

101 Fiction

Issue 5

September 2014

Welcome to Issue 5.

Welcome to the blue room. A vast and infinite sky where your wildest dreams fly free. A crushing claustrophobic ocean in whose depths swim all your fears.

We enter the second year of the quarterly 101 Fiction with fifteen stories tuned to a theme of blue and spread across a suitably broad spectrum of genres. Each one a tiny hundred word seed that swells and bursts and blossoms inside your headspace, blooming blue behind your eyes.

Do you remember copper sulphate crystals in science lessons? Starting with a tiny shard and immersing it in the cool blue where it grew into something bigger, something special. That's what a good drabble is, a tiny notion that sinks into your thoughts and softly expands into something bigger, something special. Something extraordinary.

Inside issue 5 you will find blue eyes, blue teeth, blue blood. Desire and obsession. Disaster and heartbreak. Murder and magic. Science and fantasy. Wordplay and wonder. Fifteen blue-based worlds to slowly unfurl through your thoughts.

Read. Absorb. Enjoy.

Dyed

by Glen Donaldson

Jenny Stain's courtship with the colour blue had begun early.

Triggered by an inconceivably rare reaction to a bluebottle jellyfish sting at age six, now, nearly two decades on, her colour immersion infatuation was near complete. Hair, skin, even tongue – all dyed blue. Converting her body's own waste products to pale azure with a daily oral dose of food colouring tablets had perfectly consummated the affair.

Yet love and devotion can be unfairly blind. One too many dye pills had brought on a sudden, and in Jenny's case, tragic condition – permanent colour blindness.

Out of the blue, love had soured.

Author bio: Glen Donaldson is a Brisbane schoolteacher who embraces the ridiculous when he thinks no one is looking. He holds firmly to the view he is not cynical, just experienced.

Memories

by Matthew R. Czarnowski

Desire isn't red. I know because her eyes are blue.

They are winter; me skating across the ice in the park, holding Halie Smith's hand...

They are spring; a delicate sun shower sprinkling atop a canopy as I share my first kiss with Natalie Flowers...

They are summer; waves crashing against the sand as I lay with Kelly Dominguez, her hand buried deep in my swim trunks...

They are autumn; the cool glow of twilight as Jennifer Schuele scratches long lines down my back...

I put her eyes on the shelf next to Cassie Dunway's hands. Her nails are blue.

Author bio: While writing is his passion, Matthew spends a lot of his time learning survival skills in preparation for the zombie apocalypse. He currently teaches English in Las Vegas, Nevada.

mrczarnowszki.wordpress.com

Fetching

by Shenoa Carroll-Bradd

He likes his girls to look a certain way.

Black hair. Blue eyes. Red lips. White skin.

Not pale, but white. Bloodless.

So for him, I dyed my hair. The chemicals stung my nose, but blackened my curls into silken ash.

I bit my lips until they swelled, full and red.

And for him, I died.

My joints are too stiff for dancing now, but my skin is perfect, milk-white and cool.

Eyes clouded over into murky blue.

He likes his girls to look a certain way, and when he sees how far I've gone, I know he'll love me.

*Author bio: I like to write in just about every genre, but my favourites are horror and fantasy.
My author homepage is www.sbcfiction.net and I can also be found on twitter @ShenoaSays*

Fade

by Danielle Bordelon

She stroked the dark spot on her neck, eyeing it in the mirror.

“It will fade with time,” he promised.

She nodded.

Secretly, she didn’t want it to. She thought the colour was rather pretty, like that of the ocean depths. It marked her as his, as someone special.

Then the nights grew darker, the bruise grew larger, and she grew weaker.

She collapsed against the bed frame, her naked torso a canvas of indigo and alabaster.

“You said that it would fade!”

He smiled as he sank his fangs into her chest.

Her heartbeat slowed, then stopped.

“It will.”

Author bio: Danielle Bordelon is a fiction writer currently focusing on short stories and the editing of her novel. She lives in an apartment with three friends, hundreds of abused books, and an overactive imagination. Her short stories have been published in literary magazines including Black Fox Literary Magazine, Quail Bell Magazine, and the Fast-Forward Festival and are available on daniellebordelon.com.

Eyes

by Laura Davy

At midnight they took her from her bed, asleep and unaware. They wore robes and smelled of smoky incense. She used her fingernails like claws, bleeding three of them as they tied her to an oak tree.

She cried as they poured bitter liquid into her mouth and onto the roots below. She spit and cursed, but she swallowed too.

She screamed out, "Why?"

Their silence was her only answer.

They watched the tree's bark slowly inching across her skin, itching more than it hurt.

After three days they departed, leaving behind a tree blemished only by blinking blue eyes.

