



## COALESCENCE

Mabel, episode twenty-four: Coalescence. In which two halves occasionally make a whole.

[INTRO]

ANNA: - Anna Limon -

AUTOMATED TELEPHONE VOICE: - is not available. At the tone, please record your message.

[BEEP]

**MABEL:** It's - she - the way she closed up like a *fist* -

I killed someone. I killed someone. I killed someone I killed someone I killed someone I killed someone -

[CRYING] Anna, Anna, I did it - I - no, it's. It isn't true, it isn't - it's not *real*. I can't blame you for this, Anna. I killed someone, I killed someone. It would be easy to lay this at your feet, like an offering, a gift, the work of a creature who couldn't possibly know better. A cat leaving food for its big, dumb, silly, good cohabitant. A mouse, a bird, a stoat at your doorstep. But animals only follow their instincts. They are pure in a way I am not. I knew what I was doing. I knew.

It isn't your fault, Anna. It isn't. I don't want - I don't want you to - you can hate me, please hate me, please consign me to the hell that exists without you in it, the despair of the endless, godless pit - but don't - it isn't your fault. None of this is your fault. I need you to know that. I *need* you to. My family - my mother and her mother and her mother and her mother and her mother the ocean and the moon and the stars and the living dark all coalescing into the curse come to bear down upon the Martin house and the Martin name and the Martin blood, *my blood, Anna, its impurity* infecting you –

[STATIC]

**ANNA:** – something I never told you before, something I never told anyone. I used to be obsessed with – god, how do I explain? With de-realising myself, with depersonalizing the world around me. I used to wait until everyone in the house was asleep and pick up my sister's hand-mirror, the one she kept on her desk, and walk around the dark house with it cradled at my chest, looking down so I could see everything – everything backwards, everything its anti-self, and I'd just. Walk and walk the house up and down over and over and over until every solid thing, every known thing was made unfamiliar. Like even then I was trying to walk myself backwards into your kingdom.

[STATIC]

**MABEL:** I just want you to get out. Can you find your way out of me, do you think? Out of the labyrinth of me? I'll set myself on fire to give you light. I don't want you to be lost. I don't want you to be stuck. I just want you to be free, and joyous, and buoyant.

[CRYING]

Her throat under me - the way it *cracked* –

[STATIC]

**ANNA:** I dreamed about her, about you killing her. I was off to one side watching you do it and I was her, too, I could feel all the twigs and kindling of my neck crick and crackle when you put your hands around me, and both of us, both of the mes, were laughing. It wasn't a nightmare. I woke up – Mabel, I woke up *needing* you, you artery ripped loose from me all bloody and twining. They are singing in the depths of the hill. Time rattles on its hinges

down here. The king is unthroned now, all bones and sinew and ligament, his crown wound from dead leaves, dry bark, bare thorns, red holly berries, icicles. He paces the underworld like a black cat. This will be my first season down here. Or is it – ? Is it longer? How long have I – ? What day is it, Mabel? What month? What year? How long have I been sleeping underneath this hawthorn tree? If I crawl out – if I ever crawl out – will the whole world be changed, my family dead, me an old woman and you long gone...somewhere? Where, where would you go? How could you leave me?

[BEEP]

**MABEL:** - the door, the trap, the way - I can't do it, there's no moon, there's no sun, there's no *impetus* for the land to split open and let me -

[SIGHS] If this was a fair story, you would have already come back to me, Anna. Killing her would have done it. Isn't that what they say in all the old books, that destroying the stick creature brings back flesh, brings back warmth and comfort and your loved ones to the world? You would be here now, not stuck in the wet earth of me, the land of eternal twilight. If only they ever followed their own rules.

Instead I have to do it myself. Like every other goddamn thing.

[BEEP]

[WALKING]

**MABEL:** Alright. Alright. I can do it. You can do it, gillygirl. You can do it for Anna. For Anna.

[RUNNING]

Hey. Hey!

[DISTANT HOUSE NOISES]

I've come to barter!

[HOUSE ROARING]

Right, we had a *volatile* conversation. (laughs) I will not apologize for burning you to a husk of yourself. Fire purifies. Anyway, you started it. I did what I had to. And see how I have kept my promise? Here I am, bloodied and burnt, killer and curer.

