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from **THE ZODIAC PLAYS**

1 – ARIES: TAYLOR WAKES UP

(A)

The Original Zodiac Story
created from Instant Theatre

(from 12 Zodiac Stories:
The Twelve Tasks of Taylor)

Preface to the 12 stories:

Follow Taylor through the Zodiac in these twelve dreamlike stories, as she plunges from one sex to the other, out of sex altogether and back into a mixture of both, before returning to what she was where she was - well almost! Her journey is a spiral rather than a cycle. Mimicking Hercules, she finds herself with a task to wrestle with as she (or he, or it) travels through each sign; but overall it is the meaning of the trinity of grandfather and golden hammer and anvil that most requires elucidation.

This is a restless tale of transformation, that throws itself across space and time through a kaleidoscope of disturbing images, zany ideas and sometimes excruciating puns, in a search for a settled identity that is allowed to materialise only for a brief second at a stretch before the urge to be something else knocks the narrative sideways and Taylor is forced into being someone, or something, else.

This is the story for a time that has plunged into chaos and no one alive can be sure of the meaning of tomorrow.

Taylor's Task in ARIES:
to get to dry land in some way
and become a land-goat;

Zodiac Stories – ONE: ARIES

Taylor's grandfather was a lighthouse keeper and looked after the Needles, off the Isle of Wight. He was deaf and could not hear the striking of the Grandfather Clock which told him when to light the lighthouse lamp, so Taylor, his granddaughter, lived with him to help him in his duties.

At nine o'clock in the morning one Tuesday, at the beginning of Aries, with a storm raging outside the lighthouse, the Grandfather set about

hanging presents on the washing line (which was fixed to the cliff and stretched past the lighthouse window) because it was Taylor's fifteenth birthday. He was simply following an old family tradition in doing this. Taylor herself was asleep in bed, waiting for her grandfather to wake her. Unfortunately the old man (he was seventy-eight) was unable to complete his task. He collapsed and died of exhaustion and fell into the rough sea outside the lighthouse.

At that time the Isle of Wight was inhabited by a race of dwarves, and one hundred and two of them saw the grandfather fall into the sea. They rushed to rescue him, but when they found he was dead they hung his body on the washing line. To dry out? Well, maybe - but there's more to it than that!

Taylor knew nothing of this, and continued sleeping in her bed on the ground floor of the lighthouse. Under the bed was a kind of basement hollowed out of the rock and, while she slept and her grandfather's body rocked on the washing line outside, nine cats began giving birth to kittens. The cats had arrived on the Needles rock from a ship which had been wrecked there. On this fateful day they gave birth to one hundred and thirty kittens.

Taylor slept till four o'clock in the afternoon, as the storm receded and gave way to a pouring rain. When she woke she had no idea that she no longer had a grandfather, but she did realise it was her birthday and she jumped out of bed and went to the mirror. The face that looked back out at her was red - she came to see for the first time that she was covered in acne although others had known this for a long time.

The Island dwarves had certainly noticed: the reason the dwarves had hung her dead grandfather's body to the washing line was because of a local tradition that a girl might be cured of acne if she saw her grandfather's dead body hanging on a line. But when Taylor saw her blotched skin she cried *Wow! I'm a woman*", and she knew her journey through puberty was over.

Since it was her birthday she looked for her presents. She opened the window and saw this figure on the line, but she did not recognise her own grandfather (and so the dwarves' hope for her acne to be cured was thwarted). She thought she was looking at a scarecrow, which, she assumed, had been blown down by the storm from the top of the Needles' tower, where she and her grandfather had cultivated a small veggie patch. However, Taylor had read in a magazine that being a woman meant that if you looked upon a scarecrow you would at once fall in love. So when she mistook her grandfather's body on

the line for a scarecrow, love came over her! Till this moment Taylor had been a very inturned person; the *scarecrow* was the first other person she had really become aware of. At least he, unlike everyone else, did not run away the moment he saw her. It was clear that she *had* fallen in love because she fainted; but she was leaning so far out of the window at the time that, instead of falling to the lighthouse floor, she fell to the outside and plunged, as her grandfather had done that morning, into the heavy sea.

Taylor was in great trouble. Not only was the sea polluted, but she became entangled in a mass of seaweed that the storm had thrown up close to the rock, and the seaweed began to feed on the acne that covered her body. Taylor regained consciousness to discover she had changed into a blue and purple striped sea-goat. Immediately she set herself a task - to get to dry land in some way and become a land-goat.

At that moment, the present that her grandfather had been trying to hang to the washing line dislodged from the cliff, where it had become stuck, and fell directly on Taylor. The present was in fact an anvil: her grandfather wanted Taylor to become a blacksmith. The anvil caused the seaweed to fall away from her body. Now she was free. She then saw a boat nearby and started to swim to it, taking the anvil with her. The anvil changed into gold (still keeping its anvil-shape) - but fool's gold, not the real stuff. As she swam, she expanded to the size of the Empire State Building, and weighed forty pounds.

The boat was a yellow, black, purple and red pirates' ship. The pirates on board saw the lengthening sea-goat swimming towards them and thought it would be good to eat; so they began to fire harpoons at the creature, one of which pierced it. This immediately caused the acne to disappear. The pirates tried to pull the sea-goat on to the ship, but Taylor head-butted the craft and they were forced to push her away.

