

Witch, Please

By: Austin Huibers



Chapter 1: The Trials and Tribulations of Being Semi-Witch

Hazel Blackwood stood barefoot in the center of her bedroom, her toes curled over the edge of a poorly drawn chalk circle. She was 19, officially an adult by human standards, but only a provisional witch in the eyes of the coven. Her room smelled like lavender and burnt toast-both magical ingredients in her last failed spell. In the corner, her cat Familiar (unironically named Greg) glared at her from atop a stack of books titled *Hexes for Dummies*, *So You Wanna Be a Witch*, and *I Accidentally Turned My Brother into a Cactus: A Memoir*.

Today was supposed to be the day-the day she got picked up by the Grand Witch who would guide her on the final trial: a sacred journey to all seven wonders of the world. Classic, awe-inspiring, full-of-danger-and-self-discovery-type wonders.

But so far, nothing.

Hazel flopped back on her bed dramatically, accidentally elbowing a jar of preserved frog eyes.

"Ow. Greg, be honest-do you think the Grand Witch forgot about me?"

Greg blinked slowly and proceeded to clean his butt.

Hazel sighed. "You're right. She's probably just fashionably late. Grand Witches love dramatic entrances. Fog, cloaks, minor lightning strikes. The usual. I wonder what she looks like or her name, everyone was so secretive about this process so I'm a little nervous to be honest, I hope she likes me." Somewhere across town, however, the Grand Witch was not preparing her entrance.

She was lying flat in the middle of Route 16, her hat still smoking slightly from being run over by a 2008 Honda Civic.

Chapter 2: MapQuest and Manslaughter

Robin Lane was thirty-five, single, and emotionally allergic to group texts. Her idea of adventure was trying a new gas station taquito and not checking the sodium count. She'd spent the last three months planning a solo road trip to visit seven bizarre roadside attractions. The issue was it was alone. Robin had no family, no friends, no significant other and although she craved companionship, she struggled to meet people.

She had a laminated map-yes, laminated-spread across the passenger seat with seven circles in blue Sharpie:

The World's Largest Ball of Twine (Kansas)

The Museum of Bad Taxidermy (Minnesota)

A House Made Entirely of Spam Cans (Texas)

Elvis's Slightly Used Toothbrush (Nevada)

The Corn Palace (South Dakota)

World's Largest Frying Pan (North Carolina)

Bigfoot's Alleged Toilet (Washington State)

She was three sips into a lukewarm iced coffee when the Grand Witch quite literally appeared out of nowhere.

There was a thud, a scream, and the unmistakable sound of a spellbook hitting asphalt.

Robin skidded to a halt.

“Ohmygodohmygodohmygod.” She jumped out, already mid-panic spiral. “I killed someone. Oh my God, I’m going to jail and I haven’t even seen the frying pan yet!”

The woman on the road looked like she’d walked out of a Halloween store clearance bin: long velvet robes, crooked hat, small broom, faint smell of incense and regret.

She was definitely dead.

Robin stared at the crumpled book next to her. On the cover: Final Witch Trials: Transport Route & Talking Points. Inside: handwritten notes, diagrams, and a picture of a girl with big eyes and bad posture.

Robin picked up the book. Then she picked up the hat.

Then she made the worst decision of her life.

Chapter 3: The Grand Imposter

Hazel stood outside her home with two packed bags, a hopeful smile, and a travel wand she bought on clearance from WitchMart. When a battered Civic pulled up and a nervous-looking woman stepped out in a floppy hat and oversized sunglasses, Hazel's eyes lit up.

"You must be the Grand Witch!"

Robin pushed her sunglasses up. "Yes. It is I. Grand... Witch... uh... Sheryl."

Hazel tilted her head. "Sheryl?"

"Named after the ancient goddess of car snacks. Shall we begin?"

Hazel frowned but nodded. "So... are we going to see the Pyramids first or the Great Wall?"