[HOUSE NOISES]

We both know you were going to get me back one way or another, eat me alive. That's what you want, isn't it? Isn't that what you've always wanted, since the flesh and bark of me kicked into the world? Since I crawled burnt out of the grinning mirror and wrapped myself up in a girl's life? Oh, I remember everything. I remember the stairs and the attic and the parlor and the basement and the endless dark of the hallways. Do you think I'm as fickle as a human?

[HOUSE NOISES]

Don't whine. It makes you repulsive. Here!

[THROWING SOUND]

A braid of my hair, a birch rod of my blood, a vine torn from my bone. Three times three is a vow. What did I tell you? I'm here, aren't I? So come on! Let me in! Let me in, you old, pathetic *coward* -

[HOUSE SCREAMS, DEVOURS]

[BEEP]

[GARBLED SCREAMING]

[BEEP]

[GARBLED SCREAMING]

**ANNA:** Mabel?

**MABEL:** I didn't - I killed you, you're -

**ANNA:** How did you - what's - you're bleeding, what -

**MABEL:** How *dare* you take her face again, do you want me to *burn you alive* -

**ANNA:** are you – are those *matches*? What do you think you're doing?

**MABEL:** I'm going to - Anna? Is it - is this really you, are you - are you here?

**ANNA:** Of course I'm here, I've *been* here the whole – what are *you* doing here, how did you – oh my god, Mabel, are you –

**MABEL:** It's fine, I'm - I'm not hurt, it's not - serious, don't worry about me, why are you here, I thought - I thought you got out, maybe, I thought you *left* -

**ANNA:** It's *fine*? You're – half your hair is – what happened to your arm? Let me –

**MABEL:** No! I'm okay! You don't have to fix me up! You have to get out of here!

**ANNA:** Out of *where*? Where are we? What did you – what did you *do*?

**MABEL:** I - it's nothing to do with you!

**ANNA:** It's nothing – what are you *talking* about?

**MABEL:** Forget about me. I think if we just look for a way out I can talk to it and let it - let it let you go, maybe, if you just give me a bit -

**ANNA:** Are you – you just – oh my god, Mabel, are you seriously – you turn up out of, out of nowhere, and you're just –

**MABEL:** I do *not* have time for this, you can be angry at me later, you can scream and rage at me when you're not in danger anymore -

**ANNA:** You? Do not have *time* for this? I have been stuck down here in the dark with nothing but your voice going on and on and on about oh, how terrible you are and oh, how I should just forget you and on, and on, and on, and now that you're – I don't know, what are you! *What are you?* You don't have *time* for this? I can't –

**MABEL:** Look at me! I'm just - I'm not even a *person* anymore, I never was, you don't know anything, you think you sacrificed yourself for me when all I wanted was for you to *get out* -

**ANNA:** God, so which one is it? Am I the martyr or are you? We can't both be the sacrificial lamb, one of us has got to be -

**MABEL:** The knife? Oh, Anna, Saint Anna, we just trade off being the knife, and today it's me, the bitch queen of hell, I'm going to push you out of here if it's the last thing I do because otherwise this just never ends, it never ends, it never -

**ANNA:** [shoving NOISES] Will you just be quiet for one - god - damned - minute -

**MABEL:** [LAUGHS]

**ANNA:** Why are you - [ALSO LAUGHS]

**MABEL:** There are other ways to get me to shut up, you know.

**ANNA:** I've been trapped in this place for - a while. This seemed like the best option.

**MABEL:** Yeah. You're - very strong. Did you...want to let me go, or...

**ANNA:** ...Not yet.

**MABEL:** Doesn't - feel so bad when you do it.

**ANNA:** Really, though. How did you -

[HOUSE NOISES]

**MABEL:** Go, go go go go go - !

[RUNNING]

[BEEP]

[HOWLING; ROARING]

[BEEP]

**MABEL:** - not a linear thing, it's - a cycle, a constant recurring mess -

**ANNA:** Okay, but I asked you how you got down here. Do you want to maybe try that again?

**MABEL:** I am answering! It's repetition, I - I was in the garden, and I killed you - not you but - the other - [HYPERVENTILATES]

**ANNA:** Calm down. Look at me.

**MABEL:** Yes. It's - I'm sorry. I was - after I - before all that, I told the house...something. Made a promise.

**ANNA:** It wants you.

**MABEL:** I know. I thought I could - leverage that, maybe. To get you out. To free you. It wouldn't let me leave, before, when I tried to, and then I had to burn down the entire south wing to get out -

**ANNA:** You did *what*?

**MABEL:** I - so what? I burned it down. It wouldn't let me out so I set it on fire. It's not unreasonable, it's *my* house -