The sound of *Match of the Day* football music came across the water from a tv in the lighthouse. The pirates eventually let go of the harpoon rope, and Taylor the sea-goat (who still desired to be a land-goat) shot away through the air, shrinking as she went, exuding before her an enormous energy which flattened the towering lighthouse into a flat plateau shape. Taylor dropped her anvil of fools' gold into the sea, and shot back to her bedroom on the plateau's ground floor. She came to rest on the bed, squashing the tv beneath her and putting an end to the football music. By this time she was still a sea-goat (very much wishing to be a land-goat), but had resumed her normal size. The anvil of fool's gold

was taken from the sea by an alchemist among the pirates, who bent overboard and gripped the object in his teeth.

In the plateau-shaped ex-lighthouse, the nine cats with their one hundred and thirty kittens were still alive under Taylor's bed. When she returned to lie on it, they began to bite her, eating away her sea-goat legs. She took this sitting down - and very badly! She began screaming and this state of affairs lasted for a whole year, until her sixteenth birthday. It took all that time for the cats and kittens to bite her sea-legs off. They seemed to understand she wanted to become a land-goat; and used themselves to build a bridge to the mainland; but even though, at eight o'clock on her birthday morning, the sun was shining, Taylor knew that she was having another bad birthday because no birthday present was forthcoming. She was hoping for a hammer, but she still didn't know her grandfather was a year-dead. She'd left her energy outside the plateau, and (this one year on) it was getting fed up and was storming round and round the building with such force that it converted the structure into a launch pad, which suddenly shot her up into the air. In the haste of the situation Taylor grabbed at one of the kittens forming the feline bridge to the mainland and took it with her, leaving all the other kittens and their mothers uselessly below.

So powerful was all that discarded energy that it projected her right up into the cosmos. She travelled for one week and came to the *re-taylor*ing bit of a Woolworth's, which looked like a giant gold and pink tinsel-wrapped Easter egg. There were a million *re-taylor*ing staff (whose job it was to stick tails on miniature Easter eggs - using little hammers) and they told her she should not be a goat, either of the land or sea variety, but rather a ram.

To achieve the transformation they fed her on chocolate and spinach and stuck a pink tail on her. The kitten she had grabbed from the bridge of cats died and was absorbed into her body. She became the ram. Then the staff decided she needed work experience on a city farm and she was allowed to go to the city of her choice - Bristol.

Once there (and she reached there very quickly, with no complications) she was greeted by a three-headed person, whose heads were called Bob, Zodiac and Mrs Thatcher. She soon realised she was what she should be (she felt well - *She feel-s-well*) and proceeded to give birth to five ram-kittens, red, orange and green in colour, which looked like little lion cubs and pigs with horns.

There was a school visit to the city farm taking place at that time and many children had gathered round and watched the birth of the five ram-kittens. They were surprised at the spectacle and thought it was marvellous. They had to kiss the ram-mother; whereupon the creature turned back into Taylor, without acne. A yellow scarecrow appeared with a gold hammer, which he gave to Taylor as a lovely birthday present. He told her that her grandfather was dead, the first time she had come to know that sad fact. She seized the hammer and bashed all the children around her to death. A policeman witnessed the carnage and arrested her - but only for her own safety - and locked her up for life, along with the yellow scarecrow (and the gold hammer), in the city prison.

The children all came alive again as kittens.
And Aries passed into Taurus.

Scenes from the Play

two – lighthouse

enter barside (bob) and sidekick – singing

both: *barsides barsides
the terrors from the farsides
farsides farsides
cor what a night it was
cor what a fright it was
once they got hold of you
they wouldn't let go
in and out in and out
you wouldn't want to know
barsides barsides
the terrors from the farsides
farsides farsides
go go go*

sidekick: *what's this place then?*

barside: *eerie and creepy if you ask me*

sidekick *might be a place to shelter from the pissing rain*

barside; *might be a place to hide from the lightning strikes*

sidekick: *cor what a night it is*

barside: *it's like the whole wide world is heaving*

sidekick: *i'm bloody heaving i know that
just from the sight of it*

barside: *the dwarves and the women
both lots totally feral*

sidekick: they're the wildest women i've ever known

barside: women – they were more like cats

sidekick: cats – yes – more like cats
and then the boat too – that was wild

barside: it's all bloody feral around here

sidekick: i was so sick in that boat
but you wasn't sick once
how did you manage

barside: i was too busy trying to hang on

sidekick: no you wasn't – you rowed
like you was sliding on glass
like you said to the waves
back you bastards and they
just slunk and slid away

barside: maybe it was the thought of those women

sidekick: maybe it was their bright green eyes

barside: yes – i remember their bright green eyes

sidekick: i feel like somebody's piss pot standing here

barside: there's a prick of a light up there

sidekick: i can't see no light
hang on – i saw it then
it's must be coming from a torch
with a duff battery in

barside: no it's not a torch – it's revolving
look here it comes again

sidekick: you know what this is
it's the lighthouse
used to be called the needles
or something sharp

