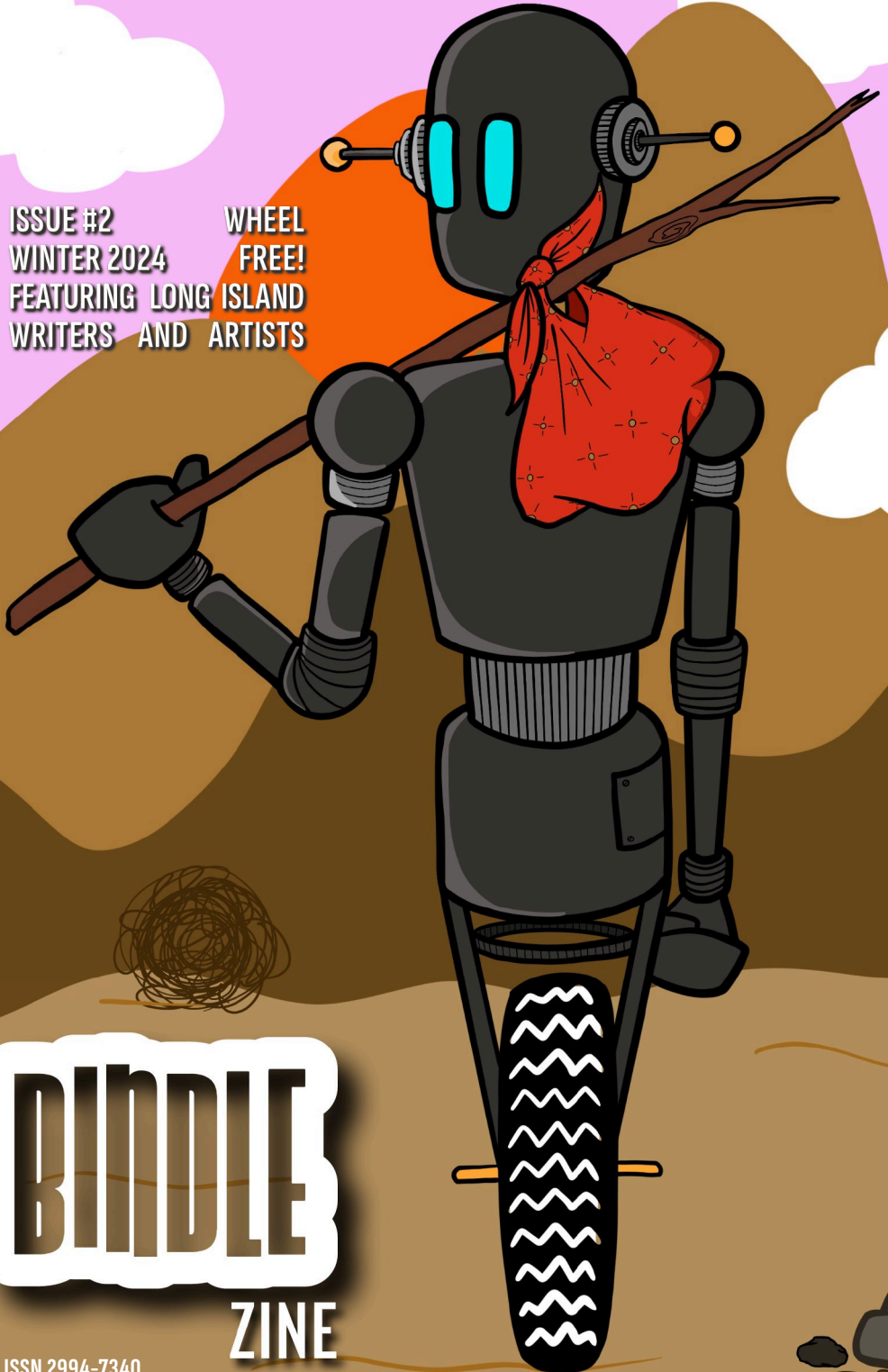


ISSUE #2
WINTER 2024
FEATURING LONG ISLAND
WRITERS AND ARTISTS

WHEEL
FREE!