**ANNA:** It's *my* house! I didn't even - I didn't even know it had a south wing! You burned -

**MABEL:** Oh, your house, my house, who cares! It wouldn't let me leave! I was trying to help you! And anyway I'm not going to be trapped again -

**ANNA:** You were trying to help me? By burning down my house, getting yourself thrown back in here, almost burning *me* down -

**MABEL:** No, that was just - I thought you were someone - *something* else.

**ANNA:** [PAUSE] Do you still think that?

**MABEL:** No. [CRIES] I don't think so. I don't want to -

**ANNA:** Stop, stop. Mabel, don't. It's me. It's *me*, I promise.

**MABEL:** I believe you. I always believe you. I'm - it's okay, I'm fine. Sorry.

**ANNA:** You keep saying that.

**MABEL:** It's my fault. I should have - warned you away, a long time ago, I should have let you go, instead of - I just. It's my fault you're here. You shouldn't be.

**ANNA:** No, you're right. I forgot you're responsible for every terrible thing that happens to me and everyone else. You're just that wicked, just that *bad*, aren't you?

**MABEL:** [LAUGHS] Oh, Anna. I'll bet you fit right in under the hill.

**ANNA:** Tell me, how did you fit in down here? They like riddles, they like girls who rig every game. What do you want me to say? Do you want me to apologise for all the hours I've spent listening to you? I tried to claw you out of my ear drums, you know that? But nothing worked, I couldn't stop hearing you, all your grandiose self pity and your -

**MABEL:** No one. Made you. Save me. So did you do it of your own free will or did I chain you to me? I'm sorry for - for *talking* at you constantly, that can be *remedied*, I can get you out of here and you won't have to deal with anything like this ever again -

**ANNA:** You're right. You're right! No one made me save you, I *chose* to. So how can it be your fault? How can *everything* be your fault? Am I autonomous or am I an automaton? Which one is it?

**MABEL:** I don't know, *I don't know*, why don't you claw *that* out of your ears -

**ANNA:** You're always so *right*. It must be such a *burden*. I must hate you, isn't that it? That's why I'm down here, that's why I did all this, because I want you gone. God, you're so clever! You just see right to the heart of everything, Mabel Martin with her ghost-green eyes, what's it *like* to know everything so *perfectly* -

**MABEL:** [LAUGHS] It's just no fun at all, Anna. Saint Anna. With your impetuous hair and your pretty skin. I can fictionalize you too. [PAUSES] I heard you, you know.

**ANNA:** Did you hear me call myself terrible, say all of this was my fault?

**MABEL:** [CHEERFULLY] Nope. But I heard you command me not to leave you. I liked that.

**ANNA:** So you're just following orders?

**MABEL:** Yes, that's me, Mabel Martin, the obedient girl. I am with you because I want to be. That's all.

**ANNA:** I'm here because I want to be. [PAUSE] I want you here.

**MABEL:** Good. *Good.*

**ANNA:** I guess I know what I'd do if I met my best friend in [hell](#).

**MABEL:** Push her against a wall?

**ANNA:** You were *asking* for that.

**MABEL:** Well. I mean, yeah.

**ANNA:** You admit it?

**MABEL:** Christ-child, Anna, do I have to *beg* –

[GENERAL SCUFFLING, GASPING]

**MABEL:** Right. Okay. Yep. So - so -

**ANNA:** I didn't – I – I think I missed you.

**MABEL:** I don't - I don't know what to say. [LAUGHS] It might be easier to fight with you. I know how to - defend myself. I'm not sure I know how to respond to genuine affection.

**ANNA:** I'm still mad at you, if that helps.

**MABEL:** It does. I almost became self-aware.

**ANNA:** God, can you imagine?

**MABEL:** Will you - do it again?

**ANNA:** Do what? Yell at you?

**MABEL:** No, not - nevermind. We still need to figure out how we're going to get you out of this place.

**ANNA:** We? We never agreed I was going to -

**MABEL:** Well, there is no democracy in Fairy Hill, so I'm going to make sure you leave one way or another -

**ANNA:** You think you can force me to do anything I don't want to do?

**MABEL:** Really? *Really?* After you couldn't *claw* me out, after you had to listen to the same thing over and over again, after you were here in the dark with the water and the moon and the king in the labyrinth - you don't want to leave?

