is gone  
either dead or flown  
but she won't  
on no she won't be missed

on the moor they make their home  
loves young dream just them alone  
how can they resist  
how can they resist  
how can they desist

then seven years on from the look in her eye

there's something that she's missed  
seven years on he sees in her eyes  
something she can't resist

as he holds her in his arms  
he knows his faded charms  
are all too easy  
easy to resist

and when the weekend comes around  
she can't be found  
she's gone to town  
how can she resist

and as he's lying there alone  
he hears a moan  
a feline groan  
the cat is back  
the cat is back  
the cat is back  
but no

It's his wife who's back with never a word  
and she does the same each week  
whenever she's gone it's the cat who's heard  
and it's just the same each week

at last he can't ignore  
the groaning at the door  
is it the cat who's back  
is it his wife who's back  
is it the cat who's back  
is it his wife's who's back  
is it the cat who's back  
is it his wife who's back  
is it the cat who's back  
is it his wife's who's back

he sees a velvet paw  
creeping through the door

afraid for his life he grabs a knife  
and he hacks at the paw he fears  
with a howl and a moan the cat is gone  
a cat is what he hears

but when his wife comes home that night  
her hand's bound tight  
in red and white

and then he knows that in his fear  
he hacked the hand  
that he holds dear

the light has gone  
where's it gone  
the life has gone  
where's it gone

how's it come to this

HER            You found me.

HIM            I wasn't looking.

HER            Through your night-sights. Most impressive.

HIM            Better than what we had in the Falklands.

HER            Why are you here?

HIM            Stake out.

HER            It's not your watch.

HIM            How do you know?

HER            Is it.

HIM            A bit of private hunting.

HER            Most irregular.

HIM            All gone quiet.  
It's like it's playing with us.  
We're the best. You could trip over us on the moor still wouldn't know we were  
there. The Argies never knew.  
But this thing does. This thing knows. Keeping away.

HER            So why here?

HIM            The men are watching the farm. I'm just following my nose.

HER            She's getting to you.

HIM            Stretching my legs. Gets a bit claustrophobic hunkered down all day all night.  
  
Want to know where it's watching us from.

HER            How did you know I'd be here?

HIM            I'm a hunter.

HER            And I'm the prey?

HIM            Of course not. But perhaps you know where I might find it.

HER           The beast's lair.

HIM           Do you know?

HER           Follow the path.

HIM           Where does it lead?

HER           We'll find out

HIM           Is it far?

HER           Are you fit?

HIM           Try me.

                  [SHE PUTS ON HER DARK GLASSES]

                  Don't be daft you won't see a thing

HER           Night-sights.

HIM           For real?

                  [THEY RUN. SHE LEADS THE WAY]

HIM           Yeah all right, slow it down. I 'm long distance, not a sprinter.

                  How do you run so quiet?

                  Hey where are you?

                  Where you gone?

                  Is this is it then?

                  Are we there?

                  Hey you.

                  Your name

                  I don't even know your name

                  why's it so dark

                  where's the moon

                  it's here isn't

                  it's somewhere here

                  and it's not a dog

                  I know it's not a dog

                  it's a cat

                  where is it?



is that you?

woman  
whatever you name is  
is that you?

listen  
I have a phobia  
I'm not joking

I have a phobia  
galeophobia  
gatophobia  
ailurophobia  
they're all the same thing

I'm afraid of cats

you're not to laugh

any cats

big cats  
little cats

I can't breathe  
I can hear my heart  
can you hear my heart

where are you  
it's here isn't it

there's a cat here  
and it knows I'm afraid

To all you farmers of the moor  
who would crave one more acre  
From pinkery pond there comes a lady  
Dressed in black and ochre  
Eyes of green and hair of weed  
It waves and falls behind her  
The liquid strength within her flows  
as she rises from the water  
she cries  
Who calls me from my sleep  
who tramples on my quilt of green  
so wild and free and dear to me  
who threatens it creator

she stops atop of yarbury coombe  
queen of all she sees  
but the forest she'd made so wild and free  
is fenced and furrowed bound and  
for mans own wealth and greed

far below the foxhounds run  
she hears the hunters horn  
the hare it hides the deer run far  
and the foxes throat is torn

now I know who breaks my sleep  
I know what stains my quilt of green  
The creatures call in pain and fear  
in a land that once was clean

