



A Knot in a Piece of String

A Magic and Empire Encounter

Mikala Ash

Changeling Press

ENCOUNTERS

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The perfidy of men is matched only by the fickleness of faeries. Sarah Fletcher is not Robin Goodfellow's only interest in the village, and there's nothing she can do about that. Instead, her pricked pride fuels her desire for revenge on the man whose callous betrayal had driven her to seek out the Kingdom of the Faeries in the first place.

Unbeknownst to Sarah, her actions will rekindle an old feud between the witches of Pendle, and bring disaster to so many, guilty and innocent alike.

A Knot in a Piece of String

Goodwife Hamlyn met me at the well. She appeared ghastly, her face pale and drawn. She sat down with a heavy sigh. "Isobel! What ails ye?" I asked.

"He came to me last night," she whispered, her exhaustion telling in her hoarse voice. "I haven't slept, and I'm sore all over."

"Oh, aye," I said, unable to hide my curiosity. Though Robin Goodfellow had gotten me with child during a revel in the faerie hall, he'd not yet visited me in my home, and I was ever keen to hear of his doings. "Was your husband not with you?" I whispered.

"He was. Lying beside me, as good as dead to all the world. Robin told me not to heed him, as the powder he'd given me to put in his stew would give him nothing but sweet dreams."

"What happened next?"

She fixed me with pointed glare. "He chastised me for speaking his name."

My face warmed with guilt. "Forgive me."

"Never mind. He then thanked me for bringing you to him."

My heart thrilled with that knowledge. "What happened next?"

"Not here you daft woman," she hissed and busied herself with her pail.

Alison Device and her spiteful little sister were approaching with a black dog trotting behind her. My heart jumped. Was Robin Goodfellow coming to me again? But no, the strange little girls, completely engaged in a sisterly argument, passed heedlessly by without a word, and so did the dog though I gave it a welcoming smile. It must only have been a dog after all.

"What are you doing?" Isobel asked.

I cleared my throat. "Nothing. When can we speak?"

"Come home with me. Jamie is out cutting wood."

Over a cup of warm stew Isobel continued her story. "I'd given Jaimie the powder... Sarah. What is it?"

I was looking suspiciously at my cup. "There's none in here, is there?"

"Daft bugger. Of course not."

I took a sip. It was too watery to be flavoursome, but I made a suitable noise to appease her. Isobel can get prickly about her cooking. "Do you have any left? The powder, I mean."

"None. Robin said use it all, so I did. Jaimie fell asleep mid tumble, and left me all hot and wet. Then came a scratching at the door, and when I opened it a black cat wandered in and sat itself by the fire."

"Well? What then?"

"I blinked, and Robin was standing before me, all naked like. That cock of his wavin' about like a snake."

"I remember it ," I said. His organ was long, impossibly long, and thick, and moved like it had a mind of its own. My quim thrummed with the memory of it. I had never believed such feelings were possible. He'd taken me to heights of ecstasy that I thought only existed in, well, faerie stories.

Isobel took a sip and screwed up her nose. "Not enough hare. Anyway, he looked over to Jaimie and said that I must have spoke the spell correctly. Aye, I said. Then before I knew it I was on all fours and he behind, that cock of his screwin' inside me like an carpenter's auger."

I giggled. "What was the spell? Can you remember it?"

"Aye, but you need the powder, so there's no point in me tellin' ye."

I poked out my tongue. I didn't need her to say the words, they'd already formed in my mind. "As these grains like sand have slept through storms and tumultuous tides," I recited. "So shall the man who drinks of thee."

"Well if you knew it why ask?"

"To see if the spells change depending on who says them, and who they are for. Go on, what happened next?"

“Well he had me like that for ages, so long my knees began to hurt, but he satisfied me, I can’t deny it. Almost lost myself a dozen times and I was left breathless. He had his hand over my mouth so my groans and cries would not waken the village.”

I laughed as I squirmed in my seat. Her tale had my quim hot and wet imagining Robin’s muscular body, not as coarse as Tom Wallace’s knotted and toil beaten form, but smooth, sculpted like the statues in a churchyard, as he drove his cock into Isobel’s willing quim.