BUNDLE ZINE

ISSN 2994-7340

Bindle

ZINE

FEATURING

Bindle Bot

by Corey Houlihan
[spacewomanstudio.com]

The Second Time You Die

by Toby Fox Ferrari
[deviantart.com/tobiashobbies]

What Do We Do?

by William Aiello

General Slocum

by Brian Ferrari
w/artwork by Toby Ferrari
[brianferrarinyc.com]

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Inspecting a freight train from Mexico for smuggled immigrants. El Paso, Texas

by Dorothea Lange
[www.loc.gov/item/2017770601/]

SPECIAL FEATURE

Society of Bloodthirsty Women; We're Not Here Just to Serve and Breed;

un puño! knuckle sandwich

by ratgrrl.
[instagram.com/ratgrrl_]

wheel (or bracer): a leg. A *hogleg* is a long-barreled gun, and a *jake leg* is a chronic drunk; whereas, a *flat-wheeler* is an uncomfortable freight car.

WHEEL

Bindle Issue #2 – Winter 2024

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This issue can be found in an accessible format at bindlezine.com/2024/winter/

COLOPHON

This issue delayed thanks to anxiety and *Baldur's Gate 3*.

Thank you Allan and all our contributors, sponsors, and donors.

Watching the leaves fall, we remember Odenson. So it goes.

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What Do We Do?

by William Aiello

When the nation was founded
And the country was new
You might think to yourself
What did people do?

There weren't many books
And newspapers were few
So at the end of the day
What did people do?

I suppose there were bicycles
But not many roads
What did people do?
Did they jump up like toads?

But life went on
The nation expanded
It moved south and west
Cities grew, states joined
Technology at its best

What did people do?

Well, they talked
They played board games
They sat on porches
They looked at each other
They knew each other's names

Then professional sports
Came onto the field
It's what people did
Their pleasures revealed

Then there was radio
Their ears finely tuned
The family gathered
Like they were marooned

And then came the tv
Soon families had two
They no longer conversed
That's what they would do

Tape recorders
Video games
Sports cars
Cell phones

And now...
Do we look at each other?
Do we recognize kin?
Do we say, "You're my mother?"
Oh where do I begin?

So where are we today?

Processed foods?
Streaming tv
The Internet

Have we become so
impersonal, alien and isolated?
Have we made the family unit
violated?

What do we do?

General Slocum

by Brian Ferrari w/ art by Toby Fox Ferrari

I was sitting at a table outside of the Life Cafe when the Mayor of Avenue B waved his change cup towards Tompkins Square Park and said, “It’s just beyond those trees — a pink marble monument, written on one side: In Memory Of Those Who Lost Their Lives In The Disaster To The Steamer General Slocum, June 15th, 1904. Eleven hundred or so lost — they never did get a total — burned on board or drowned in the East River. Women and children, mostly. The heart of this neighborhood, they said.

“You go ’round to the front where a boy and a girl face away from you — lookin’ back towards the river with faces hidden by design and a century of wear. Can’t hardly read what it says anymore: They were Earth’s purest children, young and fair.

“Below that, a lion head spits water into the fountain with a stream that arcs over 100 years, as if to say ‘Here I bring you water to douse the fires in which your loved ones perished... water tamed of its currents that swept away your young. Here it flows in its simplest form as you reflect upon what has been lost.’

“But nobody reflects. ’Cuz nobody remembers. That monument — created so they would not be forgotten — has been forgotten.”



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THANK YOU!

A Poem for Hell's Kitchen

by Fred Byrnes

I once sent
Jimmy Coonan
a few poems
I'd written
about Ireland
Jimmy's in
Lewisburg Federal Pen
doing 75 years
I thought Jimmy
might enjoy the poems
Never heard from
Jimmy Coonan the
former boss
of The Westies
Hell's Kitchen
Irish-mob

At 24 I went
back to college
out of fear
I too could end up in prison
Although I was never
in Jimmy's league

In college
I learned about poetry
Me, just an Irish-American
Carry on the tradition of
Seamus Heaney
William Butler Yeats
Brendan Behan
My good friend
Desmond Egan

Jimmy Coonan
he comes up
for parole
in 2032

Personally I haven't
stolen anything since 1981
Alas, at times
whenever I see
a Brink's armored car
I'll think about
all that money
all that money

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Coterminous: Chapter 2

Crozley's Caravan, part 2

by Corey Gene Monaco

Continued from Bindle Summer 2023 issue. The story so far can be followed at <https://bindlezine.com/coterminous>

"Ah, my fearless retainer approaches!" Crozley exclaims during an exhale. "Ulric, how goes the perimeter?"