So on hoar oak hill she gathers strength  
Her arms reach to the sky  
And when she brings them to the ground  
through the darkness gleam her eyes  
dark slits of yellow green her puma length she arches  
And as she coils herself to spring you heart a wild cat scream  
Coursing over moor and over marsh along the midnight stream  
You will see the spirit as she runs a path across your dreams

BILL I've had a butcher's shop in Barnstaple 5 and 40 year. Never had no trouble 'cept once..about 10 year ago...spring April time..Monday morning I goes to check me stock in cold store out back opens the door brrr full of girt great haunches of beef big as big strong men sought and bought from Bideford to Braunton. Now I've always prided meself on me stock keeping so I starts checking me meat...2 haunches missing...someone had been meddling with me stock..now there was plenty of competition about in those days and plenty jealous of my success but none more so than my neighbour Jack Chitterling...one week later same thing happened Monday Morning checking me stock out back..brrr darn me if there weren't 2 more haunches pinched I was jumping..now I'd had me eye on Jack Chitterling..but I couldn't go a-pointing the finger so what t' do...well I had something of a reputation in these parts as a spinner of yarns..I could right spook folk if I had a mind. I had to stop telling of the Ilfracombe werewolf for when I got down on all fours rolled me eyes in the sockets clawed the ground all me listeners would run away in terror...so that evening after I'd scrubbed me block with sawdust sharpened up me knives I was shutting up shop when

GILL Evening Jim

BILL Evening Jack

GILL Ows business

BILL Yourn

GILL Prosperin

BILL Ere Jack ..have you seen my big black puma?

GILL What big black puma..didn know 'e had a puma

BILL Oh I just got him from a lepidopterist up in London....someone had been meddling with me meat so I got meself protection...very fierce pumas...big as a wolf and twice as wild...you can see him prowling out back around the yard with his glittering teeth and pricked up ears see him?

GILL           Where's e too then?

BILL           Surely you can see him...swinging his bell rope tale swift as a shadow, black as night...eyes like red hot poker..

GILL           I don' see him no puma

BILL           E's got a paw as goes this way and one as goes that

GILL           Yes yes I see im..with a paw as goes this way and one as that ees walkin' by the coal store wall

BILL           I had him seein' a puma as wasn't there

GILL           Be careful Jim take care he don get loose

BILL           He's safe enough in the yard Jack but woe betide the man as lays a hand on me haunches.

                  After that all went well for a while nothing went missing I thought the problem was solved. Then one morning in early May...

GILL           Ere, you wanna watch that beast of yourn I jest seen him bounding along Butchers Row with paw as goes this way and one that goes that

BILL           When was this?

GILL           Jess now

BILL           But there he is in cold store in the yard out back

GILL           So he is..he must run like lightning to get back here so fast

BILL           Well I can't understand how ee got out Jack

GILL           I've told folk about your big black puma and us is a-feared that he might get loose and go for we

BILL           Couldn't believe it e'd seen the puma even when I wasn't there and that wan't the end of it.

                  Morning Mrs Shapland

GILL           I've seen it

BILL           Whats that then

GILL           Disgusting it is 'S not right letting out in public

BILL           I donno what you're on about Mrs Shapland

GILL           You knows what I mean... up on the Gorrall estate swift as a shadow black as night with a paw as goes this was and one as goes that

BILL           I'll chain 'im up this instant Mrs Shapland

GILL T'ain't good enough...I want compensation now

BILL Couple pound of sausages to see ee right - this was getting ridiculous

GILL Ere you the one with that cat then  
BILL What the one with a paw as goes this way

GILL ...and one that goes that...well I seed him jumpin on a wall down on Rolle Quay  
you let that thing out again me and my boyz is gonna come and sort ee out

BILL suddenly everybody's seein it

GILL swift as ashadow...  
filleigh viaduct...  
out by Molland  
black as night ..  
shouldn't be allowed  
saw it as Whistlandpound  
and me  
me too  
with eyes like red hot pokers  
nearly run im down at North Molton  
Black Cat pub..  
Drewstone..  
Lynton..  
Minehead..  
Dulverton..  
my aunty lives up Brayford she's seen it...  
we've all seen it with a paw as goes this way and one that goes that...  
somma'st gotta be done

BILL Perhaps the time had come to get rid of me big black puma. So the next  
morning, with all me neighbours looking on: come on girl in the back with ee...  
it's off to Paignton Zoo with ee... purr to the people..

