



\* Stories of Knowing Otherwise \*

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## **THE FREE AGENT—or, The Ring of the Nibelungs Loosely Re-Visited**

(Being yet another telling from the variations of the Norse Volsung Saga, German Nibelung Poem, and Richard Wagner's "Ring of the Nibelungs," etc., with some contemporary twistings. )

Who can say where and when  
it all began or ends  
Deals were made, turf staked, plans laid  
He got his, Big Daddy, he got it all  
up there, high up, top floor tall building  
Boss Man long reaching in many pockets  
one-eye seeing far ahead and behind  
But still he wants, still the one thing  
that he gave up, made the trade for  
swore he would not take back  
having gotten his power for giving that  
the diamond ring with the formula hidden in  
that secret recipe for free energy  
that magical making

that all the Big Boss Men they charged the Recluse Brother  
to keep hidden, knowing if any one of them gets it  
he would destroy the powers of all others  
and even his own  
so the Ring Keeper lives  
fiercely alone, jealous of his unused treasure  
that all want and fear  
the revealing of which would mean his own death

Yet and still how he plots, Big Daddy One  
for an Other to do the deed  
one not bound by pledge and past  
some Free Agent who could act unknowingly  
for Big Daddy's gain  
So he watches for such a one  
to do his Dirty Work  
make the move to break the binding vows  
And now The Stranger comes to town  
who does not know himself  
who from where he is  
free in his no knowing  
that not-yet-hired Hired Gun Man man

Now Big Man Big Daddy Boss He orders her,  
that woman, the Daddy's Daughter One  
the one so strong, braver than any Jack The Ripper  
like no Right Hand Hammer any boss man ever had  
who always makes his will be done  
as if she sprung from his very head  
She is to protect and guide The Stranger

until the time comes to kill the Ring Keeper  
But then The Stranger, come from wild unknowing  
To city of bonds, he finds his long lost sister  
and like two halves come together they make to mate  
no wise to how they are one blood  
But that woman one who sets his fall  
In pledging his allegiance  
she already be the property of Big Daddy's Police Man Jack-O

Seeing this fatal flaw, he tells her, that Daddy Daughter,  
Big Daddy says, let the Stranger die in the fight  
for he is no use now  
having made a vow to another and lost his freedom

But she cannot do it, cannot leave it be  
First time, only time she defies the Big Man Big Daddy  
But no one can do that, no one stronger than him  
Big Man lifts his little finger  
so The Stranger dies, and the Police Man Jack too  
when they slash for the Lost Sister  
the way fools and lovers do  
done in the way all who play pawn for Big Daddys go

Some way now the Daddy Daughter one  
you know, she does what she must never do  
doing what she wants, chooses for her self  
seeing the passion of lovers she has never known  
she helps the Lost Sister escape town  
flee into the country wide to hide  
big with child seeking shelter

far from the Big Man's wrath up high  
out there where some wild lands yet lie low.

Big Daddy takes it hard, high up there  
no daughter his can betray him, no more  
is she his Executivve Executioner, no way no matter  
how she pleads she must go naked out  
to be some stranger husband's woman  
whose choosing she cannot nay  
He only grants her this -- that that man must be  
able to walk through fire to see her sleeping for the taking  
loving or raping as he makes his moves  
let the fates go, kind or cruel  
he casts her down, his deadly darling one  
into the Burning Circle of his rage  
there to lie until

And so it goes you know  
He comes along at last  
He who never knew enough to even wonder who he owed any thing  
even to that one-time small-time Hit Man Jacko for the Boss  
Kracker Crumb Man hiding from the Big Time  
who acted out the no-body's-boy's motherless no-father fathering  
far from City Capers and Big Boss Bonds  
after he kept the lost Lost Sister when he found her weeping  
for his own uses till she died dropping down  
the boy child from nowhere anybody knows  
But even such a Belly Crawler smells some value  
in such a could-be-hero without master  
born to become Free Agency

rarest Jack of all who can choose but will not  
if he ever knows how free he is  
who to serve and how.