Author bio: Laura Davy lives in California with her husband and two cats. She has been previously published in Apex Magazine, Nth Degree and Plasma Frequency Magazine. You can learn more about her at www.lauradavy.com.

Dress

by Kelly Dwyer

I walked into that ball feeling like a princess, with the gown that brought out the blue in my eyes, and my glittering glass slippers. As soon as the prince fixed on me, I knew I had a chance to change my life for good. Three days later, when he visited each house, I stared into his eyes, sure that he would recognise me. But he didn't. I had to try on that damned shoe to prove that I was me. He had fallen for a silhouette in a pretty dress and sparkling shoes. He didn't even know my name.

Author bio: Kelly Dwyer (@barabookd) grew up near Disneyland. Now she lives in Wisconsin, where she is working on a collection of plays and flash pieces based on the Disney Princesses at middle age.

Cheater

by Jonathan Hawk

I clutch the test in my hands. My stomach wrenches. My head reels. I start crying in the stall.

"Cheater!" accuses my geometry textbook from the floor.

My parents can't find out.

"You're an idiot," scoffs the toilet beneath me.

God. I'll get kicked out of cheerleading.

"What about Aiden?" taunts the skirt at my ankles.

After prom we were gonna be each other's first! This isn't right. Ashley and I only fooled around a little when he tutored me. Just that one time...

But that damn test has a big, fat, blue plus on it.

"You're pregnant," it says.

Author bio: Jonathan Hawk is a sesquipedalian and "ugly bag of mostly water" from the Baltimore, Maryland area. He's an avid free culture enthusiast and Creative Commoner. His stream of consciousness haunts Twitter as @doublecompile.

Happening

by Tom Sheehan

Your dress over the chair's arm. Dinner waiting. A cup your father gave you on the shelf. Sheer petals between *paddock* and *palaver*, booked forever. Your shawl. Wallpaper where no light happens. This forearm vein a doctor tries, calls *anfractuous*. My paint pants, three times in the trash. Recollected. When I was cold, and six. A still pigeon on December eve. May fog under streetlight, my brother sea-bound in '42. A back room song, words I cannot remember. The sky the last time you let go, how it sifts itself out, filling other places, other eyes, falling away, away, blue.

Author bio: Sheehan served in the 31st Infantry, Korea 1951. Books are Epic Cures; Brief Cases, Short Spans; Collection of Friends; From the Quickening. eBooks; Korean Echoes, The Westering, (nominated for National Book Award); from Danse Macabre are Murder at the Forum (NHL mystery), Death of a Lottery Foe, Death by Punishment, and An Accountable Death. Work in Rosebud, Linnet's Wings, Copperfield Review, Cahoonaloodaling, Literary Orphans, Ocean Magazine, Frontier Tales, Western Online Magazine, Provo Canyon Review, 3 AM Magazine, Nazar Look, Eastlit and Rope & Wire Magazine. He has 24 Pushcart nominations. In the Garden of Long Shadows published by Pocol Press, 2014, to be followed soon by The Nations, about Native Americans.

Soulmates

by Kymm Coveney

One teardrop rose from the August pond, became a fingertip of cloud. Intent on writing her heart across the morning, she persisted, despite having to cross out, erase, start over. She soon used up all the blue.

He felt the raindrops halfway through his run. Saw the cloud cover, a storm rolling in grey from the East. His breath was ragged, his lungs straining against the miles that remained.

Exhausted, her message undelivered, the tear plummeted back down to plop against his cheek. She rolled in a caress to the corner of his mouth, where he licked. Took her in.

Author bio: Ex-pat from Boston living in Barcelona, raising polyglot kids and fooling with written languages.

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[@KymmInBarcelona](https://www.instagram.com/KymmInBarcelona)

<http://kymminbarcelona.tumblr.com/>

Rain

by J. J. Steinfeld

A year ago, I received a phone call from a rasping voice warning I would die a hideous death in exactly a year, when there would be a blue rain coinciding with a phone call from Satan. An idiotic prank, I thought. This morning, out my window I have been watching a blue rain fall, and much to my dread the phone has begun to ring. Now I am reassessing the absurd prophecy. I will not answer the phone. I will go outside and get wet, covering myself in blueness, and gain insight, I hope, into the nature of dying.