GILL It purred I heard it

BILL You heard it Wayne?

GILL I heard it

BILL Oh good.  
  
Had a lovely day out...Paignton .. dinner.. paddle in the sea.. wander round the  
zoo...at last I got rid of me big black puma for good and for all...so back to  
Barnstaple I goes  
  
Evening Jack

GILL Evening Jim

BILL Business good today

GILL You got a nerve Jimmy Brown

BILL           What you on about Jack Chitterling?

GILL           Hers back! Beat thee by an hour ..tis that long since I seen her running down  
Boutport street heading for the open country..swift as a shadow, black as night,  
with a paw as goes this way and one as goes that..

BILL           Damn you Jack Chitterling..for a liar and a scrud I left her in a cage in Paington  
Zoo

GILL           A scrud is it? We'll soon see who's the scrud..

BILL           I tell you I wish I shot him a the first and had done with it..

GILL           He's been savaging sheep up Drewstone, 35 lambs in one sitting..  
Took half a flock in Brayford 5 thousand pounds worth of flesh you'll be the ruin  
of us Jimmy Brown we want compensation...we want compensation.. we want  
compensation

                  Ahhh it bit me?

BILL           What bit ee Jack

GILL           A big black puma..

BILL           Looks like your chopper slipped to me

GILL           Don't you deny it, it came in my shop , leapt on my block and sank it's cruel  
fangs right into thumb

BILL           A gasp of horror came form every throat

                  Alright... I think its time I came clean about my big black puma.. the truth of the  
matter is..I have no big black puma...I never had no big black puma.. I never  
wanted to 'ave no big black puma...it was all a joke - a story..

GILL           Too late for that it'll take more than a few herb sausages t save ee this time

BILL           It never existed

GILL           But we'd all seed her an't we with a paw as goes this way and one that goes that  
..and what about my sheep and what about my hand

BILL           Right....hand me my revolver..it's under the till...

GILL           What are ee gonna do Jim?

BILL           Just give me my gun ...stand back..back

GILL           You wouldn't be thinking of turning it loose on us would ee?

BILL           There's a good boy there's a good maid sit sit....[MIMES SHOOTING THE  
BEAST]...and so I shot my big black puma. Satisfied..?

GILL           Her's still now..her paws don' go this way nor that way no more

BILL Get your shovel Jack us'll bury him together

GILL Mr Brown?

BILL Yes Wayne

GILL I'm sorry about your beast

BILL Yeah so am I Wayne so am I..

GILL But when we see'd him up Molland way....

BILL Yes Wayne?.

GILL There were two.....

There's a beast a black beast  
a big bounding black beast  
that runs with the wind on the moor

HER Unfortunate

HIM Disaster

HER While the cat's away...

HIM But it wasn't was it? It was very much not away. It was very much here. And I wasn't.

35 pounds of meat. That's a lot of mutton.

HER That's a family meal.

HIM Meaning?

HER Perhaps she's hunting for more than one.

HIM Don't start.

HER Unfortunate.

HIM Is that what it was?

HER Don't you think?

HIM Just unfortunate that I wasn't there.

I was led astray.

HER Oh I see. My fault.

HIM You led me to the middle of the moors. You left me there.

HER You couldn't keep up. You got lost.

HIM And that's the moment the beast chooses. Waits till I'm gone.

HER Aren't you getting a bit personal?

HIM It is personal. Hunting is very personal.  
It's watching. It's out there and it's watching.  
It's watching me.

HER You think you're the centre of her universe? I'm sure she's got more important things to think about. Like how to feed her family.

HIM That's fanciful.

HER No more fanciful than your fantasies of one-on-one with the beast.

HIM I don't have fantasies. My world is entirely real.

HER And what am I?

HIM What are you?

HER How could I possibly outrun you?. You who yomped the Falklands. Yomped your way into Port Stanley.

HIM Yes in fact.

HER What kind of fantasy Amazon am I?

HIM What are you talking about? You're talking rubbish. What is this? Where does it come from?

HER Leading you astray, out on the moors.

HIM You left me.

HER I was never there. Mills and Boon or soft porn? Pure fantasy.

HIM I know what's what. And I know who you are. Don't think I don't. I remember.

HER I don't think so.

HIM I saw you before. In the flash of a shell.

HER I'm not one for war.

HIM You were there.

HER Fantasy

HIM Ammunition and a packet of fags. I thanked you. You smiled. Then you drove off into the darkness.