**ANNA:** I didn't say - I'm not leaving without you. All right? I'm not.

**MABEL:** Well - too bad, Anna! Too damn bad! I *can't* leave, I'm stuck here forever, I made a promise -

**ANNA:** Jealous of my martyrdom? Couldn't stand all that mortification falling only to me? Had to get yourself a *piece*, did you?

**MABEL:** Yeah, because that's what I want! To be stuck here! That's why I've tried desperately to leave for literally my entire life, only to have barter myself for you! Why don't you crawl back to your normal friends and your normal life that you had, that's waiting for you, away from all this *rot*. I am not jealous of you cutting pieces off of yourself for someone you don't even want to hear. [LAUGHS] But you're right. I am jealous of your *life*. Go back to your family, Anna. Go back to someone who wants you.

**ANNA:** I'm sorry you *had* to barter yourself for me. I'm sorry - no, really, I'm sorry to be such an obligation to you. [SOUNDS OF MOVING AWAY, WALKING BACK] You know what? Maybe I haven't lived my whole life in a haunted mansion with the black underworld howling at my heels, maybe I haven't seen what you've seen, but I'm not *stupid*. Say what you want about me, Mabel, but don't ever lie to me. I know *exactly* what you want.

**MABEL:** I didn't lie. I can't. I just - I don't know what you want from me. Usually I know. But I don't, with you. It's...frustrating.

**ANNA:** I want – it doesn't matter. [SIGHS] You bartered with the house once already. Why can't you do it again, so we can both leave?

**MABEL:** It does matter. What you want - it matters to me, Anna.

**ANNA:** Let's just find a way out.

**MABEL:** I will.

**ANNA:** Good.

**MABEL:** - if you never say that again.

**ANNA:** No wonder they didn't want to let you go.

**MABEL:** Yes, I'm easily commodified or whatever. Agree to my terms. I have an idea.

**ANNA:** You're such a brat.

**MABEL:** Right you are. Do you agree or not? I'm very patient.

**ANNA:** Mother of – fine. Tell me your idea.

**MABEL:** I promised the house I would always come back to it. [PAUSES] I mean, before I burned it down. That made it angry, for some reason.

**ANNA:** For some reason.

**MABEL:** Mm. Anyway, so this last time - I didn't know how else to try and find you, except to bargain with it. I gave it my - some things that it can use to bind me to it, permanently. But it's - the house is a physical manifestation, a physical presence. My gift to it has to be hidden somewhere. If we can find it, maybe - I don't know. Maybe we can use it to get out, somehow. It's something, anyway.

**ANNA:** Any clue where?

**MABEL:** Um. No.

[BEEP]

[WALKING, IN SILENCE, UNTIL THE TWO OF THEM SPEAK AT THE SAME TIME]

**MABEL:** So -

**ANNA:** I shouldn't have said -

[BOTH STOP TALKING]

**MABEL:** No, no, go ahead.

**ANNA:** It doesn't - ugh.

**MABEL:** [LAUGHS]

**ANNA:** Do you ever think that -

**MABEL:** Think what?

**ANNA:** I heard everything you said.

**MABEL:** I know.

**ANNA:** I heard you - the way you talked about me. It's not - I'm not -

**MABEL:** You're not what?

**ANNA:** Nothing.

**MABEL:** You are not god? You are not holy? You are not beloved, and good, and bright, and -

**ANNA:** Stop, stop it. Jesus, stop.

**MABEL:** Actually, in this scenario, I would be Lucifer.

**ANNA:** Just the devil on my shoulder?

**MABEL:** Your favorite, I hope.

**ANNA:** Do you really not know what I want from you?

**MABEL:** I am afraid of influencing you unduly.

**ANNA:** Wait, look. What is that?

**MABEL:** A - door, I think.

**ANNA:** Kind of - Chekov's gun, isn't it? If there's a door in the first act –

**MABEL:** So literary. It could be a trap.

**ANNA:** The house doesn't want to trap you. It wants you fair and square.

**MABEL:** No, it's - you're right. You're probably right.

[DOOR GROANING OPEN]

**ANNA:** It's - oh. [PAUSE] Do you still have those matches?

**MABEL:** Always.

**ANNA:** Which one of us is Theseus now?

**MABEL:** Both? Neither? Who gets to kill the bull?

**ANNA:** Only god.

**MABEL:** So, you, then. Fine.

**ANNA:** I set myself up for that one.

**MABEL:** You surely did, Saint Anna.

**ANNA:** You have to stop calling me that.

**MABEL:** Mm. Do I? Or what?

**ANNA:** You want me to *make* you?

**MABEL:** A little bit, yes. [PAUSES] We're. Going off-script, a bit.

**ANNA:** What's the script? The two heroines swashbuckle into the labyrinth to kill the monster?

**MABEL:** No. I told you - the monster is me. [LIGHTS MATCH]

**ANNA:** You're right, I forgot. You're every monster under every bed, you're the poison running through the veins of the house, you're the blight on the Martin land - does it ever get confusing, all these different boulders you have to keep pushing endlessly up that hill?

