

## **101 Fiction**

*Issue 19*

June 2018

Welcome to issue 19, an issue of fey things and faeries, fairies and fair folk. The first issue of this cycle was unicorns, and this time we've delved further into folklore and legend, into those tricky and mischievous fey, in all their forms, from the tiny to the tall. We've tried to capture the intangible, define the indefinable, and unveil things only ever seen at the periphery of vision

We have fairies in jars, in chains, in pieces. Fey on the run, on a plate, hiding behind the tea cups. And then there are those leading humans astray, whisking them away, toying with them; the mischief, the threats and the straight up violence. To some the wee ones are pests, a nuisance, a curiosity, barely more than another insect for the collector's net.

Think you can trust your eyes? Check again, in the slippery shadows, between the stalks and stems of the garden, amongst the music and lights of the fairground...

People have always looked for ways to explain the unexplainable, or at least that which they do not yet understand. Hence gods, to explain the weather, the harvest, the grand movements of the earth and sky. And fairies (and their ilk), to explain the little things: the keys that aren't where we left them; the shift in a child's mood; milk gone sour. Nowadays science explains these things, or perhaps that's just a modern way to explain away the gods and fair folk that we still don't understand.

We think you should make your own mind up, but you should always be open for at least a little wonder in the world.

Read.

Absorb.

Enjoy.

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Kidnap

by Colin D. Smith

“Come with me,” the young girl said  
Sitting cross-legged on the bed,  
Her hand extended to the child  
Who yawned and stretched, then blinked and smiled.  
“Come with you? I like it here;  
“My pillow’s soft, and my parents near.”  
“I have a place,” the girl enticed,  
“Where nights are long and dreams are nice,  
“Where no-one will disturb your sleep.  
“Come with me; this place will keep.”  
The child thought hard, then rose to stand,  
And with a nod she took her hand.  
The young girl laughed, then sang a song,  
And with a blink, the two were gone.

*Author bio: I am a writer of flash fiction, short stories, and novels living in Eastern North Carolina.*

*blog: <http://www.colindsmith.com/blog>*

*twitter: [http://www.twitter.com/colin\\_d\\_smith](http://www.twitter.com/colin_d_smith)*

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Fairground  
by Liz Tuckwell

As entranced by the bright lights and swirling rides of the fairground as her twin daughters, gradually, she notices every fairground worker is tall, slender, with watchful dark eyes and pointed ears. They ride on the carousel. All the garish, painted horses have horns.

'Free candyfloss.'

The girls receive a pink fluffy cone each.

'No, let me pay.'

'Something for nothing.'

Sharply, she tells her twins to return their gift. They step back, take a disobedient mouthful.

And vanish. As do the people. As does the fairground.

Two mouldy apples, one bite out of each, lie on the desolate ground.

*Author bio: Liz Tuckwell is a British science fiction and fantasy writer, living in London. Her short fantasy story, The Mysterious Mr. Fox, will be included in the forthcoming BFS anthology Emerging Horizons, showcasing new writers, to be published in 2018 and another fantasy story will be published in the anthology, Magic CSI, due out in the next few months.*

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Hexenring  
*by Duke Trott*

I will never forget the impossible exhaustion in his eyes, or his cries, which alerted us to his presence at the wood's edge.

"Please end the dance," he sobbed, "let me rest, let me die."

I thought I heard a child giggle, as we dragged the raving man into the doctor's home, but his screams drowned it out.

"You're all fools!" he shouted hoarsely, grabbing our lapels, trying to make us understand, seemingly unconcerned by the ragged remains of his feet, which left long red stains across the floor.

"These clothes..." said the doctor, "they reminded me of my grandfather's..."

*Author bio: Duke Trott is a writing currently living in Michigan, His work has recently appeared in Occulum and Bad Pony. When he's not writing poetry, he's usually reading comics, or researching tips for improving homemade bread.*

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Enchanted  
by Margaret McGoverne

Perry hurried back from the supermarket. They were excavating ground for new houses and digging was hungry work. The lads were waiting.

She perched astride a bulldozed tree. Slim, brown leggings, camouflage jacket.