You left me in the darkness.

And the cat crept in.

HER

So now what?

HIM

Stake out. Do what I'm best at. No more following you.

HER

Where's your spirit of adventure?

HIM

I've had more adventure than most.  
No I'm waiting here. I'm not going to her. I'm waiting here for her to come to me.

HER

Her?

HIM

I'll be ready.

GILL

You see Diane was a huntress ...pure and virginal...stealthy and smart....at one with her terrain ... flying with the fletches of her arrows, bending with the arch of her bow... no quarry too quick, no creature too cunning, no beast too bold... hunting not for mere pleasure or prowess but as one of the beasts herself....to feed herself and her maidens without the need for men and their vain displays of manhood cruelty and conquering glory..

Her virginity an emblem of a world that has no need for the domination of man... a world nurtured by women's touch that takes no more than their corporeal needs...

What need for men in such an Eden? Where girls can squeal and laugh and play without preening for men's lascivious eyes... where every female form is beautiful and being unclothed a state of grace not confused by men's demands...

And we have Acteon..., son of Aristeus, taught by Chiron ...one the greatest hunters known to man...note, known to man...no mention that it was, in fact, his grandmother who bequeathed to him his hunting skills...Yes Acteon, told from his very earliest youth what a clever little hunter he was, what a bold little boy, what a brave little man, ..Practising for hours to shoot his catapult at the village cats, to draw back with dead-eyed accuracy the string of his bow. The leader of his pack, born with a silver arrow in his quiver... no wonder he thought no quarry too quick, no creature too cunning....no beast too bold....no girl not game ...no woman too wild...but let's not get ahead of ourselves...

Acteon..out with his boys hunting...across moor and mountain, through stream and spinney, combe and copse...and what a day they'd had - dogs barking, boys baying or was it the other way round? But for once the beast had eluded them....the pack of boys and hounds content to fling themselves on such food as they had to hand and rest their flagging feet...

But Acteon was not content; the scent of beast was in his blood... Acteon wanders the woods his staff at hand ready to discharge his pent up man-power: and lo he hears ...

..Diane has that self same day as a cat crept through woods and wasteland...twice she'd had the deer in her deadly sights and twice the beastly baying of Acteon and his boys had spoilt her poise and startled her prey... At the third and last attempt her heart relented...and she let the hart go free...



The moon crept over the edge of the world and Diane and her girlfriends used the last rays of warming sunshine to bathe away the souring scent of the day's hotfooted chase...

And there he saw her....Diane the huntress inviolate, steady in her virgin purpose - stunning, supreme, sensual ...and naked. He smiled. She didn't.

...was it that she had no need of him, was unimpressed by his rippling form, his youthful confidence, his staff quivering in his hand as he gazed where no man was allowed ....or ever had? She gazed back and in that second of stillness, pregnant with possibilities,... what was it passed between them ..what conception or misconception of the moment interrupted the purpose of their thoughts? Oh how a moment can be misread ...for this was no meeting of minds.

He moved his mouth to speak – for here before him was a quarry, a creature, a beauty so exquisite that, darling of his parents that he was, he thought it must be possible, nay probable, he could possess her, win her, have her for when before had his wants ever been gainsaid?

He opened his mouth and knew, or in fact divined - for her lips did not move, perhaps her eyes narrowed a fraction, glinted almost in that dangerous way that Gods can work... and he knew, divined, he must not speak, not utter words in case the tale he were to tell become a boy's bragging boast of how he'd nearly copped a Goddess. A virgin Goddess.

But we maidens knew, we knew but would not warn him further. When a girl says no that's what she means, when a Goddess says no .... (intake of breath)

And then the playful sounding of his boys' hunting horns, the baying of his dogs ...he turned to answer to their call, shrugging his shoulders half apologetically for their course and uncouth interruption...Here, he said,

BILL Here

GILL Over here...

BILL Over here.

GILL Aagghh.

White Out ...

She shook her mane of hair, and water droplets from her new washed tresses spinning forward as shards of crystal cutting through the clear night air showered down across his manly shape and changed it there in front of us. He who once was, was now a stag –no, literally a stag... and no less lovely to us in many ways...but it was Acteon, or he who had been Acteon was now a stag that night and what a stag night it was ..his boys freshened by their ale and fodder heard not Acteon but a stag's full throated cry...the dogs scenting at last a tasty ending to their wearing day pursued the sound with hearts and stomachs determined for a prize...