**MABEL:** Dear me. We have very different ideas of villainy. I'm having a grand old time.

**ANNA:** As long as you're happy, King Mabel.

**MABEL:** [LAUGHS]

[HOUSE SCREAMS]

**ANNA:** Shit, he's - god damn it, can you hear - we have to -

**MABEL:** Will you just *run*, I can handle -

**THE KING IN THE LABYRINTH:** Don't give the farmer his fun - fun - fun - he can get by without his rabbit pie - so run, rabbit, run, rabbit, run. Run. Run.

[ROARING]

**ANNA:** I'm not *leaving* you to him -

**MABEL:** Just get out! Just get -

**ANNA:** Listen to me, you stubborn changeling *brat*, *I'm not leaving without you*. I'm not leaving you again, do you hear me? If the house wants you fair and square, if it wants you in one piece, it's just going to have to let us -

[ALL NOISES SUDDENLY STOP]

**ANNA:** - out.

**MABEL:** Well, that's. Odd.

**ANNA:** Did he just - disappear? Or did we?

**MABEL:** No, it's - you just said. You made a deal with it. Or him. Or me. Or whatever this place really is.

**ANNA:** I didn't make a deal, I - I gave an order.

**MABEL:** Anna - the house - it's - it's *in your name*. You own it. The estate. Everything.

**ANNA:** Those - those things matter, don't they? Ownership, property rights. It gives me - what does it give me?

**MABEL:** Power over physicality, over - over the manifestation of -

**ANNA:** - matter?

**MABEL:** Yes, I - I think. Probably over any construct grounded in the laws of - feudalistic hierarchies, the way they are under the hill. Older, crueller, less nuanced, more morally complicated. [PAUSES] Probably...over me, too. [LAUGHS] What was that about you not being god?

**ANNA:** You are. *Insufferably*. Smug.

**MABEL:** You don't seem to be suffering too greatly.

**ANNA:** On the other hand, you're still bleeding.

**MABEL:** I've had worse.

**ANNA:** And I've gone to nursing school. Let me see.

**MABEL:** I - I don't want to. I mean. No, thank you.

**ANNA:** You're trying so hard to be a person.

**MABEL:** Failing, clearly.

**ANNA:** Neither of us are people. Not anymore. If we ever were.

**MABEL:** Ha, sure. We're just the same. What was nursing school like?

**ANNA:** Not that much different from expensive boarding school, I'd guess.

**MABEL:** No, they got very cross when I'd stitch things up, there. How do you know about that, anyway?

**ANNA:** I put on a better *person* face than you do. People talked to me. Your grandmother, for one.

**MABEL:** That's nice. I hope dear old dead Sally talked about how she left - nevermind. It's not important. What are we going to do about leaving?

**ANNA:** It's not important?

**MABEL:** No.

**ANNA:** I don't know how you can - [STOPS, BREATHE] I know how you see me, but you don't - you have no idea how I see you. You don't know what you mean to me. You don't know anything.

**MABEL:** I don't know anything. Alright. Well, I know what I can infer from your behavior. I suppose that's it.

**ANNA:** What behaviour? How I tried to save you?

**MABEL:** Yes.

**ANNA:** Yeah, I can see how you would *infer* from that how unimportant I think you are.

**MABEL:** Did I say that? No, I did not. I cut myself off from whining about how my gr - how Sally hated me even when I was a child in an anecdote that would have bored us all to tears. Pardon me.

**ANNA:** Nothing about you bores me to tears. You're - never mind.

**MABEL:** I'm what?

**ANNA:** You're the only one who doesn't bore me. You're...you're endlessly - you're endless.

**MABEL:** [QUIET] Oh.

**ANNA:** Anyway.

**MABEL:** Doesn't - does it bother you, then? That I'm - not fixed? That's - it's kind of why you're trapped, isn't it?

**ANNA:** I'm trapped because of a choice I made. You know that. [SIGHS] It bothers me that you won't let me look at your arm. That's it.

