



Snippets of How My Mind Writes

A little personal. A little poetry. And some updates.

March 1

A Little About Bobbie Isabel



In last month's newsletter, I shared a short bio about my life, but this time I'd like to share a little about one of my greatest passions. I have loved musical theater since I was a young girl. I've always sung along to all the Disney movies, and one of my most influential memories was singing Memory in my 4th grade chorus class. Singing that song and seeing advertisements for Cats at the Winter Garden Theater haunted my dreams because we could not afford Broadway. In 5th grade, I auditioned for our school's production of The King and I. We had to sing Over the Rainbow in the audition, and I nailed it. I didn't make the cast though because I "couldn't fit any of the costumes." I've never been able to bring myself to audition since, though I have sung solos in school and perform near daily while doing large presentations. Instead, I find immense enjoyment in the audience of musicals as often as possible now, and I occasionally volunteer to support our local theater. I have decided that my first book in each genre will be a self-publish because of the anxiety I have around

auditioning. So be on the lookout for at least two books from me this year, possibly three if I can get this novel drafted.

Medium Account



OUR STRENGTH

B. Isabel Writes



Oft we wonder if the strength they ascribe
Is true regard or another backhanded platitude.
The strength they see comes from being shattered
By blows of hand and wind
And glued together by promises
Until our skin sings with a cacophony of lines,
Lines hand painted in gold because
The world says resilience is beauty unfettered
Yet, we walk on shells prepared for the
Inevitable chip in our veneer.
The poise of dreams unawakened



Until the moment we find ourselves



Not in this strength built from unaccountable tolls
But in the grace with which we embrace ourselves.



Poem for 2022 International Women's Day

Novel Updates

Here is an excerpt from my WIP, a new adult/young adult coming-of-age fantasy with the working title **The Maenad**.

Mera heard Callisto mention her name and was pulled from her thoughts. She apologized and Callisto repeated her introductions, "Pholus, this is Skyemera from The Thicket, granddaughter of the community matriarch. Mera, this is Pholus, a very old friend of mine." Mera was caught off guard by the beautiful blue eyes, like the azure sky after a storm set in a handsome face of smooth skin the color of life-giving earth after a summer rain.

"You're a centaur," she blurted, surprising herself, as she felt her cheeks flush. He laughed and responded, "and you are a maenad." She wasn't ready for that response. No one else had known who, or rather what, she was until Callisto looked at her. Well, her mother, grandmother, and Helena knew, but they had always known. The Ancient One was the first person to have just met Mera and immediately recognized her identity. The fact that another stranger, one who was not a nymph, so easily recognized her made her instantly nervous and self-conscious.

"Relax, young one," he replied in a deep resonant voice that reminded her of thunder accompanying a storm. Its rumble eased her spirit in a way she did not understand but was grateful. "I know who you are because I have been alive long enough to have known the last maenad."

"How," Mera asked, voice barely a whisper. "We learned that centaurs were extinct."

"Far as most people know, we are, and I like it that way," He said in response. "It simplifies my life," the low rumbly chuckle that accompanied that statement made Mera giggle. "Really, people just believe what they want to believe," he continued. "Take my story, for example. People really believe that I was dumb enough to accidentally prick myself with an arrow I knew to be poisonous. I believe I once heard it told that I wanted to check out the arrow," he said gesturing with his hand to emphasize the absurdity of the idea. "I don't want to be around anyone that illogical, so I disappeared when the rumors started, which allowed them to flourish. Nearly a millennium of peace and quiet. Well, except for when I come into town for supplies and a little entertainment," he finished with a smile.

"Don't look too surprised, Maenad," Callisto added, "I was supposedly dead as well."

"Yes, how was it that you managed to hide from the gods," Mera asked, eyes bright with curiosity.

"I didn't exactly hide from them. More like I was hidden from them, and by the time I reemerged, Hera had more important things to deal with. It's not like Zeus suddenly became faithful to his wife after he sent me away to the stars," Callisto said with a smirk. "Let's be clear, though," she continued with a point of

her finger, "I don't go flaunting my continued existence, and I generally try to stay away from the gods."

"Exactly," Pholus agreed. "So how did you know I was still around, my friend," he asked Callisto.

"A little birdie keeps me informed of what happens here. As humans have expanded their populations and the gods' power has waned, my people have somewhat isolated themselves. This is the closest town to several enclaves of my people, so I try to keep an eye on things without interfering. At least, most of the time..." she grew quiet and let her eyes shift to Mera who suddenly grew uneasy in her seat, as Pholus also turned his eyes on her.