barside: well the light's still working
in a piddling sort of way

sidekick: pity the bloody ships then
having to rely on that

barside: let's go in and look
t least it'll be dry in there

sidekick: as long as no one's in there

barside: thought you were from the farsides

we don't have to be scared of anyone

sidekick: no that's right
you go first then

barside: if we can find the gloomy way in

sidekick: hey is this what we came here for

barside: well if we did or not
this is what we're here for now

they go out

six – aboard the firestone (solent)

enter kemet (mrs t), pyrites (sad, sed, sid and sod)

kemet: a toast a toast
to our absent guest
who's just come aboard
ambrosial artichoke - take one nibble

pyrites: *take one nibble*

kemet: may her birthday be full
of stupendous surprises
ambrosial artichoke - take another

pyrites: *take another*

sad: two nibbles and i'm riding the moon

sed: troubled ankles become like cool streams

sod: my head's starting to bloom
like a scarlet chrysanthemum

sid: whoever first thought of ambrosial artichoke
it certainly takes the biscuit

pyrites: *pyrites pyrites that glow in the dark
pyrites pyrites this life's quite a lark
pyrites pyrites i've never felt so swell
pyrites pyrites my heart's like a bell*

enter taylor and albert (doormat)

kemet: pyrites of the good ship firestone
welcome aboard - taylor our family princess
fifteen today and radiant with it

pyrites: *ambrosial artichoke to you*

*ambrosial artichoke to you
ambrosial artichoke dear princess
ambrosial artichoke to you*

- kemet: how good it is to see you my dear
after such a long time - your great-
aunt kemet on your mother's side
the one with the alchemical nature
- taylor: where's my granddad philo
i thought he'd be here
- kemet: it's all part of the big surprise
he'll be here when he comes my dear
- pyrites: *give us gold or you'll walk the plank
yo ho ho and a bottle of rum*
- kemet: and meet the pyrites
they're distant cousins and things
- taylor: i wanted granddad to be here
to thank him for my present
- kemet: what present is that
- taylor: the anvil - the family heirloom
- kemet: he'll be here when he gets here
and then you can show him
- pyrites: *i'll wrap me cutlass round your throat
yo ho ho and a bottle of rum*
- kemet: and who is this scruffy little doormat
- taylor: that's doormat
- kemet: he can't come in here
he'll let down the tone of the place
- pyrites: *here's to the skull and crossbones
yo ho ho and a bottle of rum*
- kemet: pyrites and pirates - few know the difference
one of you throw this tyke overboard
he could do with a thorough good wash
- taylor: no he stays - he's my honoured guest
he's probably a remote nephew of mine
- kemet: very well my dear - it's your artichoke not mine
he can stay provided he stays away from the food
- doormat: i don't see any food to stay away from
- kemet: perhaps we knew you were coming

my goodness the anvil is golden
how it glows in this light - why not
make it the star of the ball as it were
put it in the centre of that table
where no one is allowed to touch it
on pain of a hundred lashes

doormat: it's not safe - i can smell trickery afoot

taylor: there's only likely to be one thief
around here doormat - and that's you
put it where my great-aunt says

doormat: ok - then shall i lick your shoes

taylor: talk to me like that and you will

sid: young nephews are a pain up the backway
we'll deal with him family princess

others: *yo ho ho and a bottle of rum*

kemet: they keep the plank well greased for such villains
shall we take a brief walk round the deck
i can tell you what the evening's plan is
your grandfather is such a sweet sweet man

doormat: don't turn your back on this banshee
you'll be somersaulting into the solent

taylor: don't you understand i'm the belle of the ball
just stick your tongue up your nose and be quiet

kemet and taylor go out

sid: eh toilet-roll - come here

doormat: i'm doormat to you snot-face

sad: fancy talking to a great uncle like that

sed: yeh you're an intruder
you could be shot - geddit

sod: if you're not on our side
we're not on yours - geddit

sid: let's put it this way dogears
you're either with us
or we're against you - geddit

sad: you either put your feet in our water
or you're made to drink it - geddit

doormat: i think i geddit
what's going on here

sed: what you don't sniff
you don't smell - geddit

doormat: i'm learning quickly

sad: good then - welcome to the pyrites
i'm sad

doormat: sad - why

sad: no that's my name - sad

sed: and i'm sed

sid: me - sid

sod: sod

doormat: pardon - oh

sod: that ain't funny

sad: was that meant to be funny

sed: if it was you're speaking trouble

sid: and trouble's our middle name
or it would be if we had
two names it could be the middle of

doormat: i'll stick with doormat
it's less complicated

sad: eh listen -
sod - sed sad sid
geddit

sod: or:
sad sid sed - sod
geddit

sed: *sid sed (what a) sad sod*
geddit

sid: *(who) sed sid (was a) sad sod*
geddit

sad: *sad - sed sid - sod*
geddit

sod: *(the) sod sed sid (was) sad*
geddit

sed: *sad sid (was a) sod - sed.....doormat*

all: wow

sid: did you doormat
doormat: did i what
sid: say sad sid (was a) sod
doormat: why should i say that
sed: if you did that was very unkind
sad: after all we've done for you
sod: we let you be a pyrite
and you've abused us
sid: i could wrap your teeth
round your windpipe easily

