

FAIRY TALE REVIEW

The Violet Issue



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KATE BERNHEIMER

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“At an early age, children are weaned on the marvelous, and later on they fail to retain a sufficient virginity of mind to enjoy fairy tales,” Andre Breton wrote in 1924. “There are fairy tales to be written for adults,” he continued. “Fairy tales almost blue.” Violet flowers are often described as “almost-blue,” which is how I chose this color; or almost how.

KIM ADDONIZIO

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I took out my knife and held her head
back. She closed her eyes. A deer
crossed the clearing, stopped

and turned. I thought
it watched me,
I think it watches me still . . .

DON MEE CHOI

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No one spoke to her
but she married anyway.
She loved her bedroom, her tower.
She slept alone on a mattress,
covered in Ziploc garbage bags.

LUCY CORIN

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I'm with the caterers, a one-time job, a borrowed bow tie, old sneakers I've spray lacquered black. It was that or heels. Fifty bucks, four hours.

TRACY DAUGHERTY

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The Sunday service had just ended. Father Thomas had prayed, again, for a budget influx to fix the sanctuary door, which was old and splintered with rusty hinges.

ESPIDO FREIRE

Irlanda: Chapter One · 32

Translated by Toshiya Kamei

Sagrario died in May after much suffering. She was buried after a service at the packed church. Many flowers lay at her grave during the first week, but they soon disappeared.

SARAH HANNAH

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Seems like she just keeps running through her woods,
Grasping: violet, bramble, thatch, stumped utterly.

LILY HOANG

from *Changing: A Novella* · 48

Mother with her silence listening to Father
& he with his hardness & his stubbornness
& his anger & Mother pretending calm by
caging tongue behind teeth & not speaking
& there is no little calmness in our home.

ANNA MARIA HONG

Cin City · 59

In the dumb kingdom of fear and trembling,
the person with the see-through slipper knew
enough to split before the other one

KIM HYESOON

The Eye of the Cyclone · 60

Translated by Don Mee Choi

A poplar tree shakes its wet hair
In front of a mental hospital in Ch'ŏngyangni
Maybe the night wind is blowing—
the wind woven with the crazy birds' hair

JEFFREY LEVINE

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There was a swift, shy, confident, anxious kiss,
similar to a first kiss. The delicacy
of the first kiss after the resurrection.

LISA OLSTEIN

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We are ringed by hills. I've taken to burying almost anything that
dies—spiders, mice, birds I find in the road. This goes against local
custom; here they burn.

DAVID PETRUZZELLI

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You heard it so many times
you began to believe you were there,
and of course you were there,
always going inside alone

NATANIA ROSENFELD

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My minder accompanies me everywhere I go, on errands of tedium
and excursions of fun—especially on excursions of fun.

AURELIE SHEEHAN

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Sara herself did not know the people throwing the party, but she went to the house in the woods anyway.

RICHARD SIKEN

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Gently, gently, with a voluntary kindness, the hand does the work because the world needs to be touched. There is a button, and there is a shoulder, and there is a darkness, and there is something on the other side.

KIERAN SUCKLING

Frogs · 86

The suspect was “not your average maggot-looking dope dealer on the corner.” At least that’s what the police say. It was 1994, and he was arrested for possession of bufotenine, a Schedule I drug under the California Controlled Substances Act. The drug in question came in the form of four toads—Hanz, Franz, Peter, and Brian—that the suspect intended to smoke.

LEE UPTON

Three Poems · 93

Even if he was a bull angel,
a land whale, a million tumblers of blubber,
a horned prevaricator,
it took dirty tricks to get him.

JULIE MARIE WADE
Maidenhead · 96

It all begins with Red. She was a good girl, couldn't have been more than twelve or thirteen, nothing on her mind but an innocent visit to Grandmother's house. Problem with the child isn't that she's vain but that she's vulnerable—or so the story instructs us to believe.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Dear Readers,

“At an early age, children are weaned on the marvelous, and later on they fail to retain a sufficient virginity of mind to enjoy fairy tales,” Andre Breton wrote in 1924. “There are fairy tales to be written for adults,” he continued. “Fairy tales almost blue.” Violet flowers are often described as “almost-blue,” which is how I chose this color; or almost how.

For a long time I was foolishly excited about writing this Editor's Note, full of happiness about The Violet Issue, the third issue of *Fairy Tale Review*, with its diverse contents and new voices and magical language. This is the first issue that is very happily a co-publication with the University of Alabama Press. So much of this issue came as a surprise, as a gift.

But then one of my oldest friends, one of our finest poets, and one of the most ardent supporters of *Fairy Tale Review*, left us forever. Sarah Hannah took her own life in May, a week before her 41st birthday. This issue is dedicated to her.

Sarah was the first person to know that this issue would be violet. She and I had a long conversation about it last November. I thought the issue would be pink, I told her. Pink is the color that she and I shared a mutual obsession with, and our friendship of the past 26 years revolved very much around pink. The pink flowers we planted, the sequined pink curtains we both had on our windows (first on hers in Cambridge, then sent to mine in Tuscaloosa), the mini pink skirts we wore to Go-Go's concerts, the pink candles we burned. We wrote letters on pink paper and often printed our first drafts on pink paper too. But Sarah said not to do this issue as The Pink Issue. “Save pink for last, for when we are old,” she said with that tone of glee—a wicked glee, an excitement only she could conjure for the smallest detail, making everything wild and secret and real.

So I decided upon violet while reading Breton, and wrote to tell her. “Perfect!” Sarah wrote back, and attached to the note the poems that appear here. She added that she used violet in one of the poems intending for readers to see it mistakenly as violent instead. And so we do.

It is fitting that Sarah’s poem contains the one of the rare instances of the word violet in contributions to *The Violet Issue*. She was a rare flower. And, as with the Andrew Lang series, the colors do not correspond exactly to the contents—I edit along the precise path of a dream without trying to wake it. But now I want to wake up, of course, from the nightmare. For while there is not much violet in here, there is a lot of violence in here, as in the tales, as in the world. Sarah’s departure could be described in her own words as “unthinking, true.” Violet, violent, a fairy tale almost blue . . .

Thank you for reading. And to all contributors, thank you for your beautiful and very fine work.

Kate Bernheimer
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