Before anyone could say anything more, piano music began, and the centaur turned his attention to the stage at the rear of the room. Mera was grateful to have their gazes directed elsewhere, as she took in the changes of the tavern hall since they had joined Pholus in the booth. The room was now full of people. Mera looked over her shoulder down the rows of booths and saw that every one of them held at least one head. The tables in the middle of the room were mostly occupied. There were a number of humans there, and a few satyrs. She even saw two barmaids, both nymphs, who she hadn't notice earlier. The barkeep, presumably the owner, was a satyr, which Mera found surprising, as she always thought of this as a human town the forest folk just traded with.

She also realized that the noise level had risen significantly. Numerous conversation were going on; simultaneously, a glass shattered behind the bar, and the human piano player picked up the pace of their tune. Mera could feel anticipation in the air, and she realized why when the curtain on the stage parted to reveal a siren.

"Of all creatures," Callisto said under her breath with a scowl.

Pholus turned his eyes to the nymph for a second, "You have to admit it's smart business. Who else would call all the patrons in, so they would spend all their coin," he asked without waiting for an answer before returning his attention to the stage. Callisto scoffed but then also turned to watch the show. Mera was already drawn into the haunting tune. She didn't think the lyrics themselves were what gave the song its haunting quality. The siren was living up to its reputation by promising a beautiful, sensual death with its voice.

When the song was finished, it was as if everyone, or at least all of the males in the room, were in a trance. They sat there staring at the siren, unmoving, until the piano player began clapping, and then the room erupted in applause. Conversations resumed, and drinks once again made their way around the room. By the time a barmaid had gotten to their table, Pholus was sharing another of the rumors surrounding his supposed death, and she caught them all mid-laugh.

"Can I get you or your friends anything to drink," the barmaid asked, directing her question at Pholus.

"Yes, Chari, grab us a round, and a meal for my guests. It is past dinner, and I am sure they are hungry."

"Chari," Mera asked.

"Yes," the nymph responded. "My name is Chariclo, but most of the patrons here just call me Chari."

"Oh, I see. My best friend's name is Kari. I am from The Thicket," Mera continued, though she wasn't sure why she felt compelled to share all of this with the barmaid.

"The Thicket," she asked, looking Mera up and down, at least the best she could when the maenad was seated in a booth inside a relatively dark and smoky tavern. "You are not a nymph, but you are also a nymph," she said, brows drawing together.

"I am both," Mera said, not sure how to continue. The nymph looked at Mera for a short second and then looked at Callisto, but when the ancient nymph did not respond either, she walked away to fetch their drinks and meals.

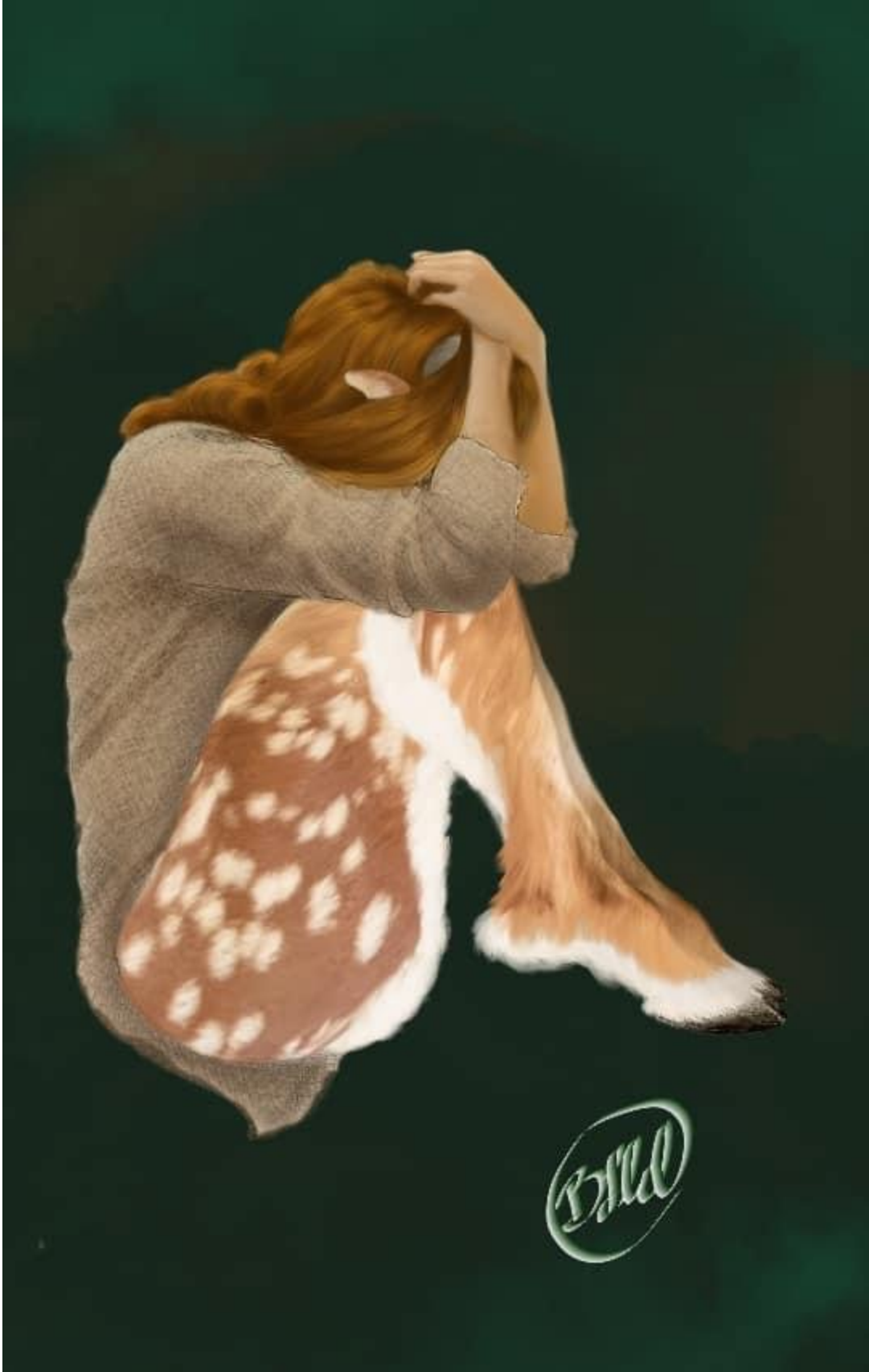
Mera looked up at her companions, noticing the odd looks on their faces.

