



The Sketchbook

The sketchbook was new, its pages thick and blank. The yarn was asparagus green. "Braised asparagus," murmured the woman as she tucked the skein beside the book, "with a glimmer of parsley. Lovely."

Not so the ink in the squat glass jar she packed next which had the hue and character of horse piss. But she gave it a swish just the same and nestled it into the saddlebag, safe among strands of wool. Piss or asparagus, it was ink she had made--and the only ink for more miles than she cared to contemplate--so she was damned if she'd put it at risk. Running off with the mule was reckless enough.

The mule was untinged. Or so some people said. The woman preferred 'mercurial' and 'moon-struck', but semantics aside she couldn't deny that what the animal did best was break things--or that a bit of caution with a glass jar was prudent. And it pleased her to be prudent about something since her selection of spur-of-the-moment supplies left so much to be desired.

"We'll list our regrets when we've gone," she whispered to the mule. And knotting yesterday's braids at the nape of her neck, she tightened the cinch, swung her thigh over the saddle, and slipped into the hills.

*dry
fruit
-six
muffins
-tapestry
needles
-knife

Sarah Swett, *Rough Copy 2: The Sketchbook*,
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Hand Woven Tapestry, 70 x 36 in. (177.8 x 91.4
cm)

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