

THE THING AT THE WINDOW  
KNOWS MY NAME



TERRY M. WEST

**The Thing at the Window  
Knows My Name**

**By Terry M. West**

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Visit the author at: <http://terrymwest.com/>

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The thing at the window knows my name.

It claims to have known it before the label was even attached. The thing at my window visits me regularly in the twilight hours, when I am so very tired and prone to its dark suggestion.

It tries to sympathize with gauche words from an angry and thirsty mouth. It tries to stare at me kindly with green-yellow eyes that are filled with hatred and violent passion. The thing is cold and hollow, but still it tries to console me when I need it (for the thing knows life is very trying on me).

It almost succeeds in comforting me, sometimes, until its nature grabs it and impractical advice involving torture and cannibalism invariably come from the thing, prompting me to draw the blinds on the beast.

It implores me to raise the curtains and give it another chance. But I always tell it to come back tomorrow and to quit staining my dreams with its own lust.

It doesn't always come to me, though. Not every night. And I genuinely miss it, though sleep is easier when the thing *doesn't* visit.

When it does return after a brief absence, it always teases me. The thing gets strange and cagey about where it was and what it was doing and it waits for me to ask questions or to show a little jealousy. I never do, though I am often curious and, yes, I admit it; the thought of the thing perched at another's window whispering secret words in the darkness does fluster me a little inside.

The thing never seeks entry. I asked it once why it had never attempted to put its scaly feet on the cold and shadowed floor of my bedroom. The thing said that it felt this wasn't appropriate; that something wicked could come from our crossing borders in that fashion.

I asked it what it meant. The thing explained that it had watched me hack my parents and little brother to small pieces. The thing even saw me feed those pieces to the hogs on our quaint little farm. The pink and fat bastards would eat anything.

And the thing was there, peering from a distance, when I taught that Joseph Broadstone boy a lesson about bullying. Joseph's comeuppance came near the creek in the woods, where his skinned body is buried. I didn't mark the grave, but I remember exactly where it is. I can find it without even trying; like all of the bones I have buried. I can find them all through sheer reflex.

The thing had been a spectator for all of the various lessons I had taught the others; truancy officer, postman, solicitors. The thing saw little Amy Harlan laugh at me and throw the flowers I had picked for her in the lake. I can still hear that little giggle of Amy's, and that giggle is as soft as a whisper and as sharp as a razor. I wear Amy's face sometimes and practice that giggle in the mirror. I say the things that she should have said; the things that would have spared her banishment to the clammy earth. Sans her beautiful face, of course.

Yes, life was certainly trying, sometimes. And the thing knew what could happen if it and I weren't separated by that window.

I would kill the thing, of course, and wear its rough skin as a costume. It would go nicely with my other flesh suits.

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## *About the Author*

Terry M. West is a well known author, filmmaker, actor and artist. He has written several books in the young adult field (most notably the graphic novel series, *Confessions of a Teenage Vampire*) and he has also written several horror short stories as well as the horror/thriller novel, *Dreg*. His work has appeared (or is scheduled to appear) in *FrightNet*, *Scream Factory*, *Agony In Black*, *Lacunae*, *Jackhammer*, *House of Pain*, *Dark Muse*, *Moonletters*, *Silent Screams*, *When Red Snow Melts*, *One Hellacious Halloween*, *Deathmongers*, *Vignettes from the End of the World*, *Halloween Tales*, *Axes of Evil* and *Zombified 2*. He was a finalist for the 1997 International Horror Guild Award for a short story (*The Night Out*) and he made the 1999 Bram Stoker Award preliminary ballot for a piece of long fiction (*Hair and Blood Machine*). He was also mentioned on the 1997 TV Guide Sci-Fi Hot List. West's books and collections include: *A PSYCHO'S MEDLEY*, *SERVANT OF THE RED QUILL*, *WHAT PRICE GORY?*, *DEAD AWARE: A Horror Tale Told in Screenplay*, *CECIL & BUBBA MEET THE THANG*, *HEROIN IN THE MAGIC NOW* and special collectors editions of *CARNEX*, *MIDNIGHT SNACK*, *THE GIVING OF THINGS COLD & CURSED* and *CECIL & BUBBA MEET A SUCCUBUS*. He is also the editor of *JOURNALS OF HORROR: FOUND FICTION*. His work has received glowing reviews. His filmography includes his debut film, *Blood for the Muse* (based on his comic book of the same name which was a finalist for the 1998 International Horror Guild Award for a comic) and *Flesh for the Beast*. He has acted in the films *The Blood Shed* and *Gallery of Fear* (both directed by Alan Rowe Kelly) and had a starring role in Joseph M. Monks debut film, *The Bunker*. Terry currently writes and paints in southern California with his wife, Regina, and their son, Terrence. Terry is an active member of the Horror Writer's Association. He has a website at [www.terrymwest.com](http://www.terrymwest.com). Terry is also the managing editor of the Halloween/Horror website, [www.halloweenforevermore.com](http://www.halloweenforevermore.com).