"What," she asked.

"I found your answer, 'I am both,' both accurate and unexpected," Pholus said in response to her question.

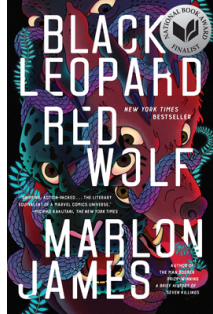
"Why did you not simply say what you are," Callisto asked, and Mera felt herself getting defensive at the question.

"I am not fully sure what I am, Ancient One, or even what it means to be one," Mera responded tersely. "How do I claim something I do not understand," she asked before turning silent again.



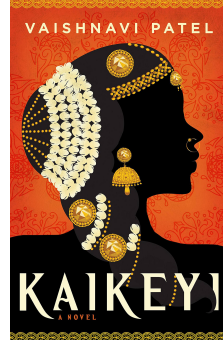
What is Bobbie reading?

I always have an audiobook, kindle book, and physical books going at all times.



Black Leopard Red Wolf

It took me a couple of chapters to get into this book, and I have to say I am glad I'm listening to the audiobook because it is written in the oral tradition, which at times makes it hard to follow. There is a lot of repetition early on that muddies the story a bit, but once I got into it, I started to get much the same feeling as when I read *Things Fall Apart*. There are lots of dark themes and difficult passages that might be triggering for many readers. The book thus far is full of folklore and fantasy, and so much imagery. It is both beautiful and disturbing.



Kaikeyi

I had been wanting to read this book since the middle of last year and am still only about 1/3 of the way through because I put it to the side to read a self-published book from a TikTok friend. I'm enjoying the story thus far with its folklore and culture that provide a different perspective from the traditional fantasies. I'm still unsure how I feel about the main character and her ideals and ideas, particularly since she is so young. Now that I have gotten to the part of the book where the magic is being unveiled, I am enjoying it that much more. Such a novel concept to have everyone connected through invisible strings. I have seen something similar where a character could track magic back to the caster through invisible strings, but these strings are relationship connections, which is a wonderful thought.



Writing Picture Books

If you've been following my website or my social media, you would have heard that I have written a picture book my sister is illustrating. I got this book for some tips to make the book the best it can be and to hopefully give me some ideas in regards to self-publishing a picture book because it looks to be a little more involved than a novel or book of poetry. I am excited about this book and getting my book in print.

In honor of Women's History and Disability Awareness Month

[Anti-Defamation League list of picture books for Women's History Month](#)

[Epick Books YA Books Showcasing Diverse Disabilities](#)

[Fantasy Novels by Women of Color](#)

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