kemet and taylor return

kemet: family family
time is about to strike
doormat: not me i hope
sad: that is not funny
sod: was that meant to be funny
sid: remember a fist
does not have to be friendly
sed: those without ears
need to wash them daily
listen listen -
kemet: philo domeside has yet to arrive
his dear granddaughter has agreed
we must regrettably proceed without him
so first the ambrosial artichoke
the joys of which our dear princess has yet to taste
later - *five-up five-down*
doormat: that sounds either rude or gymnastics
sad: he with a loose tongue
should tie it to a gatepost
kemet: the greatest party card game of them all
you see the table already set for it
dear family - exquisite taylor
welcome to our all-fools' night celebrations
everyone - take a piece of biscuit
doormat: is that all the food there is
biscuits make me sick

sed: you're too young anyway

doormat: all right i'll have some

sad: it tastes like mushrooms

doormat: all right i won't

kemet: may the world you are about
to enter into travellers
be beyond your wildest dreams
ambrosial artichoke - take ond nibble

pyrites: *take one nibble*

kemet: *ambrosial artichoke - take a second nibble*

pyrites *take a second nibble*

kemet: and why not - let's be daring on this all-fools night
ambrosial artichoke - take a third nibble

pyrites: *take a third nibble*

taylor: wow
it's like putting a bomb in your mouth
it's like your blood turning into coca-cola

sid: it fizzles in your brain like sherbet

sod: my head's pumping up
like a vermilion balloon

taylor: it's like your liver's swopping over
it's like your heart turning into a disco

kemet: *materia prima prima materia*

sed: i feel like a twizzle stick
what is a twizzle stick

sad: excuse me - i think i'm going
to take off like a rocket

all: *pyrites pyrites*

kemet: *imperfect bodies
with a penetrating tincture
bear within their breasts*

doormat: even the old handbag's at it
the world's losing all its screws

taylor: is it only my birthday - all this noise
and all these people milling around
with their eyes popping out and their legs waving
all these millions of me's

kemet: *the gold of philosophers
and the mercury of the wise*

taylor: *i haven't a clue
what's happening to me
but i'm not who i was
when the dark ate me*

pyrites: *pyrites*

taylor: *then i was bottled
up deep inside
my tongue was knotted
and my world denied*

pyrites: *pyrites*

taylor: *now i'm skimming
a bottomless sea
in search of a stranger
more powerful me*

pyrites: *pyrites*

kemet: *such subjects must be purified
rid of their attle*

doormat: *attle attle
what kind of word is that*

kemet: *oh when the big bang comes*

rest
(except doormat): *oh when the big bang comes
you can't pretend any longer
you're just nothing*

kemet: *oh when the big bang comes*

rest: *and when the big bang comes
oh when the big bang comes
you'll be a piece of stardust
and be whirling round and round*

kemet: *it'll take a billion years or so*

rest: *to find you've landed safe and sound
you can't pretend any longer
you're just nothing
when the big bang comes*

kemet taylor and the pyrites dance out

doormat: *this ambrosial artichoke
must be the kind of stuff
you have to give volcanoes*

before they'll start erupting
i'll have a squint round - this table now
with taylor's golden anvil
squatting on it like a naked
piece of goods
and these cards already dealt
into seven hands - why seven
the six of them out there - and one
for the missing granddad i suppose
why's this cross discreetly placed
beneath one of the seven hands
i'll move the cross one hand to the right
there - we'll see what goes on now
only just in time - the rowdy nutters

enter the rest - still dancing

taylor: *and when the earth cools down*

rest: *oh when the earth cools down*

all: *you'll have stardust in your eyes
and the wide world to dream in*

kemet: and now my family favourites
the climax to our birthday fun

pyrites: *yo ho ho and a bottle of rum*

kemet: i'll choose my place at random here
taylor as guest of honour for your birthday night
it'll be my privilege if you'd join me on my left
others spread around and take your hands

taylor: ok ok all you millions milling around me
let's see what the game is in this golden ship
ambrosial architoke arkichote whatever
show me the good life my mamma didn't tell me

doormat: she's on such a high she's likely to bump
her head on the pole star

pyrites: *yo ho ho and a bottle of rum
five-up-five-down your time has come*

kemet: dear old philo domeside - granddad de-luxe
must have lost his bearings in the milky way
there's an empty place look next to you

taylor: doormat doormat do your duty

doormat: i'm useless at card games
i cheat too much

kemet: five-up-five-down's so mechanical punk
it's immune to all silly cheating
now sit down there or i'll spoil your party

sid: if you haven't got teeth
 your gums won't be happy
 geddit

sed: a nose round the back of your head
 is no good for smelling - geddit

doormat: i geddit - you're requesting me to play

kemet: what a sensible maggot - now taylor
 to spice up the stakes for the game
 how about an extravagant wager

taylor: i will i will - when i know how to play

pyrites: *five-up-five-down's the way it travels
 but it twists and turns as the play unravels*

taylor: this stuff is pumping my brain
 to the size of the british museum
 there is nothing i cannot know

kemet: and playing's so easy princess
 this is your day of great winnings
 all fools' luck for an all fools' child
 the cards hold your fortune
 risk nothing - and you stay a cabbage