We watched from the shadows, watched dispassionately, without a glimmer of remorse as they tore him man and hound to feast upon his flesh ...and just before the final coup de grace was given I think I saw, to this day I believe I saw, Diane peering down from a tree's top-most branch allowed a droplet to fall upon

the ravaged form below her – and it was water I'm sure - for Goddesses do not cry.. just one drop and in that moment they knew the stag was Acteon...but it was too late and the blood lust was heavy on them and they did not, could not stop.

KAT It's so peaceful up here Perc

PERC You like it?

KAT Of course I like it

PERC Not too lonely.

KAT No – I've got you...and all that space. We could go wild up here and no-one would ever know.

PERC No.

KAT I was only joking.

PERC I know.

Kat. I ..I have to go out tonight...stay out on the moor...something worrying the sheep...Better keep watch.

KAT Of course. Dogs d'you think?

PERC Don't know. Probably nothing. Better safe than sorry. You'll be alright?

KAT Course I will.

PERC Lock and bolt the door. Pull the blinds down

KAT Yes, yes...don't worry, I'm not afraid of the dark.

PERC No. See you tomorrow.

SHE CARRIES ON HUMMING. WITH HIS BACK TO THE AUDIENCE HE HINTS AT CHANGING INTO A WEREWOLF

KAT Your hair's grows so fast... If I didn't cut it at least once a month...I swear it'd soon be as long as mine..

PERC Kat. I have to stay out on the moor again tonight.

KAT The dog again? What is it – farm dog gone wild?

PERC Likely.

KAT You should ask around next time we're at the market –

PERC Yeah Good idea.

Lock and bolt the door... Pull the blind ..

KAT            yes yes. Don't worry.

                 AGAIN WITH HIS BACK TO THE AUDIENCE HE HINTS AT CHANGING INTO  
                 A WEREWOLF

PERC           Kat..

KAT            I know. You have to stay out..

PERC           You know?

KAT            Full moon

PERC           Lock and bolt the door

KAT            Pull down the blinds ..Yes I know

PERC           I should have told you

KAT            you better go

                 THIS TIME FACING THE AUDIENCE HE BECOMES A WEREWOLF. SHE  
                 HEARS WHAT IS HAPPENING AND GRABS A KNIFE. HE MOVES AS  
                 THOUGH TO ATTACK HER AND SHE RAISES THE KNIFE.

                 THIS MORPHS INTO THE NEXT SCENE BEFORE IT IS RESOLVED.

BOY:           Where's my dinner

Ma:            Where you been?

Boy            It's time

Ma            Where you been?

Boy:           Out

Ma:            Out?

Boy:           Hunting!

Ma:            Hunting?

Boy:           Beast

Ma            No

Boy            Father

Ma            Edgar

                 There's meadows need mown

|      |                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Boy: | Reward                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Ma:  | Reward?                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Boy: | £1,000                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Ma:  | £1,000                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Boy: | I want to go on holiday ...to America.                                                                                                                                  |
| Ma:  | sheep need sheared<br>fences need fixed<br>meadows need mown<br>hay need hauled<br>drains need dug<br>dung needs dumped<br>straw needs stacked<br>slurry needs spraying |
| Boy  | America<br><br>Time                                                                                                                                                     |
| MA   | Time                                                                                                                                                                    |
| BOY  | Hunting                                                                                                                                                                 |
| MA   | No....                                                                                                                                                                  |
| BOY  | Blood axe                                                                                                                                                               |
| MA   | Claw hacks                                                                                                                                                              |
| BOY  | Blood axe                                                                                                                                                               |
| MA   | Claw hacks                                                                                                                                                              |
| BOY  | Blood axe                                                                                                                                                               |
| MA   | Claw hacks                                                                                                                                                              |
| BOY  | Blade bites neck bone                                                                                                                                                   |
| MA   | Up chuck of blood gut                                                                                                                                                   |
| BOY  | Blade bites neck bones                                                                                                                                                  |
| MA   | Up chuck of blood guts                                                                                                                                                  |
| BOY  | Blade bites neck bones                                                                                                                                                  |
| MA   | Up chuck of blood guts                                                                                                                                                  |

BOY                   Head of hell hag hoist rejoicing

                          Beowulf beast slayer boy kid of Edgarthor  
                          watcher of ewes on edges of Exmoor  
                          hastes with head to hall of lording  
                          Fit to feast and sing his feat  
                          Beowulf bold mad mother has beat

MA                    Sheep need sheared  
                          Fences need fixed  
                          Meadows need mown  
                          Hay need hauled  
                          Drains need dug  
                          Ding need dumped  
                          Straw needs stacked  
                          slurry needs spread

BILL                 noooooooooo

HIM                 I could have killed you.