The giant animal that trots toward the corbillard leers with fierce amber-colored eyes, baring his fangs as he speaks. "Retainership is just another term for thralldom. I am not one of your servants."

"Yes, you continue to remind me of that, and must I continue to remind you to work on your sense of humor?"

Ulric towers over the others, his eyes aligned with the roof of the corbillard. He looks at me for a brief moment and nods, his brow furrowed as it always was. I have not seen the old wolf since the beginning of the trip, and his exhausted expression speaks volumes in regard to the extent of his work to keep the caravan safe as it moves toward its destination. His fur, once grey as the skies, is now dirty and matted. Claws full of dirt and paws battered from the miles traveled ahead and behind to search out obstacles and potential threats. The scar on his face that grazes his eye and covers his snout is flush and appears fresh despite its age.

"Forgive me if I am keeping up my end and investing my concern in the security of the caravan," says Ulric. "Especially considering our present company and current location."

Crozley rolls his eyes, "The Wolds are like any other place. Just much more dangerous. As for our guest, I fail to understand the apprehension gleaned from the presence of a woman."

"A sorceress, Crozley, such is the distinction."

"Sorceress? Out here she may be considered as such, but her abilities are quite normal from where she hails."

"I am aware of that, and it is where she comes from that concerns me the most."

"You do realize she is quite the celebrity in Threnus?"

"We have all heard her voice, yes, but many would rather keep it that way. Everyone is already uneasy about her, and now that she has brought us here the sentiment is doubly so."

"Such is why I have those like you Ulric!" Crozley cheers. "You are fully aware of my impulses, and it is up to you to mitigate any damage caused by my decisions."

Ulric growls softly, "I am not getting into this. With reluctance, all here are falling in line as per your advice. The perimeter is secure, but I still think we need to fall back and leave room for a cordon in the front — "

Crozley gestures as he cuts him off. "I know the normal protocol, but there is nothing to worry about. We have a sorceress here after all."

"The whole world worries about what lies beyond that road. Your confidence is both admirable and disturbing."

"Finally, a compliment, even if it is one sandwiched between an insult and sarcasm. But I will still bite. Anything else you need to say, Ulric?"

"My scouts are spread too thin in their reconnaissance last night. I may need Cane to pick up the slack in patrol for the evening."

Cane stands in response, raising his drink to Ulric. Crozley, however, interjected immediately. "Your drones' ineptitude at being decent scouts is not my problem. Cane remains with me."

"Surrounding yourself with the strongest is a clear mark of cowardice."

"I consider it caution." Crozley takes a long drag of his pipe, exhales, then points it at the giant wolf. "But it is your lucky day, because as much as I love our little arguments, today I am keen on acquiescing your request because I am joining the hike into the forest."

Ulric chuckles, "You are serious?"

"Brune and Urcus are enough to guard the corbillard, and although he may be an old lunger, Walcroft will also suffice. My escort will consist of our current guest and our new friend Seirath here."

Ulric looks to me again. We both exchange a smirk, and he winks. "As much confidence as I have in Seirath's abilities, I suggest bringing reinforcements."

"Such concern for my safety, Ulric, that is not like you. Seirath will suffice. But if it makes you feel any better, I will bring Vespine with me as well."

"Vespine is a bug."

"And you are bugging me. Now, take any of the other muscle in this

Coterminous: Chapter 2

Crozley's Caravan, *part 2, cont'd*

camp if you have to, gather your scouts, and secure the site. I do not want to worry any more on this while I am away.”

