

## Junipers

By Stephen Ribuffo

Nobody knew the meaning behind juniper. Some believed it rotated around the daffodils; others thought they hovered just about the barely. The only one who knew the junipers was the Quintessential Fox. Many questioned the Quintessential Fox's sanity, saying he was delirious with whirligigs and ginger snaps. The Quintessential Fox would reply, with slight sarcastic undertones that if gingers snaps and whirligigs were delusions of sanity then perhaps he should juggle pantomimes in his underwear. Many were offended by the Fox's insight and understanding of the universe. All but one, who was Anonymous. Anonymous had spent much of its time on the moon contemplating the relative relationship between semicolons and marks, so it was very keen to the cleverness of Quintessential Fox, despite his need to over exaggerate the needs of yarn and otherwise helpful noodles. To the dismay of many the Quintessential Fox and his friend Anonymous would spend much of their leisurely time propounding philosophies that would--might--ground or perhaps question the meaning of the junipers themselves. Most believed the junipers should be left well alone since they were snobby, anyway. Sad Quail had one day overheard the rambling of Quintessential Fox and decided to see what the ruckus was about. It turned out to be nothing since the fox was talking in his sleep. Fearing that the fox might wake up and eat her Sad Quail quickly donned a disguise much resembling that of a weeping willow. Some say it was suitable that Sad Quail dressed as a weeping willow, but anyone who knew anything about Sad Quail would say that it was rather ironic. She merely had the unfortunate luck of being raised by the

Underkittens of Miramar; if there was one thing about the Underkittens of Miramar it was that they had a reputation of being ironic. They also had a reputation of shaving pixies with stemware (that's neither here nor there). Anonymous had been speaking with a marsupial suffering a drug addiction, but decided to leave when the conversation was getting good. He happened upon Sad Quail, who was sitting beside a sleeping Quintessential Fox and exclaimed,

"Lo, the weeping willow who sits beside my slumbering friend! What is it that you may have knowledge of the junipers!"

The weeping willow, which was Sad Quail, was startled. She had never met Anonymous and, frankly, didn't know who it was.

"Be still, stranger," Sad Quail replied, "I have seen the junipers, but have yet to meet their acquaintance. I was merely about my way when I heard your friend rambling only to find he was asleep."

Anonymous nodded. "Yes, Quintessential Fox does have a tendency to ramble," it thought of something, "willows don't 'about way!' Show me as I might make your acquaintance!"

Sad Quail blinked. "Who are you, have we met?"

"I'm Anonymous."

"If you are anonymous, how am I supposed to know you?"

"It is mere knowledge of those who giggle rocks, Styrofoam, and ant lions that may possess the know."

Stunned by its words Sad Quail removed her disguise. "I am stunned by your words," she said. "How is it that you possess such insight?"

"Wake my friend, and we shall reveal that of the junipers so you no longer live in dig nation."

Sad Quail began to cry with happiness and shook Quintessential Fox awake, but upon awaking the fox Anonymous had forgotten to mention that essentially one must wake a Quintessential Fox with eggs and construction nails. It was perhaps a sad thing that Quintessential Fox had eaten Sad Quail, for no one saw it coming.

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