And how could he, he who grew without restraint  
have felt bonds or love or fear  
he just is, you know, just is  
tall and strong and bold  
but curious, too, wanting something too  
desiring to feel  
what others feel when they stop and stare  
or run and hide  
those who shake before his guileless gaze  
What can that be like to him  
so wild as to never know  
Wild from tame  
Obscurity from fame?

And when full blown that UnBonded One, his Plotting Parent  
always wanting more than his always unfair share  
sends him seeking that fearful lesson that might makes his only meaning  
meaning he wants to know this fear of  
So he goes then, as some one always must  
to the Grimm Ring Keeper's door  
he whose power is kept up by all the Bosses equal fear  
of what he hordes in his One and Only Way  
but who is a false blusterer to the Fearless One that has no bonds  
so even so, terrible as he is  
the Ring Keeper falls in his own attacking tracks  
impaled upon the unknowing of the terrors of terror

dropping down the fabled ring of plans for unlimited power  
there-in enshrined rattle ruin of all Boss Men powers  
falling to the Hero's hand which dips  
in his untempered innocence  
the blood of another man to his lips  
the taste of which turns his sensing inside out  
Now he knows more than he has seen and done  
his bloodied hearing reaching far and wider  
listening in to the plotting thoughts of his unfathering parent  
who seeks the ring at any cost  
willing to slay the slayer to deal the Deal  
So The Free Agent Jack cuts him down too, low down  
still fearing no thing in thinking  
his being is without obligation  
raised to feel no feeling  
as he acts upon the acting of others

So he goes to town  
bravely seeking some companion  
straight to the Boss Man, lead treading  
over every Jacko Guard Dog  
straight to Big Daddy High, up there, towering over all  
In that one-eyedgaze the Free Man stands  
saying, I, I am lonely in this world of Shakers and Moanmen  
and asking where is there some equal to this?  
Where is the match to ignite in me some feeling sense  
That I might be alive like others?  
where is that Right Hand Hammer Man they say  
made you so fearful once, Old Man Now  
where does the Unbonded One find a one so feared

as to be imprisoned in some band of fire of which I hear?

Big Daddy moves to strike him down

this only one and nothing but

bold hero creature of his own unfeeling making

who possesses now the ring of power over all

that circling bond that meets itself

but who merely wears it, a decoration

Long Fall, Old Man, step aside or take the trip

you'd call for me, the Fearless One spells

stepping through the Boss Man's flaming walls

here and now he sees her

lying in her once terrible armor

that form stronger than any man's touched by fear

Now the Free Agent Man bends low

drawn to the earth tone of her stillness

beauty of such arrested forcefulness so he is touched

in touching her and feels the first time

and, oh, as ever, last

a fear of futures in this present tension

Now is he lost, finding and passing over

that this is a Woman, that other-oneness

and fearless too, though no longer Big Daddy's Hammer Man

Yet as soon as she awakes to his first kissing of some thing

she lets go her past powers for his in

moving toward him, away from the self she once held

takes passion over freedom

Now The Free Agent, now he possesses

Rather than meets his fearless equal

And all being is lost that might have been gained  
in his knowing enough fear to keep her free in her own  
so even so such as they can lose the way  
falling thus into the circling of each other.

Alas, unfeared, he puts the ring upon her finger  
pledge of his devotion  
giving up its circling power without knowing  
and bonded now, and halved by union  
and turned around from where he was going  
only thinking he is whole he  
goes out seeking adventure in a world of fearful deceptions  
to which even he is now bound to become one  
Big Daddy's and Hammer Men, Conning Jack-Os everywhere.

Yet how without her so wise having been up high  
among the low moves of so many Big Boss Men  
how could even he, Free Agent Hero among merely bonded men  
who found and lost the True Fear in giving over the ring  
whose absent circling from hand to hand  
holds the whole Big Bad Deal together  
how could even such as he  
escape the fate of all us born to Deal and Die?  
The formula holds itself still  
that magical making making us all  
play our parts against each other  
Round and round we go  
upon this carousel of posers  
grasping at that golden ring  
beyond the grasp of fearful groping

which she wears invisible by plain sight seeing.  
Where only Free Agency's no knowing  
Could ever go.

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