

Beast of Bladenboro (based on true events)

Dogs and goats are being killed in a small Southern town. Is it someone just concealing moonshining, or something more sinister?

WITNESS

Tracie 'Red' Johnson

Recently returned to her grandparents' farm, she heard her favorite hunting hound bark once. By the time she went outside to investigate, he was dead; something had broken his neck. She heard an eerie scream in the lowering darkness. Her strength is *local woman newly returned home* and her personality trait is *stubbornness*.

OTHER PEOPLE

*Police Chief Roy Fores

The sheriff in a small town, he likes things quiet. He says it's a black bear or a lynx killing the dogs; which won't scare the tourists or the locals.

*Mayor Barb Fussell

She thinks it's a lynx but publicizing the mysterious Beast will draw hunters and get her small town in the news. Plus, she just booked the movie "The Big Cat" in her movie theater.

*Eva Butler

Young Lumbee woman attacked by the Beast, she survived when her mother came running, firing her shotgun. Eva is too shaken to give a good description, claiming the twilight shadows confused her.

*Josh Hester

A hunter from Wilmington, NC, leading a party of hunters to track and kill the Beast. Or so he says.

*Jane Vause

An elderly black woman who says the Beast isn't new; it comes through every fifty years. It starts by killing dogs and goats.

LOCATION AND ERA

Bladenboro, NC in 1953 is a small, rural town in eastern North Carolina. Like most towns of the area, it relies on farming and agriculture. It's surrounded by pine forests and swamps. Most families have been there for generations.

OTHER LOCATIONS

*Big Swamp

The large swamp about four miles from town. It's largely unexplored, except for a few hunters and moonshiners.

*Longleaf Diner

The most popular diner in downtown Bladenboro (the only diner) where the locals, city officials, and hunters gather to discuss the hunt and the Beast. Ruby and Opal Murphy own the diner, and their children wait tables.

*Butler Farm

On the edge of a pine forest, the farm has tobacco fields, a large house garden providing food for the family, and chickens and a few goats. An assortment of yellow dogs once guarded it. As typical for farms in the area, there's no indoor plumbing and the family relies on thunder pots (aka gozunders or chamberpots) and an outhouse.

*Pine Woods

Wherever there are no farms or swamps, there are pine trees. Sometimes there are pines in the swamps, too. Few other trees can handle the sandy soil and frequent hurricanes. But the area has been settled and farmed for thousands of years.

SAMPLE CLUES

*dogs and goats drained of blood

*records of similar attacks occurring every fifty years, going back to the early European records in the 1700s

*local native legends mention a Beast Who Hunts, who culls once a generation.

*signs of fires in the swamp, which Fores blames on moonshiners

*a scream like a woman being stabbed, but no one is missing

*hunters who claim to have come from a nearby college

*for sale, an old woven reed basket has designs resembling a black creature's head

*a fragment of clay pot of the local red clay, dyed black showing a black, clawed paw

*goat with a lower jaw missing

*the mist rises from the swamp and slowly fills the town square, promptly disappears at midnight

*a weather-beaten board with hashmarks, every seventh one is red

*wave of small animals flee the swamp, run through town, and disappear into the woods.

*claw marks on an outhouse