“Perry?”

As she spoke he forgot the lads, his job, his own name. He forgot his why, his wherefore.

“I’m Fay.”

She toyed with his hair, knotting his man bun. Her emerald gaze pinioned him.

“Brought me something?”

He surrendered the bag.

“Bread and milk!” she breathed, and he laughed; his offering pleased her.

Clasping her hand, he followed her through uprooted hawthorns, onwards, followed her forevermore.

*Author bio: Margaret McGoverne recently published her first novella, *The Battle of Watling Street*, and is working on the sequel, while being distracted by short stories, flash fiction and her blog about all things writing: <http://margaretmcgoeverne.com/>*

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Dinner

*by Samantha O'Brien*

The moment had finally arrived, I was so excited! A hush crept across the hazy room as we awaited the main course. So far I was not sure the hype was deserved. The servers removed the covers and a loud applause rang out as the surprise was revealed at each table. Small humanoid creatures flitted against gilded bars, tears rolled down their cheeks and terror was in their almond eyes. I retched, horrified, as my companions reached forth and took up the now shrieking creatures, eating them alive. Next thing, I was looking at the stars, initiation failed, forever barred.

*Author bio: Born in Liverpool forty plus years ago and now living in Dublin. I would happily live in a library. I love reading to the local school children and helping to foster a love of reading and storytelling.*

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Pinned  
by John Xero

"The *other* collection."

Confusion furrowed Ian's brow. He indicated the open draw with a sweep of his manicured hand.  
"This *is* the collection."

It was magnificent. Butterflies from five continents shimmering in the bright, precise lighting. They could have been in motion, but for the pins driven through them, the regimented display like no cloud of flutter-bys had ever flown.

The viscount was unimpressed, a sword suddenly in his gloved hand.

Ian was pinned to the wall.

A hidden switch and another draw opened. Of iridescent wings and tiny limbs. Faeries at rest, but for the pins, driven through them.

*Author bio: There's always an 'other collection,' you just have to know how to blag/ bully/ buy your way in. John Xero has a few collections available for public perusal...*

*xeroverse.com*

*@xeroverse*

*Even a few floating around from way back when: HddnTrcks (<https://h-dd-n-tr-cks.livejournal.com/>)  
And the 'other collection'? Well...*

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Fidelity

*by Simon Lee-Price*

My wife Donna is unrivalled as a children's illustrator. Male fairies are her speciality. Her brush captures their shy beauty, the lightness of their wings, the magical gleam in their eyes. Even the fabled fairy spirit, so gentle and free, finds expression in her paintings. Her models are freshly gathered from a secret place deep in the woods. Seated at her easel, she asks me to fetch the finest specimen from the crowded fairy cage. The little man is quite helpless and trembles for his life. He stands before her, head bowed, wings clipped, his pretty legs restrained in irons.

*Author bio: Simon Lee-Price lives and writes in the UK. His strange fiction has appeared in The Breakroom Stories, Five:2:One, Torrid Literature Journal and Sirens Call. Follow him on Twitter @SimonLeePrice.*

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Choices

*by Stella Turner*

He'd always coveted a faerie and this one was special. Delicate and lithe with a soft blue aura. He kept her in a bell jar and watched as she battled vainly to escape. Sometimes she'd crumple in a heap, her wings soggy with emotion. He wondered what special powers she possessed and one day she told him of being trapped between heaven and hell, promising him riches if he let her go. But he was tired of fairy tales and next morning he swapped her for a Leprechaun – crocks of gold, rainbows and Irish whisky being more to his taste.

*Author bio: I'm Stella Turner and known as @stellakateT on twitter. I have had flash fictions published in anthologies and long-listed several times in the Fish Flash Fiction competition. One day I will write a novel by persuading myself it's just a series of flashes strung together :)*

*My blog can be found at*

*<http://stellalikesspidersandot hermyths.blogspot.com/>*

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Brunch

by Sandy Hiortdahl

The twins huddle behind my husband's teacup, snickering so that their dark curls bounce when he drops a teabag into it and asks, "Have you moved my spoon again?"