**MABEL:** You'll - you're going to be angry if you do.

**ANNA:** I told you, I'm angry at you already.

**MABEL:** Fine. Don't yell.

[VINE NOISES; CLOTH AND SKIN]

**ANNA:** *Jesus Christ, Mabel, what the –*

**MABEL:** It's not that bad, calm down!

**ANNA:** I can see your *bone*, you want *me* to calm down - ?

**MABEL:** It's not important. It doesn't matter.

**ANNA:** Stop saying that.

**MABEL:** I mean it's - it's over and done with, is all. There's nothing I can do about it now, there's no point getting upset.

**ANNA:** Maybe not for you. You're insanely cavalier with your own self, you know that?

**MABEL:** It's not my own self. Or it's - only one of them. I don't know.

**ANNA:** I forgot. You – willed yourself to the house, the way Sally willed the house to me.

**MABEL:** Right, yes, all of my inheritance is yours, of course, obviously.

**ANNA:** You said I had power. How much, do you think?

**MABEL:** Why?

**ANNA:** I don't know. I'm not sure. Let me try - this is so stupid. [CLEARS THROAT] You moved the walls of the labyrinth before. Do it again. Bring us to Mabel's – *gift*.

[HOUSE NOISES]

**MABEL:** Well, it heard you. [COUGHS] Are you sure you were *commanding* enough? You always sound sort of sweet, to me.

**ANNA:** It worked, didn't it? I mean – we're *somewhere*. Do you see – ?

**MABEL:** It's too dark. I'm going to light - I'll light something. [MATCH LIGHTS]

**ANNA:** What did you – is that – Jesus.

**MABEL:** I'll put it out before it gets to what's left of my hair.

**ANNA:** Oh, wonderful. As long as you do that. [PAUSE] Is that it, over there?

**MABEL:** I think so. I'll go get it, don't -

**ANNA:** No, I've got it, there's – what – [DROPPING, SHUFFLING SOUNDS] That's just. That's amazing. I was wondering where that *missing piece of your ulna went*, thank god you've kept it safe, I was starting to worry! What else - you did this for – you did this to yourself, you did it – why, Mabel? For me? Look at me! Did you do this for me?

**MABEL:** I had to. The house wouldn't - it's not your fault, it was my decision, you don't have to feel - I chose to, alright? I'm not upset. It doesn't bother me.

**ANNA:** It doesn't bother you that part of your arm is just – torn out, that you're bleeding and – it bothers *me*, I can't –

**MABEL:** Don't be - it's okay, I'm fine, really, it's not going to - nothing's permanent, for me. It won't - *take*. I had to find a way back to you. I'm sorry.

**ANNA:** You shouldn't have done that.

**MABEL:** Maybe not. I just wanted - [INEXPLICABLE NOISES] what the *hell* -

**ANNA:** [at the same time] How is that - ! Come here, let me see, how did you - how did you do that?

**MABEL:** Oh, I. I really do not think that was me, Anna.

**ANNA:** But I didn't - never mind. What do you think we should do with - the rest of this?

**MABEL:** [MATCH LIGHTS] Purify it.

[FIRE CATCHES]

[MABEL SCREAMING]

[STRUGGLE SOUNDS; STATIC AND DISTORTION]

**ANNA:** - Mabel, Mabel, god, Mabel, Mabel, don't - please, please, you can't -

**MABEL:** Put it out! Say it!

**ANNA:** You're - you're not on fire, you're not -

[SOUNDS STOP, EXCEPT STATIC]

**MABEL:** Thank - thank you.

**ANNA:** Are you okay?

**MABEL:** I'm fine, I think. Did it work?

**ANNA:** [PAUSE] I. I think it did. Look at that. It's like - a mouth, or something.

**MABEL:** That's very - Jonah. Shall we go through?

**ANNA:** I'll go if you will. Give me your hand.

[RUNNING NOISES]

[BEEP]

[MORE STATIC, GARBLED SCREAMING]

**MABEL:** - not that bad, it's okay, it's going to be fine -

**ANNA:** - get it off get it off get it off me, it's not, Mabel, get it off, I can't -

**MABEL:** Calm down, just -

[BEEP]

**ANNA:** So, let's. Let's review the situation.

When I look at you in certain angles, it still looks as though you're - burning. Not full-on, not when I look at you like this, but. I can see them, the flames of you, blue and black, from the corner of my vision. Your arm just - healed, regrew itself, like - like *him*, like the seasons, as though - I don't know. I don't know, I don't know. And my hand - look at it, Mabel, tell me what you see.

