

Issue 28

Amber's Update



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Scary Clown



Scary Beast from Maurice Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are exhibit, Denver Museum of Art. Let the rumpus begin!

Scary Scary Scary
and not in a Richard Scary kind of way

It's difficult to think about sending an update that ignores the political happenings of the last week. What else is there besides the election results right now? This

affects us all, and although there are many educated and uneducated guesses about *how* it will affect us, we don't really know yet. So we are in this period of trying to wrap our hearts and heads around what happened, what it means, and how we will move forward. We are feeling anger, fear, confusion, distrust and even apathy (a survival response).

I personally was in something of a state of shock for a few days, digesting how decisive the election was. And now I am overwhelmed by discerning what to read and learn about the election, what it means, the changes coming, and all the distracting breaking news alerts.

My husband is making sense of things in his own way, analyzing numbers and creating a spreadsheet tracking voter turnout among other things, finding a story emerging from the data.

Writer [Lyz Lenz](#) says, "There (is) no longer any such thing as 'mainstream media.' All media is niche media now." She points out, "Not every platform is bad. But not one platform is all good."

We are watching old and powerful news sources shattering and dying, and the rise of something new. News in this moment is a tough and unappetizing media stew. I am looking for less spin and drama and more independence in my new sources.

This election is a repudiation of "the elite." I don't like being called elite, but I fit the profile. As do you, dear reader. Last year, while traveling, this elite met a variety of human I had not encountered before; an outspoken Maga supporter who is an openly gay white male. Circumstances caused me to spend more time with him than I would have chosen. But I was curious. As I got to know him, both his kind-hearted side and his brash way of using money as power, I thought he was an anomaly. How wrong I was, I see that now. He was only an anomaly in my bubble, my [Dunbar's](#) circle, as I was perhaps in his.

I can't claim to know what the next few months hold. It's probably going to be a rough road in some ways. The only prediction I'm going out on a limb for is this. Let it be said here, I predict the resurgence of crocheted doilies. After a long streak as profoundly out-of-date and old-fashioned, they are having a moment. However,

they will no longer be used simply on tables or backs of chairs. Maybe our great-grandmothers were on to something, making them as a way to relieve stress before antidepressants, to demonstrate skill in a limited job market, and as a symbol of prestige before athleisure wear and designer sunglasses.



Doilies crocheted by my grandmother Constance, used for things she would not have used them for. The doily tire cover, not made by my grandmother, was spotted in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Three Things

1

As a reminder that there is still some hope, joy and humor left in the world, despite signs to the contrary, I'd like to give you some fun, beautiful and profound things to ponder.

This song, [Plowshare Prayer by Spencer LaJoye](#), is powerful and passionate. Take a listen, to the whole thing. Thank you to my friend, poet and artist Jean Reinhold for bringing it to my attention.

2

[Singularity \(after Stephen Hawking\) by Marie Howe](#)

Check out this lovely little video. Poetry and science, set to artwork. This gave me an expanded perspective that I need right now. I am a big fan of cellist [Zoë Keating](#) who wrote the score.

3

Artist [Wendy MacNaughton on The Role of the Artist](#) (paywall removed for this week). She reminds me of the power of the pen, and also has some great ideas of what to do to prepare for what's next.

4

[The Marginalian](#) is a smart and nerdy newsletter by Maria Popova, an author, voracious reader, and essayist. Her newsletter has been described as an emporium of ideas. I suspect that reading and exploring her work really does make you smarter, or at least a more interesting conversationalist. Wouldn't it be nice to discuss something other than the election results?

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Things to drink right now.



Best regards

Amber McClain Shaw, writer/artist/ambivert

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