

A reworking of the tale of Rapunzel from the point of view of the witch next door:

*It's Not About the Hair*

So, I break my back all summer cultivating this garden, part spell, part soil, lots of hard work. And my next-door neighbor, a dim sort of fellow to be sure, wants to steal my lettuce for his pregnant wife. Why doesn't she just ask me herself? Why send him? And did either of them ever do anything for me, offer to help with the garden, invite me to dinner, even say a friendly hello? No. Of course not.

So, I challenge him and tell him I'll trade him lettuce for the child. Never dreaming he'd agree. But he does, the fool, in total betrayal of his wife. And himself. Well, that's their problem. Now I've got this kid, who's cute enough at the moment, but she's going to grow up and want to meet a prince. Well, sure, don't we all? Maybe she will and maybe she won't, but I'll try to keep her safe from that particular craziness, over there, in that tower, for now.

By Lynn Olcott