Ulric stands, “Since when do you worry about anything Crozley?”

Crozley shakes his head and engages Brune and Tala. “He acts like I don't care.”

Tala giggles, “Do you?”

“Very little.” Crozley smiles and then looks to me. “Cane, Seirath, get down here and tend to our guest.”

Cane begins to dismount the roof. “Be vigilant in these woods. Don't lose yourself.”

“Have you ever been?”

“No. No one here has, except him,” he nods in Crozley's direction. “And look at him now: the mad optimist. It's almost as if he's forgotten the misery of this world, at great risk to himself and others.”

“Doesn't seem like such a bad thing. It would be nice to forget.”

Cane is on the ground now taking one more swig from his mug and then returning it to the inside of his cloak. “So says you.”

There are plenty of humans in the caravan, but none with the skills she possesses. Some here consider her talents too overwhelming, so perhaps that is what justifies the apprehension. I have yet to lay eyes on her in person, but like many others I have heard her voice over the broadcasts and seen her likeness in papers and posters. At present very few of the caravaners have seen her, as she spends most of her time in Crozley's personal carriage and her own.

Conversations shift to stories of the Quintess' arrival. Ulric just adds it to his pile of stress which is already front loaded with Crozley's lax sense of involvement in caravan logistics. Cane has been with Crozley for so long he dismisses it as another whim. Brune says and thinks very little of it while Tala snickers and escapes back into whatever thoughts keep her locked in that amused expression. Vespine's vapidness is her typical response to anything, for Crozley's decisions are her gospel. The others I met in my brief employ are either too focused on their work or too jaded to even have an opinion.

The door to the corbillard opens and the steps of her bare feet precede her. She stops, looks to me first and smiles with a sultry familiarity. She then turns her attention to her general surroundings. It seems as if she is waiting for something, looking for something in the distance. But then she takes a deep breath and turns her gaze skyward and whispers.

“Ula, my goddess, the first, the world dreamer, thank you for your guidance here.” She rolls her slender neck after the prayer, eyes closed, opening suddenly as she pivots toward me once again. “It is certainly a pleasure to see a face other than Crozley's, especially one so easy on the eyes.”

Vespine flutters out of the cabin, tittering as she sees me. She carries a pair of leather lace sandals which she drops to the ground, then flies to Crozley's shoulder who has been at the front with Walcroft engaging in heated conversation. He promptly shoos her off and she instead lands on Walcroft's stovepipe hat. The old man is too busy arguing with his boss to care. The woman before me descends the steps and flits gracefully into her footwear. With subtly and caution, I watch her tie and fasten them on her feet. Feet connected to long legs, hips with curves, and a slender waist. The rest of her follows suit, with an athletic and fit figure, she is stunning by all human standards, and it becomes more and more difficult to look away.

She stands and extends her hand in the most urbane fashion. I give pause, but return the courtesy, her long nails gently scratching my skin as they enter my palm. “There are very few humans in this little band. I am surprised I have not come across you sooner. My name is Meresineia Mavourneen.”

“Seirath.”

She smiles, “Fine name, and a fine man. Crozley has chosen a handsome addition to his caravan.”

“He did not choose me, I am here on my own accord.”

“You don't look much like the type that just volunteers.”

“I am whatever they need me to be.”

“Hired hand then?”

“I provide various services, mostly with my hands.”

Coterminous: Chapter 2

Crozley's Caravan, part 2, cont'd

She grins brightly, "And what strong hands they are, ones that I may require."

"For a price, they are yours."

"I am sure they are worth the coin. I will keep it in mind, as I may desire some servicing from time to time."

She is staring at me, reading me, disarming me. Maybe this was her spell, to lock a man's gaze and cause him to become so lost in thought that all composure falters and breaks. Perhaps it was simply because I was a human man, and she was more or less a human woman, save for whatever anomalous abilities are inherent. This woman, with hair colored like coal fines and eyes like precious aquamarine jewels. Clad in what left little to the imagination, garments cobbled together from soft thin hide, fur, silk, and feathers. Baubles consisting of assorted earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and similar accessories adorned her body, supplemented by the bold black ink markings that cover her thighs and arms.