HER                 I could have killed you.

HIM                 What are you doing? What the hell do you think you're doing?  
                          I'd have had her.

                          Instead of which I nearly had you.

HER                 I don't think so.

HIM                 She was in my sights.

HER                 So was I.

HIM                 Yes you bloody were. Which is why I couldn't bloody shoot.

HER                 You didn't shoot.

HIM                 I couldn't shoot.

HER                 You didn't shoot.  
                          You couldn't shoot.  
                          You couldn't shoot her.

HIM                 Because of you.

HER                 Because of you.

HIM                 Don't come it.

HER                 Could you.

HIM                 Just don't come it.

HER                 Galeophobia

Gatophobia  
or something else?

HIM She's beautiful

HER Of course she is

HIM Hardly saw her

HER She's fast

HIM Want to see her again  
Before I kill her  
I want to see her again

HER You've looked in her eyes

HIM I have

HER Then she's won  
you'll never kill her now

HIM Of course I will

HER you've looked in her eyes

HIM There's been plenty of eyes I've looked in  
kids' eyes some of them  
little kids sent to fight  
but it doesn't signify  
I was aiming right between the eyes  
clear as you like through the night-sights  
and she looked  
she was ready to take me  
I was ready for her  
then you  
how did you get in?  
how did you know?  
cos you did know  
didn't you  
knew she was there  
you knew she was there

HER Of course I knew. How did I know.....

HIM I've seen you before. I remember

HER Who am I?

HIM Another moor .A Falklands moor

HER You know who I am

HIM What's a woman doing on a bloody battle field

HER I've come for you

HIM Get her out of here

HEWR There's no escape

HIM Ammunition and a packet of fags....

HER You've looked in my eyes. You've seen more than is good for you

HIM Can't breathe ... get her out of here ... there's a cat ... can't breathe ... can't breathe

HE BREAKS DOWN

GILL how different the beginning

with a beast on the loose  
 who best to turn to  
 but Hercules  
 the hero

BILL and what a hero  
 the very type of hero

GILL this was the lad  
 who at ten months old  
 had strangled the life from a pair of pythons  
 clutched in his tiny fists  
 his baby smile lighting his lips

BILL this was the lad  
 whose body and mind were honed  
 through his infancy  
 honed through his teens  
 honed in early manhood  
 into a sleek mean killing machine  
 that longed for action

GILL so when the message came

Thespis is under attack  
 The Thespians fear for their livelihood  
 fear for their lives

a monster  
a beast  
some say a cat  
some a dog  
in truth a lion of monstrous stature  
roams the land

BILL I'm ready

GILL Hercules few of words  
in need of little persuading

the messenger prepared  
with offers of gold  
and the lure of King Thespius' fifty daughters

but Hercules

BILL I'm ready

GILL the adventure was all

BILL where's the lion?

GILL and where indeed the lion?

like many an enemy before and after  
the lion makes a tactical retreat

BILL disappears into the fastness of the thicket  
biding his time

GILL with an occasional foray  
BILL a flurry of fleece

GILL To remind them he's there

BILL I'm here to fight and kill

I hate the wait

I hate the waste of my life

I'm away

GILL Thespius  
King of the Thespi  
has other ideas

fifty daughters the old man has  
Hercules will surely sire sons  
fifty grandsons to do the old man proud  
guard him in troubled times to come

take your ease  
enjoy your leisure



with my daughters  
seek your pleasure

BILL if I can't kill  
I might as well procreate  
so after 50 days wait  
and 50 nights sweat  
the 50 wombs of  
Thespius' 50 daughters  
spring with life to come

GILL while outside the city  
the deaths continue

he tears the life from the throats of our cattle  
rips the fleece off our flocks  
he ate a goatherd last night  
bit him in two  
and swallowed him down

BILL these daughters of yours  
a deadly distraction  
women have no place in war

GILL and this is war  
war to the death

BILL bring it on

spear in hand  
bow over shoulder  
club at the ready  
he leaves the city

GILL Thespian cheers  
ringing in his ears  
as the hero leaves the city

BILL as a hero  
he leaves the city

deep in the thicket  
can't see a thing

GILL bleary eyed  
from fifty wearisome nights

BILL can't hear a thing

GILL in his ears the ring  
of Thespian cheers

BILL is he the hunter or the hunted  
here in the beast's terrain?