“What then?” I asked in a husky voice.

“He picked me up and threw me onto the bed and ploughed me there, beside my sleeping husband. My ankles were on his shoulders and while his cock worked he spoke to me, telling me things.”

Her voice became soft and dreamlike, her eyes misty, her gaze drifting to the cobwebs hanging from the ceiling.

“What did he say?”

“That I was beautiful.”

A spear of jealousy lanced through my heart. How could he say *that* to *her*? He’d said I was beautiful, the most...

“The most comely woman in the village. That my lips gripped his cock like a vice. That...”

“Yes, yes,” I said sullenly. “Then what?”

“Well, he got on his knees, imagine that, him on his knees to me, and one fork of his tongue tickled my nub while the other went all the way inside me. It went on for hours, first in my quim, then in my fundament. That was a surprise, but he reminded me that when I first met him at the Sabbath when I gave him my soul I kissed his puckered hole, and he was giving me fair return. That fork tickling my nub made me forget myself and when I regained my senses his cock was there instead of his tongue. How that hurt. Only Jaimie had ever gone there, and he’s much smaller than Robin. I thought he’d split me like a log. I lost myself so many times, then I must have fallen

asleep, because I awoke with the cock crow and Jaimie complaining about his head and wild dreams.”

I left her soon after, angry at Isobel for having Robin in her bed, furious at Robin saying those things to her. What fickle creatures men are, mortal or immortal, they’re all the same.

Tom Wallace the blacksmith was hammering by his fire. I stood awhile, gazing at his bulging sweat sheened muscles. I imagined his slim hipped body between my legs, those powerful thighs driving him down on the anvil of my body.

Imagining was one thing. Now that I was with child I needed a husband.

He saw me there and scowled. “Be off with you, Sarah Fletcher. You know I’ll have none of ye. Stare at me with those cow eyes as much as you like. I’m promised to Jean, and nothing you can do will change my mind.”

Anger far hotter than his furnace flared in my heart. “You’re welcome to her,” I said bitterly.

How I hated that bitch, going behind my back and stealing Tom from me. Just a few days more and he would have asked me, and I would be spreading my legs for him, and not a faerie king.

A black dog nudged my leg. I jumped. “Get away,” I yelled.

“Is he the one?” the dog asked, his voice low.

I almost replied, but how would that look to Tom?

“He can’t hear me,” Robin said. “If you want him to pay for his betrayal, and she too, then just go home, make their images in clay and say the words. Then tonight come to the path in the forest and follow the faerie lights to Pendle Hill. There I shall pleasure you beyond your dreams.”

“I am with child,” I said. “Yours.”

“I know my sweet thing. I can smell her in you.”

“A daughter?”

“And a bonny lass she’ll be.”

“I need a mortal husband, or people will talk.”

“As they do. I think you can do better than this callow youth, who does not see your beauty, only the rich farm of Jean Prout’s father. He wants to inherit it when the old man dies, and have sons to leave it to in his turn.”

“I’d thought as much.”

Later at home my murderous thoughts turned to a far colder revenge, one I could savour for a lifetime. I named a piece of string Tom Wallace, and tied a knot in it. “As this limp string is to your cock, this knot will prevent seed from flowing into any quim.”

That will dash his plans, and leave Jean Prout an unsatisfied bitch. The spell now given I draped my shawl across my head and left my mother’s house to find the path in Pendle Forest. There the faerie lights would lead me to the faerie kingdom under the hill. There Robin would dance with me, and give me the pleasure that has cost me body and soul.

Awakening (Magic and Empire 1)

by Mikala Ash

London 1850. A bustling city on the brink of change, with a hidden heritage that refuses to let go.

Anne Device, daughter of a prostitute turned spiritualist, grew up on the dirty streets of Whitechapel. Anne has seen it all -- degradation, desperation, anger, pain and sorrow. Her world revolves around her family -- her mother, sister and brother.

The charismatic and attractive Lord Carlyle, gentleman magician, sees in her the potential to move worlds. Anne, who has never been loved, experiences for the first time the magic of desire. Marriage is only the first ceremony in which Anne will give her body. What came next will test her very soul.

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