Robin opened the laminated map and held it upside down. "Change of plans. You see, those are the old wonders. Those are so mainstream. We're visiting the hidden wonders, known only to the magical elite. Didn't anyone tell you about the change in the process, bad start my dear"

"Oh. That makes sense. Like, deep magic stuff."

"Yes. Like, very... spiritually weird. And hot dog adjacent."

Hazel squinted. "What?"

"Nothing. Get in the car."

Greg, who had snuck into Hazel's bag, meowed judgmentally from the backseat.

Robin started the car. "Next stop: Kansas. Land of twine, tornadoes, and terrible diner coffee."

Chapter 4: A Tangled Web We Twine

The World's Largest Ball of Twine was less "grand monument" and more "hay fever hazard." Still, Hazel stared in awe.

"So this is... what? The tangled knowledge of the universe?"

Robin nodded solemnly. "Exactly. Legend says the ball was woven by a thousand witches under the full moon... or one retired guy with carpal tunnel. Interpret as needed."

Hazel circled the massive ball reverently. "Should I touch it?"

Robin paused. "Yes. But only with your soul."

Hazel reached out gently, then jerked back. "It's really warm."

"Yeah, it's been in the sun for five hours."

They wandered through the adjacent gift shop, where Hazel found a postcard of the twine labeled "Yarn of Destiny."

Robin bought a corn dog and a snow globe.

"So what lesson do I write down in my Witch's Journal?" Hazel asked.

Robin thought for a second. “That not all things that appear useless are without meaning. Or sometimes a ball of string is just a ball of string.”

Hazel scribbled furiously. “Wow. Deep.”

Greg yawned.

Back in the Civic, Robin turned the map to stop #2: The Museum of Bad Taxidermy.

“Alright,” she muttered. “Six more to go. I just have to keep up the act, avoid any actual witchcraft, and hope she doesn’t ask me to fly.”

Hazel looked up from her journal. “I’ve heard legend of your flying abilities, when do I get to witness it myself?”

Robin immediately started coughing.

“Choking on the mystery of the universe,” she wheezed. “Very magical.”

Hazel nodded in awe.

Chapter 5: The Museum of Bad Taxidermy

The Civic rattled as it approached the roadside shrine to wildlife gone wrong. Hazel's eyes widened behind her glasses. "I never thought I'd actually see a raccoon with its mouth frozen open in a silent scream."

Robin adjusted her oversized sunglasses and smirked. "It's like a hall of shame for nature. Perfect for witch resilience training."

Inside, Earl, the curator, greeted them with a knowing nod. "Welcome you two, we haven't had visitors at all this week. So, here to learn the fine art of turning failure into folklore?"

Hazel smiled nervously. "Something like that."

They wandered past stuffed owls that looked like they might fall apart if you so much as blinked and a fox that appeared to have been attacked by invisible chainsaws.

Hazel jotted down notes. "Lesson one: Not every spell works. Sometimes the result is just... weird."

Robin nodded sagely. "And that's okay. Sometimes weird is powerful."

As they left, Hazel whispered to Greg, "I think I'm starting to get it."

Chapter 6: The Spam Can Cathedral

Robin's face lit up as they rolled into the parking lot of the Spam Can Cathedral - a towering structure made entirely of canned meat.

Hazel raised an eyebrow. "Is this really a place of power or just a very weird tourist trap?"

Robin shrugged. "Isn't that the question every witch must ask herself?"

Inside, walls glimmered with metallic pink cans, arranged in patterns that oddly resembled ancient runes. Tourists posed with giant Spam cans as if they were relics.

Hazel traced the shapes with her fingers. "I think this is like a metaphor for transformation - taking something basic and making it sacred."

Robin handed her a Spam-flavored snack bar she had sneaked in her purse. "Try this. It's the taste of the cathedral."

Hazel took a tentative bite and promptly made a face somewhere between confused and enchanted. "It's... complex."

Robin laughed. "Welcome to the sacred weirdness of witch trials."

Chapter 7: The Corn Palace

The golden murals of the Corn Palace glistened under the late afternoon sun. Hazel felt a warmth spreading through her chest.