GILL he's the hunter all right

BILL           a huge paddy-paw in the mud  
                  gives the game away

GILL           a paw going this way and one going that

BILL           and blood  
                  fresh blood  
                  the beast has a kill

GILL           the thrill of the hunt is up

BILL           the beast knows

GILL           of course he knows

BILL           he knows the hunter's on his track

GILL           but there's no going back  
                  the game is on  
                  take your partners for the dance  
                  a dance as old as time

                  a dance danced  
                  since man first felt the hunger  
                  gnawing in his belly

BILL           the track leads on

GILL           then doubles back

BILL           hunter and prey

GILL           one going this way

BILL           one going that

GILL           here the beast waits  
                  worried lest the hunter's left behind

BILL           but Hercules has his second wind  
                  he's on the case  
                  the chase is on

GILL           a glimpse through the thicket  
                  of a tawny pelt  
                  a shaggy mane

BILL           he's closing on the beast

                  he grasps his bow  
                  arrow at the ready  
                  looking for the moment  
                  looking for one clear shot

GILL           all he'll need to dispatch the beast

BILL           and it's there

GILL           the lion turns  
to face his pursuer  
the beast vaunts his body  
braves the immensity of his chest  
inviting the marksman to take aim

BILL           which he does  
Hercules' aim is true

GILL           the shaft takes flight

BILL           and should by right pierce him to the heart

GILL           but right doesn't prevail

BILL           the barb of the arrow fails  
even to mark the skin

GILL           bouncing harmless to the ground

BILL           Hercules lets loose another dart

GILL           but still to no avail

BILL           and others soon lie spent  
at the feet of the beast

GILL           enraged the lion snarls  
anger blazes in his eyes

BILL           Hercules grips his spear

GILL           the lion fixes his tormentor  
with a glare  
holds him steady in his gaze  
as he crouches  
coils tight the spring  
then leaps

BILL           Hercules thrusts his spear  
at the underbelly of the flying beast

GILL           the lion lands with all his weight  
on top of the shaft

BILL           but the stock of oak  
the blade of iron  
meant to pierce the heart  
they bend as though of softest lead

GILL           such a mighty weapon  
wielded with such strength  
should have left the lion dead

BILL           but that which should have pierced  
                  wilts like a fragile flower stem

GILL           leaving the beast unharmed

BILL           and now the beast has slipped away  
                  into a cave before unseen

GILL           the lion's lair

BILL           now I have him

                  one weapon left

GILL           the club that only Hercules can lift

BILL           a club fit to dash the brains of a beast

                  bide my time  
                  wait outside the mouth of the cave  
                  until at last hunger drives the beast  
                  from the safety of the dark

GILL           hunger drives us all

BILL           not even the beast can endure

GILL           and wait

BILL           and wait

GILL           and wait he did

BILL           sun rise sun set

GILL           sun rise sun set

                  and still not a whimper from the beast

BILL           surely hunger will drive him soon  
                  from the darkness of the cave

GILL           then in the evening gloom  
                  Hercules hears a scuffle behind him  
                  turns in time to see the beast  
                  with a goat slung over his back  
                  through the thicket behind

BILL           two mouths  
                  the cave has two mouths

GILL           doesn't take long to confirm

BILL           soon rocks and boulders wrenched from the cliff side  
                  stop up one entrance firm

from there no escape

GILL and Hercules not prepared to wait  
any longer

BILL grasps his club  
and enters the cave  
penetrates the gloom  
deep into the unknown

GILL the warm sweet stench of rotting flesh

BILL strains his ears to hear  
listens for the purring or the panting

GILL the lion holds his breath

BILL Hercules hears the beating of a heart  
in a mighty breast  
his heart?  
his breast?

GILL the lion's heart?  
the lion's breast?

