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Dickcissel

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One Stitch at a Time

Lauren Limburg

Thread has always told a tale. Humans have long been fascinated with thread. It's woven all throughout myths and legends. Metaphors hiding a history of string that is just waiting to be pulled. I wanted to chase that thread. I wanted to pull and pull, unraveling like my old sweaters under the paws of a beloved cat.

I gave myself three weeks to learn how to knit. It was my own quest. In my eyes, I had nothing to offer in terms of trade. Not physically. I cannot draw. I cannot weave or use a loom. I wanted to learn a craft. A trade. I wanted to sit at the feet of an expert and watch her hands create.

And so, I sat.

On the first Thursday, we learned how to hold our needles and cast on. I held the needles like a child or like one might hold their cutlery. Eventually, we all learned that the needles were sharp enough to puncture fabric but not our skin. Although even now, I hear the mantra our teacher taught us to remember the knit stitch: stab it, strangle it, pull out its guts, and throw the body off the cliff. We never drew blood, but the mistakes hurt all the same. It was a slow process, unraveling a misplaced stitch or counting and finding you had magically and erroneously added a new one.

At the end of the night, as we packed up our needles and skeins, she said, you are creating fabric, you are creating something, never forget that. As if she was scared that we would diminish our skills like those before us. That we would forget how far we had come. That we would forget what we now had to offer.

On an island, there was a thread that conquered the beast. No one sings the praises of Ariadne or her string. They sing of Theseus. They sing of a fearsome minotaur and a labyrinth. We forget the thread. A single strand to bring a

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