taylor: no no i've stopped being a cabbage
 strike now while my fortune is hot -

pyrites: yes yes
 strike now while your fortune is hot

taylor: to match this priceless goldenness
 i know i know
 against my golden anvil - this golden boat
 your firestone for this toy of the firegods
 i don't care a dog's flea if i lose

pyrites: *we don't care a dog's flea if you lose*

doormat: taylor you're being played
 like an old tin whistle
 being all dolled up
 to sound like an angel's flute

kemet: be quiet you dog's deposit
 she wins - she gets this floating palace
 she loses - all she forfeits is an anvil
 so friends - your cards march on before you

pyrites: *yo ho ho and a bottle of rum
 five-up-five-down your time has come*

kemet: *oh it is true without lie*

*what is below
is like what is above
and what is above
is like what is below*

pyrites: *the sun is its father
and the moon its mother*

kemet: five down five up
the nectar of card games
so simple and yet profound

sid: remember five up or five down wins

sed: a climbing or sinking five

sad: aces both ends - going down
can go top with a king

sod: going up can go bottom with a two
the rest will be plain

sid: double cards reverse
treble reverse again

kemet: *thou shalt separate the earth from the fire
the subtle from the gross*

pyrites: *the sun is its father
and the moon its mother*

sad: ooh this is so excitingly sad
i m dying so much to get going

kemet: who wishes chooses
sad's hand's on the trigger first

sad: well then – an eight to begin - we're off

sod: mine sinks with a two

kemet: four - *materia prima* - that's good
and it's rising

taylor: and i'm turning an ace
surely that's a brilliant card

doormat: the only point of this game
is you have to be fifth
my ten's going down

sid: a nine - that's a sinking third

sed: a queen - a leap up the ladder

kemet: *it rises from the earth to the sky*

doormat: come on sad - your go again

sad: a four

kemet: *and again descends into the earth*

sod: a six - once more on the climb

kemet: and a six
 that's handbagged the leaping

taylor: seven - that's climbing again

kemet: but it's only the first not the third

taylor: if the ambrosial artichoke says so

kemet: *thou shalt have by this means
 the glory of the world*

doormat: ace - like a jump to the pole

sid: jack - sliding down

sed: five - third in a sinking row

sad: ace - oh dear that's a sinking four

kemet: a touch of the firestone may be upon us
 sod - if you have a king
 then you cross to the top
 and you'll be the fifth coming down

sod: it's a four - oh unlucky sod

kemet: what a relief - mine's a jack
 back up back up we go

taylor: and i've got a two - down
 down boy down

doormat: i come in with a queen -
 up to the pole again

sid: and a nine

sed: and a five

doormat: that's three on a downward trot

sad: oh look i've got five again

kemet: that's the sinking stopped in its tracks

sod: but i've got another five

doormat: i geddit i geddit
the drop's on again
but it's still only a sinking three

kemet: damn it - an ace
someone's been tampering here

doormat: don't worry it's part of the thrill
taylor - you're lost
if you don't get a king
any other card becomes second
in a climbing run

taylor: if a king - this floating casino
is mine - all mine

doormat: that's what the bet was

kemet: no - this is not what should be
what bet - i agreed nothing

taylor: i want to be clear
before the card gets turned

doormat: turn it turn it and see

kemet: *for it shall vanquish
anything subtle
and anything solid
penetrate*

taylor: well was it or wasn't it agreed

doormat: don't be so daft taylor
just turn the card

pyrites yes you must turn the card

kemet: she's cheating
the game must be stopped

pyrites: yes - the game must be stopped

kemet: *thus the world is created*

doormat: turn the card taylor

taylor: is the boat mine if i win?

kemet: *from this shall be
and shall proceed
admirable adaptations*

doormat: for the king the boat's yours
she daren't daren't deny it

taylor: yes - it is the king

kemet: *it is finished - what i have said
of the operation of the sun*

pyrites: *the sun is its father
and the moon its mother*

taylor: yesterday taylor you had nothing
today you have a million pounds
come on you lot - you'd better get shipshape
i've had my five downs - from now on
it's nothing but up up up up and up

kemet: it was only a game you fool
just a fifteenth birthday joke
it's not our boat to give away

taylor: a game - a joke - not for me it isn't
this is taylor who may have had her tongue
in chains and her body wrapped in scabs
not now - the foot is in the other boot
i'm enormous - my head the size of this room
my body like a bridge across this water
i'm like the genie in the bottle
i'm like the queen of sheba magnified
i'm like the pyramids all rolled in one
i'm like.....