BOTH two hearts beating as one

BILL he swings his club in the darkness  
an unerring blow  
crashing into the skull of the beast

GILL but the skull is the stronger  
the club bounces back

BILL bounces back with such force  
as to fly from the hands of the hero  
to flee to a distant corner of the cave

GILL uninclined to play further part in this battle

BILL so now man and beast together in the dark

BOTH two hearts beating as one

BILL nowhere to hide

GILL nothing to separate them

BILL time to get physical  
a fistful of mane

GILL hugging hard

BILL a close embrace

GILL            crushing the beast to him

BILL            the warmth and comfort of his skin

GILL            the taste of his sweat

BILL            the struggle of his muscles

GILL            the pull and the push

BILL            the to and the fro

GILL            the flailing on the floor

BILL            on top and underneath

GILL            the desperate raking of claws on his back

BILL            till finally the moment comes

GILL            with one last squeeze of the mighty bicep

BILL            and life his choked

GILL            extinguished

BILL            the light put out

GILL            the beast will breathe no more

BILL            Hercules drags the beast from darkness  
into the glare of daylight  
and sits in a moment's contemplation  
with the body of his foe

GILL            the birds sing

BILL            the lambs bleat

GILL            the world is as it was  
with one difference

BILL            the beast is dead  
the lambs bleat uninterrupted

GILL            until the next time

BILL            and now to claim his trophy  
to wear the skin of the beast  
take on the strength of the enemy he vanquished

GILL            with a hide no arrow can pierce  
a hide that turns away the blade of the spear  
there's only one answer

BILL            the claws of the beast itself

GILL           and so he skins the beast  
tears the pelt from the flesh

BILL           wraps himself in the hide of the monster

                  and makes his way to the city  
weary  
wounded  
victorious

GILL           the beast  
the beast approaches  
he's nearing the city  
shut the gates

BILL           no it's I  
Hercules  
the beast-slayer  
Hercules your hero  
it's I  
let me enter your city

GILL           No Hercules  
you're a killer  
there's no place for you here  
this is a city of civilized men and women  
who seek to live their lives in peace

BILL           I freed you from your fear  
you owe me  
let me enter

GILL           we're grateful  
and especially grateful  
if you'd be gone without fuss  
we have our lives to lead

BILL           I demand you open the city gates  
do you want me to break them down

GILL           just as we feared  
you're out of control  
you're a liability  
a berserk  
as dangerous as the monster you killed  
you have no place in a civilised society  
now be gone

BILL           And so the city gates slammed in his face  
slammed tight shut in his face

GILL           the lion-killer wasn't welcome anymore

BILL

Can't breathe ... can't breathe...

BACK TO THE SOLDIER'S BREAKDOWN.

SHE PUTS A GUITAR AROUND HIS NECK

when a hero has had his day in the sun  
when the battle is truly lost and won  
where do the heroes go  
to fight the demon armies of their mind  
where do the heroes go to let the tangled web unwind

we tell you disappear  
you're no longer welcome here  
thanks to you the danger's gone  
now we must all move on  
but where do the heroes go  
with blood and guts still spooling through their mind  
where do the heroes go  
how do they move on when the pictures in their mind  
rewind  
rewind  
remind  
where do they go

untidy huddle of a blanket in the street  
unholy muddle from victory comes defeat  
it's here the heroes lie  
to fight the demon armies of their mind  
it's here the heroes lie  
to let the tangled web unwind

we hoped you'd disappear  
instead you're lying here  
where you lie you're in our way  
as we try to lead our lives  
it's here the hero lies  
what life has he to lead when in part he died  
where another hero lies –  
a hero from the other side who died  
he died  
he died  
he survived –  
but in truth he died

we tell you disappear  
you're no longer welcome here  
thanks to you the danger's gone  
now we must all move on  
but where do the heroes go  
with blood and guts still spooling through their mind  
where do the heroes go  
how do they move on when the pictures in their mind  
rewind  
rewind  
remind



where do they go

HIM            They're pulling us out  
HER            What a shame  
HIM            It's not over  
HER            It is for you  
HIM            Want to see her again  
HER            You had your chance  
HIM            One more night  
HER            It's over. The war is over...You're still alive  
HIM            And so are you

There's a Beast a Black Beast  
A big bounding black beast  
That runs with the wind on the moor

Walking through a moonlit night  
Across the moor to home  
Hears a sound a footfall on the ground  
He doesn't walk alone  
A big black cat with a gleam in her eyes  
How can he resist  
A big black cat with a demon in her eyes

Coursing over moor and over marsh along the midnight stream  
You will see the spirit as she runs a path across your dreams

Spattered with red tooth and claw