I have not. Indeed, I've never touched his grandmother's teaspoon. The twins in whom he does not believe hide it. Today, I see the younger one glance left and I spy the spoon beneath my husband's Motortrend. "There," I say.

He grins and retrieves it. The fairies dart right, disappearing behind the toaster, though not quite quickly enough this time. "Did you see something?"

"Nothing," I say.

"Huh," he says, "Okay."

*Author bio: Sandy Hiortdahl lives in a small brick house in East Tennessee. She's been published in Thema and Metonym, among others. Her website is [www.sandyhiortdahl.com](http://www.sandyhiortdahl.com)*

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Existentialism  
*by Allen Ashley*

"I don't believe in them, they're not real." Betty continued exploring the bright yellow flowers.

"Well, I've seen them, I'm certain," Agatha responded. "You have to know where to look. And when."

"Sounds like a silly bedtime story to me. We ought to have grown out of that by now."

"My mother says we should be scientific about it," Agatha countered. "We don't see them because they experience time differently to us. I can't remember whether she said it was faster or slower. Quite an interesting explanation, though."

Betty fluttered her tiny wings, alighted the petals. "Believe in humans? Nah!"

*Author bio: Allen Ashley is a committee member for the British Fantasy Society. He works as a creative writing tutor with five groups currently running, including the advanced science fiction / fantasy group Clockhouse London Writers. He appeared in "101 Fiction: Heroes and Monsters" with "Entwining". [www.allenashley.com](http://www.allenashley.com)*

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## Thief

*by Mary Casey*

The trap is set with my favourite socks. White, with shamrocks. The washer next to me is filling. My timing must be perfect.

I observe one sock floating in the air above the rest, held in place by a being the size of a hornet, with fluff for hair and long teeth, like the teeth of a comb.

The fairy pulls it apart, thread by thread, and swallows.

Not caring if my hand is shredded, I reach out and grab the thief. I slam open the washer, throw him in, and grin as the sock fairy suffers the spin cycle.

*Author bio: Mary Casey lives in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, where she writes prose and poetry in between chasing socks.*

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Infestation  
by Lyric Hyde

“That it?”

“Yes, up there.”

The pixies swarmed the old box, their tails illuminating the ramshackle houses they had built.

“Normally I wouldn’t call an exterminator, but they keep attacking my cats. I even tried offerings,” Aria fretted. “Can you handle it?”

“Course I can handle it,” Gunther grumbled. “It’s my job.”

The exterminator crept up to the box. The tiny creatures froze, studying him. A couple hissed, baring rows of sharp teeth.

“You don’t want to breathe this,” Gunther called down to Aria. He pulled down his mask and held the nozzle up to the pixie nest. “Goodnight, bugs.”

*Author bio: Lyric Hyde is a high school student that wishes to go into a writing career, at least as a secondary job. As well as writing, she enjoys learning, music, anime, and a good book. Fairly new to posting her writing, Lyric has started a website called [Animarret.wordpress.com](http://Animarret.wordpress.com), but she can also be found at various websites, including Wattpad, Get Underlined, Prose, and Young Writer's Society under the name Animarret-Writing.*

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Spawn  
by Shannon Bell

Gavin watched, disbelieving, as a flower uprooted itself, ran to him, and spat a sickly-smelling liquid over him. His skin itched, and hundreds of small pustules appeared, a tiny foetal form curled within each one.

A voice tinkled in the air. "Protect the host."

Golden mist enveloped him.

He wasn't sure how long he lay there, paralysed. Days? Months? Time moves differently in their world.

The pustules all erupted together, the air filling with fledgling fairies.

A voice tinkled in the air. "Consume the host."

"Oh fuck," he whispered, as hundreds of heads turned towards him, their teeth-filled mouths gaping.

*Author bio: Shannon Bell is addicted to words. You will find him madly writing away in the spare time he has available between holding down a full-time job, being part of a dysfunctional family and looking after his attention seeking dog. His stories have been published in Dark Edifice, Short & Twisted, 101 Fiction and strippedlit500. You can follow Shannon on Twitter at @ShannonBell1967.*

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Secret

by Marie McKay

I stuffed the fairy's tongue into a locker at school. Left it there among the rows of other dark holes plugged shut with scaled-down doors. When I stand back and take them all in, they remind me of a mortuary wall.