kemet: you're like nothing you worm
you're a loser from a through to z
you with your miserable doormat
switching the cards - how pathetic

taylor: excuse me while i dance round my ship

kemet: taylor you're no more than a fly
attracted to horse-piddle
you're mine for the use of - no more

taylor: why have i gone green inside
my heart's banging up against my kneebones
my head's coming towards me like an asteroid
desperate to catch its last train home

kemet: sickness becomes you my dear
are your knees spinning round
like moons out of touch with their orbit
is your tongue like a dried up slug
is your head being kicked between pillar and post

taylor: am i dying

kemet: you'd be better if you were

taylor: life seems such a long way away

taylor faints

kemet: you've had such a hard way to go
to learn the anvil's not yours

doormat: and nor is it yours - i'm having it
gold or fools' gold -

kemet: you're just a doormat
i could snap fingers and you'd disappear
put the bauble back on the table

doormat: is she dead

kemet: who are you

doormat: a runaway a liar and a thief

kemet: has bob sent you

doormat: who's bob

kemet: everyone knows bob

doormat: oh that bob

kemet: pyrites get the anvil
bring it to me in my room
and dispose of this dungball
in any way you care to

kemet goes out

sid: the alchemical lady said
she wants her anvil back

doormat: that was no lady
that was old cloven-hoof's wife

sod: that ain't funny

sad: was that meant to be funny

sed: if it was you're speaking trouble

sid: and trouble's our middle name
or it would be if we had
two names it could be the middle of

doormat: i'm not letting go of this anvil
it belongs to the blacksmith's bride

sad: eh listen -
sod - said sad sid
geddit

doormat: i don't geddit - back off

sod: or:
sad sid sed - sod
geddit

doormat: no i don't geddit
and you're not gedding this anvil
geddit

sed: *sid sed (what a) sad sod*
geddit

sid: *(who) sed sid (was a) sad sod*
geddit

doormat: just watch it
we're gedding too near the edge
i can't swim and i don't need a wash

sad: *sad - sed sid - sod*
geddit

sod: *(the) sod sed sid (was) sad*
geddit

doormat: stoppit stoppit
geddit

sed: *sad sid (was a) sod - sed.....doormat*

all: wow did he say that

doormat: you putrid pyrites
you're pushing me over
i'm going to be drowning
aaaah - splash

doormat goes over the boatrail

sid: did anyone get the anvil

sed: not me
he jumped before i could grab it

sad: yes he wasn't pushed
he jumped

sod: we'll tell kemet he jumped

sid: yes that's it
he threw the anvil overboard
then he jumped

sed: before we could stop him

sad: he pretended to offer us the anvil
then threw it overboard
he was such a liar

such a deceitful liar

sod: that's what we'll tell kemet - agreed

all: agreed

they go out

taylor: doormat - dead
anvil gone
ugh - acne back
body like a sour balloon
must go
hurtling through the air
being dragged through water
sea-goat
speedboat
key somewhere
must get away
find granddad
lighthouse - still there
go home
go

taylor goes out

nine – hengistbury head

enter sir cosmo woolsworth, dr vilna vilan,
stew merham, anda

all:: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

sir cosmo: *on hengistbury head*
in the late afternoon
with the sun and the sea
lapping at its edges

vilna: *here where the ancient horses*
trampled with their jutish hooves
and hengist rose out of the chalk
to shout his name to the wind

anda: *and fifteen centuries on*
his name in the wind re-echoes
here on this jutting upland
a new ritual is forming

vilna:
stew: *and the name on the wind is taylor*
and the name on the wind is taylor
who was but can't be what she was
who isn't yet what she has to be

sir cosmo: *somewhere inside herself she wanders
reborn maybe but still in darkness
the hammers wait and the metal's raw
for the re-tailoring to begin of taylor*

all: *tap tap tap tap
tap tap tap tap*

vilna:
anda: *to the tap of the hammer
and the beat of the feet
to the rap of the iron
and the heat heat heat*

all: *tap tap tap tap
tap tap tap tap*

stew: *a girl must be melded with a woman's pride
taylor become anvil and the blacksmith's bride*

all: *tap tap tap tap
tap tap tap tap*

anda: *her heart cries out - i don't know who i am
she thinks she's goat - but her truer self is ram*

all: *tap tap tap tap
tap tap tap tap*

anda:
stew: *the long bright sun
and the laid-back moon
will meet in the cool
of this late afternoon*

all: *tap tap tap tap
tap tap tap tap*

sir cosmo: **this is an illustrious time my friends
it is always good news when the fallen rise
when the shutaway foot steps out in the street
when those who have died may be born again**

others: *the hammer strikes
and the anvil rings*

sir cosmo: **when black goes inside to the deepest cell
white pulls the curtains and the sun creeps in
red stirs the heart and the passions bloom
and gold imagines how a world is made**

others: *beating out the rhythms
that the love bird brings*

enter bob

sir cosmo: **here comes bob whom everybody knows**

come on my friends - let your feet hang out
or blacksmith bob and his mighty hammer

others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

bob: i once had a hammer that was nine feet tall
i couldn't swing it - it had to swing me
it was the sweetest hammer any man could have
i was the most popular blacksmith around

others: *who wouldn't want*
a hammer that size
to see such a hammer
it would bust your eyes

bob: i went out one day with my nine foot hammer
i went in this pub with it swinging tall
oh the joy was great and eyes went wild
and everyone wanted their anvils beat

others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

bob: so here i am with my nine foot hammer
well i've hidden it now so you're not gob-smacked
just imagine me with my nine foot hammer
that's nothing surer to make the juices run

others: *imagine just imagine*
a hammer that size
wherever bob goes
he gets the hammer prize

others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

sir cosmo: you've got to give it to bob - he knows the game
everybody knows him - he's a friendly bloke
with a nine-foot hammer you could be the same
you can't have a blacksmith with no blacksmith's bride

