

Blood of a Centaur

by [Robert Gear](#) (February 2025)



The Death of the Centaur Nessus (Luca Giordano, 1696-97)

I should have had more sense, trusting him to cross the narrow flood.

I jumped upon his back; 'twas such a lark.

I didn't dare await the dark.

But then my man his crudeness spied; and struck him with an arrow.

He struggled on, blood oozing. "Take this gore and keep it safely wrapped; it will serve you well," the half-man-half-beast said, before he fell.

We crossed the water; I thought I heard the tolling of a bell.

The monster's bloody ooze could not be stanchèd.

(To be honest it made me flinch).

I kept the blood, it spread and ravished our estate and made a mute entombment of the land.

(If you've read this far you'll understand)

Nessus had lied; all heroes died; perhaps it was our timid fate.

[Table of Contents](#)

Robert Gear is a Contributing Editor to *New English Review* who now lives in the American Southwest. He is a retired English teacher and has co-authored with his wife several texts in the field of ESL. He is the author of [If In a Wasted Land](#), a politically incorrect dystopian satire.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)