*Author bio: J. J. Steinfeld is a Canadian fiction writer, poet, and playwright who lives on Prince Edward Island, where he is patiently waiting for Godot's arrival and a phone call from Kafka. While waiting, he has published fourteen books, including *Disturbing Identities* (Stories, Ekstasis Editions), *Should the Word Hell Be Capitalized?* (Stories, Gaspereau Press), *Would You Hide Me?* (Stories, Gaspereau Press), *An Affection for Precipices* (Poetry, Serengeti Press), *Misshapenness* (Poetry, Ekstasis Editions), and *A Glass Shard and Memory* (Stories, Recliner Books). His short stories and poems have appeared in numerous anthologies and periodicals internationally, and over forty of his one-act plays and a handful of full-length plays have been performed in Canada and the United States. In the speculative-fiction 100-word-story universe, Steinfeld has published fifteen drabbles in *The Drabblor* (from 2009 to 2014).*

Bite

by I. K. Paterson-Harkness

It wasn't being abruptly eaten alive that surprised Alex. It was that the mouth was blue. Entirely. Even the teeth.

It came from nowhere, like a sudden storm cloud, shrouding the streets in dark shadow. Cars swerved; people ran from shop doors and stood, pointing. At the blue mouth. Sky blue. Like the sky was hungry.

And then it lunged, lips stretched backwards over azure gums. It engulfed the top stories of the tallest buildings; then the balconies and billboards; then the leafy tips of the highest trees. It was only a matter of seconds before blue swallowed him whole.

Author bio: I. K Paterson-Harkness lives in Auckland, New Zealand. She has published stories and poems with Random Static, The Kiwi Diary, Liquid Imagination, Writing Tomorrow, and more. Recently she was nominated for a Sir Julius Vogel Award for 'Best Novella in 2013'. You can visit her website here: www.ikpatersonharkness.com

Blood

by John Xero

The prince's limbs were distributed liberally around the room. An arm dangled from the chandelier. His head stared up from a silk-upholstered chair seat. Blue blood dripped.

In the centre of the room, Carson sat cross-legged, chewing on an ear.

Billings stared aghast from the doorway.

"What have you done?"

Carson smiled, "The blue blood of royalty, eh?"

"They all have blue blood, you fucking psychopath, they're aliens. You've gone and started a fucking war with a goddamned interstellar empire."

"Language, detective. You once told me I couldn't kill everyone. A provocative challenge. I think I rather have, don't you?"

Author bio: John Xero writes every day. A little bit of something big or, sometimes, a big bit of something little.

@xeroverse: for little bits of Xero.

xeroverse.com: for more Xero, including ongoing serials in hundred word episodes.

Bacterimelanchol

by Steve Green

The Melancholy virus had taken just seven weeks to overrun the planet.

Bacterimelanchol, or Bluebug as it came to be known, was aggressively infectious. It could make the jump from electronic circuitry to biological with horrifying ease, affecting machine and animal with impunity.

Soon the germ was hooked into everything. Television, internet, satellites. No system, or system operator was beyond its reach, or control.

Doom and gloom were spread through every possible media.

Until the whole world was wrapped in the black cloak of depression.

And ultimately, the button was pushed.

And then, oh my, how that bug did laugh...

*Author bio: Genre-hopping flash fiction writer who blogs at The Twisted Quill:
<http://greenstephenj.blogspot.co.uk/>*

Butterfly

by Andrew Patch

In the dirty light of the hold Vince inspected his mottled blue skin. He didn't have much time. Dropping down from his bunk, he slunk past slumbering refugees fleeing a world devastated by war and disease.

A disease he had unwittingly brought aboard.

The thrum of the hyperdrive masked his footsteps down the oily veins of the ship. The blue was spreading fast, his mind losing focus.

He had to get to the airlock, flush himself into space.

Vince reached for the console, his hand completely covered, the airlock interior beckoning.

Yet.

He needed to feed.

Vince retraced his steps.

Author bio: A drinker of black coffee, scribe of flash fiction and an inadequate footballer. Say hello @imageronin

In-between

by *Brigitte Winter*

“The earth sky was *blue*?” My Abigail presses her little nose against the glass and stares into black space.

My heart hurts for my ship baby, member of the in-between generation that will bridge those of us who left with those of us who will arrive.

“Blue like your eyes, baby. Beautiful blue.”

My child will live and die a life of artificial light – of steel walls, colourless sky.

“That’s cool, I guess.” Abigail shrugs and skips away, all youthful, giggling ignorance.

The realisation hardens in my chest. The in-betweens are the lucky ones. It’s me who’s cursed with blue.

Author bio: Brigitte Winter is a collector and teller of stories, a theatrical director, a cookie baker, a wannabe world traveler, and the Executive Director of Young Playwrights’ Theater, a Washington, DC nonprofit dedicated to inspiring young people to realize the power of their own voices through creative writing (www.yptdc.org). She has a passion for boundary-busting speculative fiction, and her current novel-in-progress is a pre-apocalyptic coming of age adventure. All of her celebrity crushes are on authors. You can follow her blog at thebrigittewinter.tumblr.com for anonymous magnetic poetry, errant street signs, and other word wonders.

Thanks for reading.

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