



# CAME FROM BOWEN'S BASEMENT

**R** DRIVE-INS, DELETE BINS AND OTHER SINS

*Bowen's Feeling Sheepish*  
by John W. Bowen

**C** *tempora, o mores!* The whole postmodern, self-aware, ironic, fourth-wall-breaking schtick is about as old hat as any hat can get these days, but back in '73, J.S. Bach's "Sheep May Safely Graze" must surely have seemed a weird-as-fuck choice for the opening credits music of a horror film. Of course, by the time you're a few minutes deeper into *Godmonster of Indian Flats* the choice makes sense, inasmuch that it's possible for anything to make sense in this flailing, cheap-ass jalopy-wreck of a movie.

Enter sheep farmer and full-time hapless doofus Eddie (Terry Wills) who wanders into a Reno, Nevada, casino and promptly hits jackpot, goes on a drunken tear, gets into a bar brawl, and winds up catching a lift back home to the quaint burg of Comstock with the local anthropology professor (E. Kerrigan Prescott), because no quaint burg in a monster movie is complete without a resident egghead. Next morning, Dr. Egghead (okay, I can't remember the character's name) and his inevitable lovely assistant Mariposa (Karen Ingenthron, who would later marry Al "Grandpa Munster" Lewis!) return to check on Eddie and find him crashed out in the barn alongside a throbbing, gelatinous, lump of goo that the prof determines to be a human/sheep "hybrid embryo." What to do, what to do? Destroy it? And have no second act extrapolation of the thing's origins or third act monster rampage? Hell no, we've gotta fill out the rest of this run time, so let's "study" the fucking thing while it grows and grows and starts flailing around and making ominous noises and emitting noxious gasses and then we'll act all hard-done-by and shit when it busts loose and runs amok in the final reel. And that's pretty much your movie right there... right?

As John Wayne was fond of saying, "Not hardly."



It's subplot time, kids, and I hope you wore your stretchy buffet pants 'cause there's enough subplot here to choke Ginger Lynn. Enter Barnstable (Christopher Brooks), a wealthy land speculator who shows up in the midst of the town's "Bonanza Days" festival (in which the local citizenry suit up in corsets and ten gallon hats and shoot at stuff) and tries to wheel and deal for mining rights or some

damn thing. But in an admittedly daring twist on horror film archetypes, the skeezy Mayor (Stuart Lancaster) and his skeezy minions turn out to be even less scrupulous than the speculator (who really doesn't seem like such a bad dude once we get to know him) and they frame him for killing a dog by faking the dog's death (!) and holding a fake funeral for it in a church replete with an empty little dog coffin (!?!). The speculator is hauled off to jail and then a lynch mob breaks in and abducts him and suddenly there's a whole sociopolitical subtext because

the guy they're planning to lynch may be a wealthy land speculator but he's also Black and this is 1973 and, and, and... *hang on just a woolly-headed minute here, isn't there a goddamn eight-foot-tall*

*monster sheep on the loose somewhere around the podunk town?*

And what's the deal with everyone – okay, basically just Eddie and Dr. Egghead – constantly yelling the assistant's name? By the end of the second act I lost count of the number of times we hear these fuckwits call out "Mariposa!" Plus that time Eddie gets surprised by the monster and stops partway through: "Maripo...!" (In a distant, mist-shrouded time when my liver was still halfway functional, I'd have turned this into a drinking game with anyone foolhardy enough to take me on.) And how's about that sheepmonster – sorry, Godmonster (?) – a shambling, howling pile of rubber and carpet samples that could very well have passed for The Creeping Terror's prom date.

Armed with even half this info beforehand, any reasonable person (not to mention myself) might well embark upon this viewing experience expecting a horror satire. And who knows? That may well be what historian-turned-design-artist-turned-shitty-filmmaker Fredric Hobbs had in mind, but this thing is so inept and scattershot that its attitude is even murkier than its plot. Of course, in this basement all this slagging is my way of enthusiastically recommending *Godmonster of Indian Flats* to all my fellow gourmands of the gawdawful. Check out Something Weird's recent, lovingly refurbished Blu-ray – and don't worry, in spite of said loving refurbishment, it still looks like shit. Now get the hell out of my basement before I get ma-a-a-a-a-a-ad.