“This place is so alive,” she murmured. “Like the spirit of the harvest is watching.”

Robin handed her a bag of kettle corn. “Plus, free snacks. What’s not to love?”

Hazel performed a hesitant dance around the palace, scattering corn kernels like fairy dust. Tourists stopped and stared, some snapping photos.

Robin whispered, “You just invented a new ritual.”

Hazel grinned. “The Harvest Jig. Catchy, right?”

They spent hours wandering, Hazel drawing symbols in her journal, Robin debating whether to buy a corn-shaped souvenir or just steal one.

As the sun set, Hazel turned to Robin. “I think I’m learning what it means to be a witch - to find magic in the mundane.”

Robin smiled. “And to survive driving with someone who can’t tell a GPS from a spellbook.”

“Wait what?” Hazel replied

“Oh nothing, just a joke. Have to keep you on your toes!” Robin replied with a maniacal laugh

Chapter 8: The World's Largest Frying Pan

The frying pan gleamed in the parking lot like a giant, metallic pizza stone. Hazel ran her hand over its smooth surface.

“Legend says this is where the first witch cooked breakfast for the coven,” Robin said dramatically “Or where someone just really, really loved pancakes.” She finished with a shrug

They set up a makeshift breakfast with instant pancakes and syrup smuggled from a nearby diner. Hazel laughed as syrup dripped down her chin, and Robin tried (and failed) to flip a pancake without making a mess.

“This might be the most magical thing we’ve done yet,” Hazel declared, licking her fingers.

Robin nodded, smiling warmly. “Sometimes, the simplest things are the most powerful child”

Chapter 9: Bigfoot's Alleged Toilet (Washington - The Throne of Mystery)

The winding forest road was narrow and barely marked, but Robin was surprisingly confident behind the wheel. "If we don't find Bigfoot's toilet soon, I'm blaming your spellbook," she joked, glancing sideways at Hazel, who was busy consulting her notes.

Hazel squinted through the windshield. "It's supposed to be right past the 'Welcome to Bigfoot Country' sign. Somewhere between 'Are you lost?' and 'Keep out, y'all.'"

Robin snorted. "That sounds like most forests in America."

After a few more minutes of bumping over potholes and swerving past low hanging branches, a clearing opened up, revealing a small wooden outhouse perched absurdly alone in the middle of a mossy field. It was pristine-almost suspiciously so-with a little sign nailed to the door that read: Bigfoot's Throne - Please Treat with Respect.

Hazel stepped out cautiously, her boots crunching on pine needles. "I can't believe this is a real thing."

Robin shrugged. "Bigfoot probably has standards. Even Sasquatches gotta do their business somewhere."

Hazel approached the toilet slowly, inspecting the weathered wood and slightly crooked door. She ran her fingers over the carved initials - "B.S." - which she decided could stand for "Bigfoot's Seat" or "Brilliant Sasquatch." She whispered,

“There’s a certain... majesty here. Like sitting on this throne connects you to the wild and the mysterious.”

Robin rolled her eyes good-naturedly. “Or it’s just a glorified outhouse someone decided to make weird for tourism.”

Hazel smiled. “Magic is often about intention. So I intend to honor Bigfoot’s privacy.” She carefully closed her eyes and sat down slowly, as if preparing for a meditation ritual.

“Alright, so what now?” Robin asked, leaning against the car with arms crossed. “Do you chant? Throw a spell? Summon a spirit?”

Hazel took a deep breath and then spoke softly: “O mighty Sasquatch, guardian of the forests and legend of the unknown, may your secrets be safe and your footsteps silent. Bless this humble toilet as a seat of wisdom and renewal.”

Robin burst out laughing, but Hazel stayed serious. “I feel... something. Like a tingling in my spine.”

Robin shook her head, smiling. “That’s probably just the mosquito bite from earlier.”

They stood quietly for a moment, the forest around them humming with life- the distant call of a crow, the rustle of leaves, the occasional snap of a twig.