I reply, for lack of any other response. "It is my job to service you in any way I am instructed, as long as there is compensation, from either you or Crozley."

"I have no doubt that you will perform, and believe me, you would prefer my currency." She smirks and walks past me proceeding in Crozley's direction. I take the time to retrieve my gear from above, signaling Cane to toss me my firearm. An old, crude looking thing yes, but reliable, extensively modified, and it serves its purpose. I was fully strapped as it was, dual revolvers on sides, lever actions on hips, sword on back, but I prefer to carry the slug rifle for its reliability as an immediate deterrent. I join Meresineia in observation of another spat between Walcroft and our caravan leader.

"I can't help that the horses won't eat because of where we are," hacks the old man.

"Then cover their eyes and force feed them," huffs Crozley.

"It's the smell. The presence," he spit again.

"Then lead them away out of sight and ear shot, pinch their noses, sing them a song — if you are able with that scarred wind pipe of yours — and make sure they get a full meal. I may be gone a while, and I would hate to come back to a bunch of dead horses. If such is the case, I am going to make you pull my carriage."

"If you come back."

"Gentlemen," Meresineia says sweetly as she comes forth, "is there a problem?"

Walcroft's eyes widen and he begins to cough and wheeze uncontrollably, patting his chest and spitting out what he could between fits.

"May be the end for you old man," says Crozley. "Perhaps I will finally be free of that constant noise you make."

Meresineia places her hand upon Walcroft's arm. He contests, but is so preoccupied with trying to take a breath that he can not resist. But after a moment his outburst begins to subside. He spits out another glob of mucous and his breath returns to a steady pace, albeit interrupted by the normal gurgling in his throat from any residual phlegm.

"Walcroft," she whispers. "Did you know that if you die in the presence of a witch, she will seize your spirit and make you her slave? Try not to die my sallow friend, and try not to let the horses starve. When we return, I will work on that little problem inside your chest."

Walcroft's flavescent eyes turn white. He scoffs and squints in frustration, replying only with a nod. Crozley smiles gleefully, winking at me in satisfaction. Meresineia turns to me and grins. "Shall we proceed?"

Brune is atop the corbillard and throws down several rucksacks for us to carry. Crozley pulls his personal pack from within the cabin while Meresineia went bare. I opted to be the mule. As I reach down to grab another bag, a slender hand interrupted my own. Tala is before me with a wild smile.

"Room for one more?"

"Not my call."

"Crozley never minds me. He will have something to stare at."

"She seems to be enough."

"No, she is all yours."

"I want *nothing* to do with that."

"I am sure you are the first man to say so."

Crozley is the first to step beyond the cairns, strolling past them with nonchalant confidence. Meresineia follows with the eagerness of an excited tourist while Tala and I wait behind.

Coterminous: Chapter 2

Crozley's Caravan, *part 2, cont'd*

Tala sighed, "Ready?"

"I will take the rear."

She giggles, "You are welcome to this rear anytime you please, new guy."

"Maybe some other time, just go on ahead."

"Last one in, first to die they say. Sure about that?"

"After you."

"Have it your way."

She crosses the threshold. As I let them gain some ground I see Meresinea and Tala's hair start to slowly float upward. The dirt and dust kicked up by their steps lingers in the air a few moments before slowly sinking back down to the soil. From my pouch I pull the makings of a long smoke, rolled it, and lit it with my oil lighter. When I take my first drag I blow the smoke toward the road in front of me. When it passes the cairns, it thickens instead of dissipating, spinning and forming into rough circles, jagged lines, and abstract shapes. I cross over, and the red flame on the cigar turns blue.

I can no longer hear the clamoring of our caravan, just our footsteps, our breath, our heartbeats. The wind picks up and the trees ahead dance within the vacuum. The Wolds are now before me, and all the world behind.

