The Lion's Mane
Bonnie Van Hall

He slips through a narrow
clack in the rocks,
a golden shadow in
African grass, and
wordless, watches the rising
of the moon,
waxing full
in slitted eyes.

what thoughts? Do stealth
and cunning fill his mind,
purveyance of the good red death
to speedless creatures?
Or regal things, proud
pursuits of a kind; the
insufferable loneliness of a leader?

Or does he simply watch
the moon's slow circling
cast its ring around
night's head, as his own
mane encircles the sinewy neck?

With a calculated, careless toss
of the head,
the golden threads weave
themselves into the stuff of
a sleepy cat's dream,
a silken, splendid shower
in moonlit purity.