others: *no blacksmith's bride*
no blacksmith's bride
you can't have a blacksmith
with no blacksmith's bride

sir cosmo: now friends i must ask you in the nicest way
to greet his good lady in today's conjunction
she's come all the way from across the water
she's still quite young but she's needles-sharp

others: *she's needles sharp*
she's needles sharp
she's still quite young
but she's needles sharp

sir cosmo: she can claim without boasting she's philosopher stock
make sure you put your descartes before the horses
where plato's concerned she won't take kant for an answer
let's have some taps for the gorgeous taylor

others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

enter taylor

sir cosmo: taylor taylor say hullo to bob
he's everyone's friend and he's a got a big hammer

taylor: the wind is sharp and i'm feeling cold
big hammer or not - he's not my friend

bob: bob with his hammer and taylor with her anvil
there's not a better couple this side of the water

taylor: my anvil's lost at the bottom of the sea
granddad will go mad if he ever finds out

bob: granddads and hammers are long lost friends
they couldn't tell an anvil from an overripe fig

taylor: if you come near me i shall spit in your face
i shall burn out your eyes with my sharp hot fingers

bob: all the better cried the wolf his hammer was hungry
a witch in a rage is the best red meat

taylor: i'm not for your touch or your licking or eating

bob: have a taste of my hammer then minx for your quibbling

taylor: this hammer won't get you the fruit you desire

bob: it will when it takes you again and again

taylor: again and again i say no - if much fainter

bob: your no is a pit my hammer must enter

taylor: a pit that surrenders admits no tomorrow

others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

vilna: there is no dungheap
compared to the darkness
taylor descends to

stew: beaten corrupted
her blood is a burning
her bones reek of ashes

anda: worms find their homestead

corruption is cared for
putrefaction is crowned

sir cosmo: black is the ball that rolls into hiding

others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

taylor: granddad so long ago
you told me a joke
i remember the whisker
of moon on your lips
i giggled all night

then somewhere near dawn
i crawled from my cold bed
the whisker of moon
lay on the water's edge
just before sinking

and eastwards the sun
first light a cool silver
echoing the goodbye moon
i could have held both
in my balancing hands

your joke my giggling
the exact minor chords
of gone moon and new sun
live on in my flesh
in the cool of a new light

the tiniest of miracles
has been knit by the worms
out of dumb taylor
i crawl on new earth
this dawn is sufficient

sir cosmo: white is the ball that rolls out of hiding

others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap

bob: *the seagoat swam in the water*
not feeling too good in her heart
what else could she do in the water
but swim - her lovelife couldn't start

one day she spotted a land-goat
rollicking around on the green
she wished for the right legs to take her
on dryland - for her beauty to be seen

the landgoat was far too busy
he had his eyes and his lust reserved
for the pretty young goat on the mountain
her favour was what he really deserved

*the seagoat swam in the water
no one guessed such a creature was there
so she called on the lord of the ocean
to help her - alas - he couldn't care*

- taylor: what a stupid song that is -
- bob: well - if you were a seagoat would you be happy
- taylor: seagoats are not happy or unhappy - they're just seagoats
- bob: what about a seagoat about to be swallowed by a shark
- taylor: if that's what happens to seagoats - well so be it
- bob: so if i was a shark and you were a seagoat
you wouldn't mind me swallowing you
- taylor: to be swallowed by you would upset anyone
- bob: i don't know - i'm a pretty good swallower
- taylor: i can't believe that - your teeth would get in the way
- bob: i could take them out
- taylor: you've got false teeth
- bob: if that's the best way to convince you
- taylor: convince me of what
- bob: how good a swallower i am
- taylor: you don't half fancy yourself
- bob: well - i only half fancy myself
which is about half of how much i fancy you
- taylor: a proper lusty landgoat aren't you
- bob: i would be if you'd be the pretty young goat on the
mountain
- taylor: it would be safer to stay in the sea
- bob: don't forget the shark though
- taylor: there's nowhere safe in this world
- bob: *the pretty young goat on the mountain
is skipping around on its heights
when she fixes far down on the green below
this lusty old goat in her sights*
- ha ha she thinks in the way goats can*

*how much his lone grandeur appeals
she goes weak at the edge and stumbles
and falls for him head over heels*

- taylor: you want me to fall head over heels for you
- bob: you don't have to be so toffee-nosed - you have already
- taylor: how can you tell
- bob: your cheeks are burning and your nose is twitching
- taylor: i can't help the mosquitoes
- bob: too early in the season
- taylor: what is
- bob: mosquitoes
- taylor: well then gnats
- bob: same thing
- taylor: they're not
- bob: yes they are - there - i've caught one
- taylor: hey leave my nose alone
- bob: if the gnats can touch it so can i
they know a pretty nose when they see one
- taylor: i've never been spoken to like this
- bob: you like it though don't you
- taylor: yes - i suppose i do
- sir cosmo: red is the ball that rattles the cages
- others: *tap tap tap tap*
tap tap tap tap
- taylor: i've never loved the setting sun so much
it spreads contentment over land and sea
even my ruined lighthouse black with grief
absorbs the heavy sunlight - dares to glow
- bob: there is a peace that hurt has in its pocket
that can't be sung of till the time is ripe
coolness from a day that's found its measure
touches the brow and swears that all is right
- sir cosmo: gold is the ball that stops where bliss assuages
- others: *tap tap tap tap*