Hazel let the silence wash over her, feeling grounded and strangely empowered.

“Okay,” Hazel finally said, “I think I passed the trial of Bigfoot’s Toilet. What’s next?”

Robin pulled out a small plastic bag from her purse and held it out like a trophy. “We leave offerings. Granola bars, maple syrup packets, and, uh... a half-empty bottle of water.”

Hazel raised an eyebrow. “You brought that?”

Robin grinned sheepishly. “Hey, hydration is important, even for forest spirits.”

They arranged the offerings carefully around the base of the toilet, stepping back respectfully.

Hazel looked at Robin, eyes bright with awe and exhaustion. “You know, this trip has been the strangest and most wonderful journey of my life. I’ve learned so much so far”

Chapter 10: Closing Time at the Weird Wonders

The sun was just dipping behind the hills as Robin pulled the Civic into Hazel's driveway, the last of their weird souvenirs rattling in the back seat. Hazel sat quietly, a thoughtful smile playing on her lips.

"So..." Hazel began, twisting the keys in her lap. "That was quite a trip, huh?"

Robin nodded, nervously fingering the steering wheel. "Yeah. Seven weird wonders. Seven lessons. And zero magical mishaps."

Hazel's eyes twinkled as she looked over. "You know, I've been thinking. Not once did you ever actually do any magic. No glowing orbs, no spells, no disappearing acts..."

Robin cleared her throat. "Yeah, well. I figured, sometimes the best magic is fake magic."

Hazel laughed softly. "And the broom? You never actually flew it."

Robin's smile faltered just a bit. "I'm more of a 'walk it off' kind of witch."

Hazel leaned back and gave a playful smirk. "You're not the Grand Witch, are you?"

Robin exhaled, giving a sheepish grin. "Guilty as charged. I'm just a woman with a map, a borrowed hat, and a questionable sense of direction."

Hazel grinned. "I kinda suspected. But honestly? You made this whole thing magic anyway."

Robin laughed, relief flooding her face. "Thanks, kid. That means a lot."

Just then, the front door creaked open, and a tall figure stepped onto the porch, robes billowing in the evening breeze, staff in hand, and an unmistakable aura of command.

"Ah, Hazel Thistlewhit," said the newcomer with a sly smile. "I am Grand Witch Paloma, replacement on short notice."

Hazel blinked. "Replacement?"

Paloma chuckled dryly. "Yes, the original Grand Witch was... unfortunately taken out in a bizarre vehicular incident involving a Honda Civic and a gas station parking lot."

Robin waved sheepishly from the car. "Yeah, about that..."

Hazel laughed, shaking her head. "Well, I guess you really are the replacement."

Paloma stepped forward, eyes twinkling with mischief. "Don't worry - the trial is real, and so is the magic. But I have a feeling you've already passed the hardest part: embracing the chaos and making it your own."

Robin grinned. "And if you ever need a tour guide to roadside weirdness, you know who to call."

Hazel smiled warmly. "Thanks, Robin. For everything."

As Robin drove off into the fading light, Hazel turned to Paloma, heart full of excitement and curiosity.

"Ready for the real adventure?" Paloma asked.

Hazel gripped her broomstick tighter, then paused, eyes narrowing playfully. "Just one question..."

Paloma raised an eyebrow. "Yes?"

"Do you happen to know where I can find a GPS that actually works?"

They both burst into laughter as the porch light flickered mysteriously - or maybe it was just a loose bulb.

The night settled around them, quiet but full of possibilities - because sometimes, the real magic starts just when you think the story is over.

Author's Thoughts

Witch, Please follows Hazel, a young witch seeking validation, and Robin, a lonely woman pretending to be a Grand Witch. Their journey through America's oddest roadside wonders becomes a quest not for magic itself, but for meaning, belonging, and self-discovery.

The story explores how true power lies not in rituals or titles, but in the courage to embrace imperfection, the unexpected connections that shape us, and the freedom found in rewriting the rules of one's own life.