**MABEL:** Hel-Half-Rotted.

**ANNA:** I know what it means.

**MABEL:** You know what having a strip of bone for a hand means?

**ANNA:** It means I really did die when I drank that poison. It means I - I can't leave.

**MABEL:** Anna. What did you think was going to happen? You're a *nurse*, for rowan's sake, you're - you didn't think swallowing a mouthful of killer flora would do any damage?

**ANNA:** I don't know the rules down here! Everything changes, everything moves in and out, how was I to know -

**MABEL:** You know the rules of being *alive*! You know the intricacies of death, of dying - it's literally your entire job!

**ANNA:** Don't – You should go. Don't look at me like that. You can leave, so you should. You *have* to.

**MABEL:** How can you think I would ever want to leave you, even if I could?

**ANNA:** How can you *not*? You tore yourself down to bone to find a way out of here, you stripped away whole parts of yourself - what are you going to do, just - lock yourself down here with me, for nothing?

**MABEL:** How dare you say that to me. How dare you call yourself nothing.

**ANNA:** I'm just trying - I'm trying to be practical.

**MABEL:** Do you think I am Sally? Do you think I am Lily? Do you think I am Rosemary or Korina or any other - do you know me at all, Anna? Have you been listening or haven't you? I will not be parted from you. Not for anything.

**ANNA:** So – what? Now we're both prisoners? I can't – I won't be the reason you're – are we going to rot down here for the rest of time, until time coils on itself again? Or do you have some master plan to kill the king and usurp his throne?

**MABEL:** Sounds good to me.

**ANNA:** [FAINTLY] – sounds –

**MABEL:** I know this is hard for you, and I'm sorry. I know you think you are only strange in mundane ways, in absences, in lack. But, Anna - you can will the truth of matter into being. Form, from void, like *god*. This place - it stretches on and on and on. We don't have to fumble in the dark here, forever. Every labyrinth has a heart. We can do this. We can rig the chessboard to topple the king. They're never very strong pieces. [PAUSE] All civilization is a cage. Which one do you prefer?

**ANNA:** [LAUGHS, A BIT HYSTERICALLY] Why not, then? It's not like he's the unholy sublimation of all darkness or anything. Let's kill him. Let's kill him together.

**MABEL:** *Anna*.

[BEEP]

**MABEL:** A long time ago you said to me, Stay with me. I will love you like a fire loves a forest. And I put my fist in my mouth and I told you, You cannot keep me here. And neither of them were true. Time has made liars and cheats of us all. Time circles around me like a snake and I let it, in love, in shrewdness. Maybe it wasn't me at all you said that to. It doesn't matter. You will still pay for it.

I will make a bullet of my mouth. I will make a knife of my heart. I will tear and tear at you until you have bled for every single day you in your arrogance and yearning built a pretty bower for a prison. You think you are the king of the bog, of the underhill, of the black wind howling between the stars? You think you are the monster at the end of this book? She is Saint Anna, Anna with the mouth of god, Anna with the fist of bone. I am the girl half burning. I am the bull in the maze. I am Mabel Martin. I am coming for you. I am coming for you. We are coming for you.

### [OUTRO]

Mabel was created by Becca De La Rosa and Mabel Martin. This episode was co-written and performed by Becca De La Rosa and Mabel Martin, and produced by Becca De La Rosa. The music in this episode is by Ars Sonora, Samara Lubelski, Kai Engel, Rebecca Foon, and (morse), and all of it is available to download from the Free Music Archive at [freemusicarchive.org](http://freemusicarchive.org). For more information about this episode, including a full tracklist and transcript, visit us online at [mabelpodcast.com](http://mabelpodcast.com).

Season three has been one of our favourite seasons to write and produce, and this finale was one of our favourite episodes, but it does not mark the end of Mabel. We will be back in the autumn with season four, and in the meantime we have competitions to run, and our Patreon will continue with even more stories, letters, riddles, songs and secret clues into the world of Mabel Martin and Anna Limon. If you enjoy what we do, please do consider donating at [patreon.com/mabelpodcast](http://patreon.com/mabelpodcast). We appreciate each and every one of you, and we know that season four will be our best season yet.