

The Herbalist
by
Kino McFarland

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

ANNE, 32, with tattoos swirling on her face and hands, hangs herbs in the bay window. An orange cat sits on the window sill. Anne hums to herself as she cuts more herbs from the pots and hangs them.

Anne grabs a saucer from the table and places it in front of the cat. She fills the dish with water and pets the cat. A KNOCK at the door.

Anne grabs her cloak off the rack by the door, wraps it around her shoulders and puts the hood up so it covers her face. She opens the door a crack.

ANNE

Please go.

EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

MARY, 18, blonde hair falls out of her bonnet and tears stream down her face, pushes the door open to reveal Anne's full body.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

Mary barges into the cottage. Anne goes to her table and sips her tea.

MARY

Anne, you have to help me.

Anne watches Mary. Mary bawls.

MARY (CONT'D)

My husband caught me with the bread merchant. He'll have me hanged. Please, give me something to make him forget... or... or--

ANNE

Or?

MARY

Something stronger? I know you can do it.

Anne takes another sip of her tea. Mary looks out the window and back at Anne. Anne places her cup back on the table.

MARY (CONT'D)

I've heard stories. Please help me.
You've got to.

ANNE

Even if I could help you, why should I?

MARY

Because I'm a good person and I don't
want to die.

ANNE

We are all good people and none of us
want to die.

MARY

But you don't understand. I--

ANNE

I've had enough. I do not fix such
problems. I sell herbs and make tea.
Unless you are suffering from
indigestion, please leave.

Anne grabs her broom and sweeps at Mary's feet.

MARY

You'll be sorry about this! I know what
you really are!

ANNE

Out you go. Don't come back.

Anne sweeps Mary out the door and locks it behind her.
She takes off her cloak and hangs it back on the hook.
The cat rubs against Anne's legs.

ANNE (CONT'D)

(to the cat)

Mother wouldn't have done it either.