

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Osmelda

Isabel Gaddis · Wednesday, November 25th, 2020

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Osmelda

By Isabel Gaddis

I was chewing the braided wool rug as one does, keeping the dentition immaculate. You never know when you'll need to bite someone, although I haven't bitten anyone in ages, have I? I'm remembering an ankle, hairy, moldy, who was that? Don't recall, but if that ankle showed up I'd bite it again.

So as I say, I had some squeaky wool right in my teeth when there was a rap rap rap on the cottage door.

I recognized that rap rap rap, and felt a thrill, as I hadn't seen the witch since I was a kitten. It was a winter day, with sun, and I was stretched out in the one rectangle of light on the floor. My attendant was sitting cross-legged on her bed, carding wool at a great clip. She's a fast worker if a bit erratic in her habits.

I leapt up and rubbed the door, leaving chocolate-brown hairs stuck to a damp spot on the wood.

My attendant cocked her head at me like a robin. (I could go for a bite of robin, that's a taste of spring isn't it?)

"Did you invite friends?" she asked me in her irreverent manner, but she got right up, so I don't hold that against her.

She opened the door and there was Osmelda, plumper than last time I saw her. I purred around her clocked cotton stockings and we herringboned into the cottage.

"Your mother sends her warmest regards," she said, and I batted my head against the back of her knee.

Osmelda settled into the one good chair and they conversed in that tedious way that people do. Osmelda had set her large carpetbag on the floor, and I put my front paws up to nose into it. It held her pleasant smell of scorched herbs and roast liver, but there was something else.

“Muzzy has brought me nothing but good luck,” my attendant was saying, which is the right thing to say if you’ve figured out your kitten was sent you by a witch.

I jumped up and into the carpetbag. I found packets of herbs, a magnifying glass with a mother-of-pearl handle, and a lump of something chalky, but best of all was an egg-shaped bundle wrapped in tissue paper.

I think it was an egg.

It smelled very nice, I want to say sardine and burnt feathers. I curled myself around it, warm, dark, and drifted off, ankles, nasty moldy ankles, a robin on a low branch, looking down at me and laughing....

I blinked and saw Osmelda and my attendant peering into the bag.

“I guess he’ll be ok with it,” my attendant said.

“He takes after his mother,” Osmelda said. “Let me know when it hatches.”



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