tap tap tap tap

- sir cosmo:** imagine if you can a pink and golden egg
constructed for easter on this ancient site
imagine too the sulphur tresses of the sun
the thin quicksilver fingers of the moon
weaving amongst each other sensuously
imagine bob - his hammer at the ready
imagine taylor - this mistaken goat
whose freedom is in rams
her passive spirit's in dire need of fire
in olden times rams served the fire gods
- anda:** and if you'll let me ram the argument home
rams is an anagram of *mars* - the god of war
- cosmo:** this is the energy sweet taylor lacks
ram is the potency that spring prepares for
ram is the headpiece that easter wears
- others:** ram is the headpiece that easter wears
- cosmo:** and the headpiece is given to the ram
- taylor:** is it mine - must i wear this
- bob:** for what you are to become - you must
- others:** *ra - thou ram - mightiest of created things*
- anda:** ram is the seed and the egg receives
here the egg is - the ram comes forth
- others:** *ra - thou ram - mightiest of created things*
- taylor:** there's a darkness in there i have to break free from
- cosmo:** the dark is the door you have to go through
- others:** *ram ram ram ram*
ram ram ram ram
- bob:** together together the darkness will shrivel
be ewe to my ram and the pain will dissolve
- taylor:** there's an ache in my head that wants to say no to
this ramming of meaning i don't want to yield to
- others:** *ram ram ram ram*
ram ram ram ram
- bob:** inside the egg's the place to be private
between us we'll forge what your new meaning is
- taylor:** inside my flesh there's this egg of a scream
- bob:** don't push us apart - let me sit in your bloodstream

not ram and not ewe but ram-ewe in one

others: *ram ram ram ram*
ram ram ram ram

taylor: i enter with a granddaughter's tears

an egg is formed around bob and taylor

others: *ra ra ra for the battering ram*
that turns a gleam into who i am
ra ra ra for the eggbound ewe
that takes the seed and makes it you
ra ra ra for the born-again cry
that comes from the cave and fills the sky
ra ra ra.....

enter mrs t

mrs t: these are the worst fears of my being
break up break up you sick shell
of a lucifer's egg - push off with your
sulphuric stink your mercurial pong
protecting my son with his overworked hammer
all of you crack away and be cursed

the others are all driven away

mrs t: come out of there bob with that slut
if i had six handbags not one would be idle

bob: oh mother just when i was enjoying myself

mrs t: are you entitled to abuse what your gifts are
to tread into flesh what is meant to be sacral

bob: why get so worked up - i was trying to be helpful

mrs t: do you think i'm decrepit - just a bag with a handbag
a stuck up old ramrod

bob: mind your language please mother

mrs t: all this high talk of yours about knowing the people
is just your excuse for putting wild into oats

bob: i've had enough of this mother
i am a future that walks on this earth

mrs t: we're dead if we have to live by your lust

bob: i can't take this - go home

mrs t: not till you're tied to my handbag strings
you're to go no more a ramming
my dribbling son

bob: let me go - clear off old bitch

mrs t: what - blasphemed by my only son

taylor: *i am the ram*
the fiercest of all fierce creatures

mrs t: belt up you ramified sapling
you think you can branch out
to where the juices are sweeter
here have a handbag from me

taylor: *i am the ram*
the potency of spring
the brother of mars
the fire which creates and destroys

mrs t: this slut of a ram's trying to kill me
get away from me you thick ewe
bob you betrayer how dare you
lie and keep lying to me
getting up to your copulatory antics
in an easter egg pink and golden
what's happened to your cosmic taste

taylor: *i am the ram*
the thunder
distiller of rains
the maker of futures

mrs t: she's ramming my handbag

bob: it's a ritual mother
it's only pretend

mrs t: not with this beast it isn't
it's believed every word
of the muck you've been spouting

bob: you've got it all wrong

taylor: *i am the ram*

mrs t: oh shut up with your foul ram-ramming
i'm not supposed to be touched - you know that
my son there's a black hole between us
and you won't find the anvil in there
i'll swallow it rather than let you have it
and if you want my advice with this animal
sacrifice the bloody thing - give it to abraham
or someone before it gets too big for its hooves

mrs t goes

taylor: *i am the ram*
i was born in the spring
what i lock with i break

bob: it all seemed so simple on paper

enter old sodi

old sodi: things have been mixed here
that aren't for the mixing
i'm taking the ram
for my circle of animals
the crystal ball tells me
that's what the plan is
i'm booked in at new milton
bob you've succeeded
in giving taylor a sheen
she fancies herself ramwise

bob: i think i have to be there

old sodi: come when you're needed
tomorrow you could say
taylor wakes up
what kind of a shock
will that be i wonder

he leads taylor off

bob: *ra - thou ram - mightiest of created things*
taylor - you've slipped out of my hands
you could be prometheus all over again
fools never do what's expected of them
between you and my mother i'm cut down to size
my stuffing's been strewn to the wind

he goes out

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