

Voodoo Shark

(06/13/2018)

Greetings to you, my startled new friend!
Forgive the intrusion, my hand I will lend
I don't wish you harm, as a matter of fact,
I just want to talk, quite harmless an act,

And please do not fear my unusual looks,
Your eyes will deceive, like the covers of books,
A wondrous story that I have to tell,
So kick up your feet and sit for a spell,

I was once a man who was lost on a hike,
A mountain adventure through treacherous pike,
A terrible storm forced me off of the trail,
Frightened and cold, indeed I did wail,

Descending the mountain, the rocks were so jagged,
I walked for so long that my feet became ragged,
And entered the jungle, a forest of rain,

Hoping to find a reprieve from the pain,

Cursing and yelling I couldn't believe,

My life at an end I couldn't conceive,

Villagers heard from the huts down below,

Spirit was lifted but they dealt it a blow,

Captured by force and dragged to the square,

Mysterious ritual their shaman prepared,

Tied to a stake as they painted my skin,

They brought out a knife passed down by their kin,

"This is the end" I thought out aloud,

"I hope that I've made my family proud",

But what happened next was so unexpected,

The villagers circled, my body protected,

The shaman began loudly chanting and praying,

Like a wolf in the night, at the sky he was baying,

Slaying a goat with the knife in his hand,

Cried out to the sky and the blood on the land,

His words were like lightning, so potent and swift,
Asking the gods to grant them a gift,
A fire behind him rose like a beast,
A ravenous creature so eager to feast,

So into the fire they threw in the goat,
The flames rising higher, smoke scrawling a note,
Reciting the words that appeared in the sky,
The shaman approached, looked me dead in the eye,

“Do you accept?” He asked with a grin,
I felt little choice with the knife at my chin,
I nodded and spoke what little I could,
The villagers cheered, stoked the fire with wood,

Removing the ropes, I thought I was free,
Not even close, unfortunately,
The fire grew higher and shone a strange light,
Changing its color like auroras at night,

It lunged like a lion, I fell to my back,
How do I protect from the sudden attack?
Shrouded in magic, my body absorbed,
The light from this most mysterious orb,

I screamed as I felt the horrible sting,
Of my body reacting and slowly morphing,
Watching in awe as their wish was so granted,
I lay in the dirt as if I'd been planted,

Eventually all of the pain did subside,
Quickly receding like the ocean's tide,
I rose to my feet and took a deep breath,
Thankful that I was not taken by death,

My eyes growing wide as I witnessed the change,
Digitigrade feet; my new paws looked so strange,
Covered in fur and with a tail I'd sprung,
I could barely stand up otherwise I'd have run,

My fingers grew claws and my face has a snout,

The animal ears on my head are quite stout,
I looked all around, tail swaying behind,
Would it be right to take revenge of some kind?

But the story's not done my terrified friend,
Please do not run or your life I will end,
The talking beast-man has a bit more to say,
And it would be best to give him his way,

The shaman presented a gold ruby ring,
They bowed down to me and declared me a king,
"The gods gave you a gift" he said with a smile,
"So please stay with us and lead for a while"

At first it was strange to be so revered,
Abusing my power was something I feared,
But I grew to love the people I lead,
From my human body my spirit they've freed,

I wouldn't change back even if I knew how,
My life has not ever been richer than now,

And not just because I'm the villages chief,
From my previous life they've erased all my grief,

But to be one of many is a terrible plight,
So let's take a walk and I'll show you the light.
I'll give you the same choice that they gave to me,
A new life or quick death. What will it be?