It's not over. My secret has a grudge and a knuckle in its voice.

I pass it on my way to class. It's grown lips and learnt to punch:

"Shitface. You can't keep me here. You know it, right!"

Winded, I scuttle down the corridor.

Soon it will be more than mouth. And for the wand it will come.

*Author bio: I live in Scotland. I have stories published in various places online including, 100 word story, Bending Genres and Easy Street. I also have stories published in The Infernal Clock anthology series.*

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Eyesore

by Holly Karlsson

My mama left me three things – a temper, hotter than a supernova, a Tedaskerian saw-blade that can mince bone, and a small, rowan-wood pendant, shaped like a peach pit.

Mama believed in grit and faeries, and I was wise enough never to call bullshit on the latter. Forgive me, Mama, for ever doubting.

Today I woke up beneath a warm corpse. A mythical creature is squatting on Aelin's back, and peering into my face.

My blade passes through its side, like a hand through smoke.

The fairy laughs, and stabs a finger into my eye. "Should've tried iron, little human."

*Author bio: Holly Karlsson is a storyteller and fervent mountain roamer. Her flash fiction can be found online at [hollyjkarlsson.com](http://hollyjkarlsson.com).*

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Knocking  
by John Xero

“What is that noise?” Kindra growled.

Rika looked at the tiger, astonished. “You hear it?”

“Who couldn’t?” Kindra thrashed his tail.

Dust drifted, glittering, from the ceiling of the cave with each resounding knock.

“I’ve heard it my whole life,” Rika whispered, “but now is the moment. Now.”

“You’re talking nonsense. The armies of man and their gunpowder roars have broken into the mounds of your kin. We must flee.”

“Go, Kindra. Any debt you owe me is paid. But this sound was pounding in my mind before mankind first tamed wild fire. Destiny or death, it must be answered.”

*Author bio: John Xero has been set adrift, and seeks a new destiny. If it must be tigers and stars and wonder, then so be it, he will cope, somehow.*

*Places he should update more often: [xeroverse.com](http://xeroverse.com) @xeroverse*

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Elsewhere  
*by Daniel Thron*

Waiting for the gas to take effect, I regard the patient's acorn head: beneath his knobby cupule lies a placid, smooth-cheeked face, like a kid in a knit cap on a snowy day. The image sticks with me, and even after we have the go-ahead from the anaesthesiologist, I still I can't help but hesitate. I know his eyes won't move, his mouth won't go slack; they are only an improbable arrangement of spots that induce pareidolia. As I make the first incision along the base of his thorax, I still feel him looking up at me, guileless and content.

*Author bio: Daniel Thron is a writer and filmmaker living in Los Angeles. He largely pays the bills with visual effects, and his work can be seen in movies such as David Fincher's 'Zodiac' and 'The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo,' as well as 'Blade Runner 2049' and 'Avengers: Infinity War.'*

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Expatria  
by Renée Bennett

The shadows slide; you turn your head. Jewels in darkness, a crown upon a brow...

So? You turn away.

He's there again in morning mist, white curling along flank and cloak... You stare a little longer, but he chose her. You chose here. That matters.

Tears on your face. That matters, too.

Gold and silver afternoon dazzles in a parking lot. Limned in light, the steed, the rider, the hand reaching for yours. "Come." Off the steed, on one knee. "Come home. We – I – regret. Can I be forgiven?"

You say, "Can I?"

Smiles. Fingers touch.

The steed carries two.

*Author bio: Renée Bennett is an author and editor living in Calgary, Canada. When asked, 'What do you write?' she replies, 'Anything I please.' This is why her bibliography includes Arthuriana, jazzpunk, and zombie erotica, among other genres. Her most recent work has appeared in the ENIGMA FRONT series of anthologies. Look for her in BY THE LIGHT OF CAMELOT, available July, 2018, from Edge Publishing.*

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Thanks for reading.

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