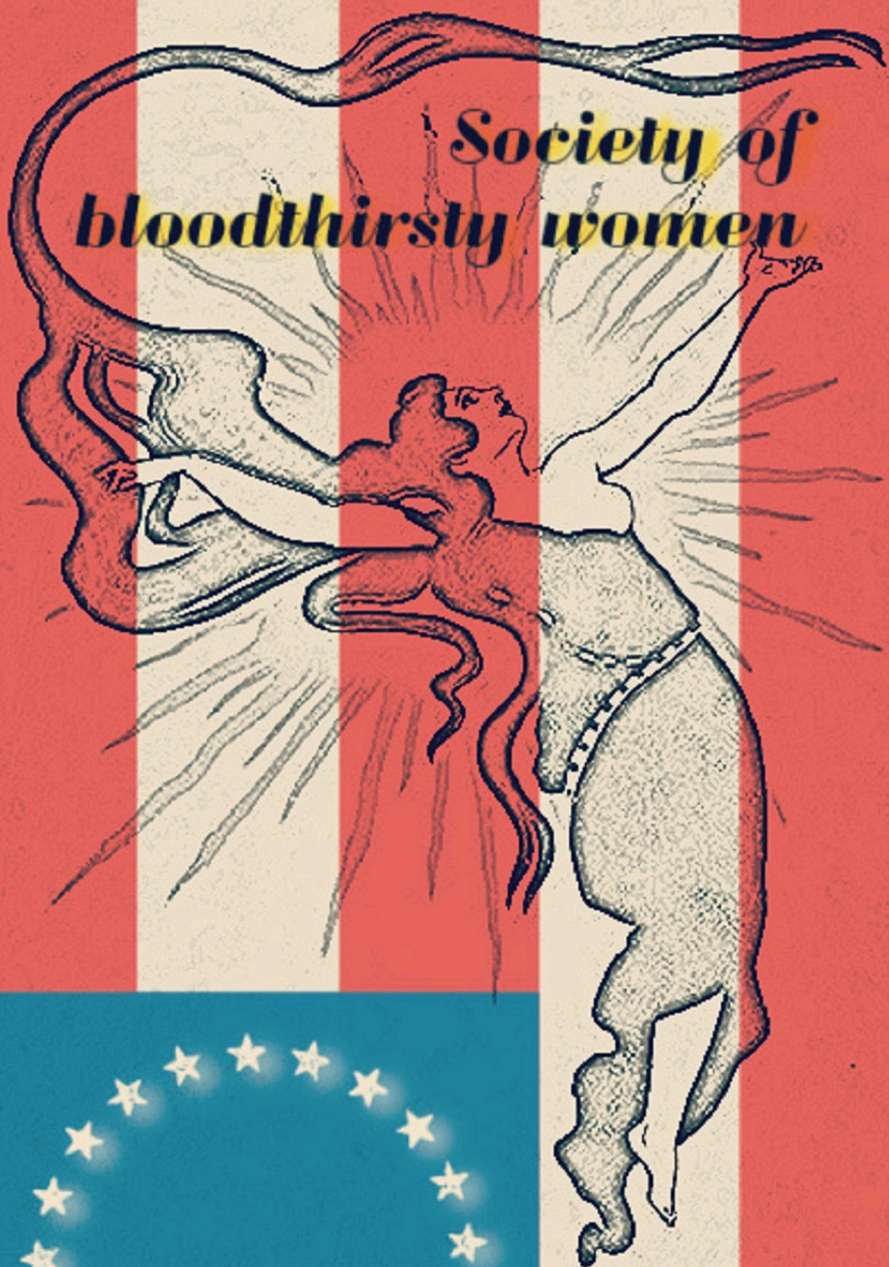
-- to be continued!

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The Winter Animal Oracle



The Hare (Garr): Rebirth, Balance, and Intuition

The Hare, the shapeshifter, is a symbol of the moon as well as the dawn and the coming of morning's light, adapting to the darkness, traveling to the light. The Hare can be your guide during times of change – with its knowledge of rebirth or, like the saying goes, turning lemons into lemonade.

When life has turned an unexpected corner, the Hare can show you the way through those changes. The Hare offers up an abundance of ideas to help you bring things back to the light.

Please take the time to think over how this card fits into your life, and use the knowledge it has given you.

Until next season.

/// Painted Birch ///

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