

Special Delivery

November 25, 2016

Summer 2016

During one moment late at night in the archives, Seth proposed that Remy had guided me, from the other side, to help with this project. It is a big idea. What happens when we are no longer a part of this world? Is there still influence? Where are we, in the web? What is the web, and when is the web, and where is the makeup between this, life, and that, beyond death? How does it all work, within space and time, and without? And if Seth is right, then when did it start? May I make it so? Or did it make me? When did it start paying attention?

Fall 2014

Rummaging the thrift stores of Sonoma County, I was seeking material to appropriate for a holiday project. My curiosity was drawn to anything that might dictate a festive spirit. One small, yellowing book with a red cover, *The Tree Angel*, landed in my hands. The simple graphics of pine trees and an angel suited my needs, and for fifty cents the price was right. Returning home, I turned its pages a bit more thoughtfully and soon realized this was not a new story, that my first encounter with this angel had been years before, and full of drama, and intrigue, and a neck brace. There was a connection.

Fall 1982

As the youngest little whippersnapper in a house full of brightness, my first grade teacher, Mrs. Stonewell, likely saw me as the obvious, fully dependable choice for a lead in the upcoming production of *The Tree Angel*. I would memorize the lines, speak confidently with a well-projected voice, and likely not fall into a protracted nervousness in front of the audience of many students. In my role as the woodsman, I was asked to challenge the belief that decimating all the trees from the forest was a good idea. After engaging with a beautiful angel and meeting a cast of animals, flowers and talking trees, my ways were changed, and the trees then soared into a higher realm of being. There is something more.

So proud of my stardom, I don't think my little ego realized I was the villain. I spent days creating the perfect cardboard axe. I remember my costume, too. I wore it to school the day of the show: jeans, a white turtleneck underneath a red plaid flannel, and a neck brace. Yes, this little diva had slept on his neck wrong and couldn't move his head from left to right, so my Mom wrapped me up with a neck brace before sending me to school.

Kids would be kids, but I confidently countered their heckles. I still remember the 5th grader in the bathroom. My nervousness had pulled me from class to go recite lines somewhere more private. When this ten-year-old saw me, he ridiculed my look, but with my gaze from the mirror, I stared him down. "I'm the lead in the play. The show must go on." With the swish of a turn, I departed by way of the squeaky bathroom door. And the show did go on, and it left a mark. Or maybe it was Remy.



James Metzger as the woodsman in *The Tree Angel*, circa 1982.

Fall 2009

Life had left plenty more marks on me by this point. Finally ascending from the darkness of addiction, I found myself moving from less than ideal circumstances into an apartment of my own. Collecting random memories from storage, I came across my handmade axe. The edges of cardboard felt more than familiar in my grip. I saved it from the dust bin and nestled it on top of the books on my dresser.

Winter 2015

Taking a year off work to sequester in West Sonoma County, I still displayed my axe with great honor. Underneath its perch, a picture of my six-year-old woodsman self was framed.



Spring 2016

While I had known of Seth Eisen, from seeing *Homo File* a couple years before, I only first met him at a gathering in Saratoga Springs. After a night of challenging conversation whirled within hours of dance, he invited me to come and brainstorm with him on his developing project, *Rainbow Logic*, the following week. What was to be a couple of simple hours extended into months of collaboration.

Summer 2016

One evening in the archive, glancing over the bookshelf, I was drawn to a small red book, *The Tree Angel* and the variety of pieces fell into order. And I shared these stories with Seth. And amidst the tendrils of magic consistently weaving throughout this creative process, Seth proposed that Remy had chosen me to help with the project, from the other side. It is a big idea.

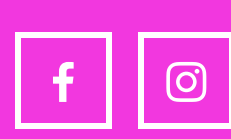
What happens in this world when we are no longer a part of it? Where are we in the web? How are we remembered and what do we leave behind? The questions, now, have become a bit different, but that's what happens when things come around again, and again, and there is work being done. Things find new flavors. They offer new insights. We learn new things and see things in new ways. But still, where is the interstitial makeup between this life and what's next? How does it all work, within space and time, and without? What is a story and how does perception tell us what is true? Will we be remembered? Will it come around again? And since it is true, when did it start? I make it so. And it makes me.

Does it all begin with paying attention? It all begins with paying attention.

James Metzger worked as the assistant director in *Rainbow Logic*. A meager impression of his creative self can be found at edwardbutcher.com. Enjoy his crafty little humorous book, *eddie the nomadic lemming*, from [amazon](http://amazon.com).

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