

101 Fiction

Issue 7

March 2015

Welcome to issue 7.

It's great to be green.

In this issue you'll find thirteen tiny fictions sprouting like the first fresh buds of spring. The green theme has taken root in some truly fertile imagination, and every little shoot has a big, big story etched into its bright little leaves.

The drabbles within span the breadth of the genres *101 Fiction* regularly harvests, with a healthy dose of those hybrids that straddle two (or more) as well. And not for the first time there's a couple that sit more comfortably in crime than anywhere else, not a genre we advertise, but one we're happy to embrace when the writing's this good (so long as it keeps its hands where we can see them...).

We like it when a story's hard to pin down. When you have to go back for more, to savour it, to understand it, to relish the feel of the words seeding themselves in your warm moist mind.

So what have we got for you this time? Salt air and seashores. Angels and aliens. A quantum quandary. Not-so-lucky encounters. Money and murder. Moonlight, twilight and a flickering green light. All leaning heavily on the strange and surreal.

It's a green, green world.

Read. Absorb. Enjoy.

Entanglement
by Kymm Coveney

Amaryllis scratches the air with one buffed fingernail. "It pushes back," she says to me. I raise an eyebrow. She rolls her eyes. "Watch," she instructs. Her peach-glossed nail picks as if at a scab in water and again scratches the air. It seems to bend, leaves an iridescent worm of Northern Lights in its wake. She pries at a glimmer of curvature. Like an eclipse it rolls over and she is gone, swallowed by a wave of emerald tinged in jade phosphorescence. I blink. As if coaxing a spell of déjà-vu, I whisper her name. "Amy?" I blink harder.

*Author bio: A translator who practices fiction at BetterLies (<http://betterlies.blogspot.com.es>), Kymm Coveney spent 2014 writing poems with Jo Bell's 52 poetry group, and has had one published recently in Synaesthesia Magazine's THUNDER, LIGHTNING issue. She's also been reading Martin Bojowald's Once Before Time, learning about loop quantum cosmology.
@KymmInBarcelona*

Secret

by Simon Williams

Green was the colour of the angels as they swept down, swords trailing sparks which tumbled like falling stars and settled in our upturned eyes. I do not know why they left the children alive; we did not deserve it.

Many years later, when the red sky had returned to morning, my grandmother, just before dying, whispered to me the secret of the family.

With my sister I went to the forge on the bank of the shining river and in the ashes found my sword. I shook off my cloak and unfurled my green wings. The sky closed forever.

Author bio: Simon lives in Edinburgh, works, reads and writes very short stories. Some can be seen at www.simonsalento.com. Simon tweets at [@simonsalento](https://twitter.com/simonsalento).

Sacrifice

by Alex Brightsmith

Some amongst my people said it was sinful to walk upon the face of the Moon, of the Goddess. I did not; is not Mother Earth a goddess?

That made it easier, when the stain spread and She hung there dim and green, when they celebrated their sacrilege and I saw what must be done, to take this job.

She is green, still, but soon She will be brown, and they will know what has been done. They will seek me, doubtless find me, perhaps kill me, but do not grieve.

For She will shine, bone white, above my grave.

Author bio: Alex Brightsmith was born and raised in Bedfordshire and defies anyone who was not to place it on a map. Profligate examples of Alex's work have been blogged at <http://alexbrightsmith.wordpress.com>.

Insomnia
by Grace Black

The moon has returned, and I can hear its whispers. It's a grey mockery of my past mistakes. A single file line of every wrong decision awaiting their turn at the podium.

Short hair in fourth grade.
Neon and spandex in sixth.
The prom date from hell.
Art history in college.
Hunter green in the 90's.
Every. Diet. Fad. Ever.
Sushi for dinner because now I'm hungry again.
Did I lock the doors?
Take my meds?

A striptease of self-doubt, night after night I lie in bed with a string of unwanted dialogue and hope for sleep that never comes.

Author bio: Grace Black is just another writer wearing down lead and running out of ink, one line at a time. Coffee refuels her when sleep has not been kind.
<http://graceblackwrites.com>
<https://twitter.com/blackinkpinkdsk> (@blackinkpinkdsk)

Iced

by Robin Jennings

That pale, sickly green piece of paper. That gritty, calloused texture that says it's been around the block a few times. That smell I can never quite place but always leaves me intoxicated.

There's just something about a dollar bill, you know?

It's magic.

Hot off the press. Damp with tears. Stained red with blood. Doesn't matter. Every one is beautiful in all of its imperfections.

So give me the next name on the list and I'll cross it off. I'll even let you pick the method. As long as you have that magic. That sickly green. Those dollar bills.

Author Bio: Robin Jennings is a horror enthusiast based in the open fields of Northern New Jersey. Having previously optioned a full length screenplay called "Shudder", she's now focusing her creative efforts on short fiction. Follow her on Twitter: @Robin_Jayyy.

Lawn

by Scott Dingley

I sit out front when a good onshore breeze carries away the smog and just salt remains, ghostly fingerprints. I sit and sweat salt of my own, staring at a spot by the edge of my lawn, where ivy meets sidewalk...

Thirty years back, some maniac took a local waitress and dumped her there – drove right up and dumped her, like a paperboy delivers the news.

This is *long* before I lived here.

But something of that dead girl has been there since; an unfading vestige; a bathtub Madonna blanketed only by Santa Ana winds.

Like salt in the breeze.

Author bio: Scott Dingley likes his fiction hard-boiled and haunted, a gothic horror breed of noir. He writes Westerns too, but that's another story.

Tart

by W. M. Lewis

“Man can't survive on lemon tart alone,” Pippy Hunter said, the wind whipping the syllables away like a third-rate magician. The smell of fresh bitumen, pigeon crap, and ancient shells permeated the foreshore.

He said nothing, merely looked at the green sea. She scraped her boot in the gravelly sand. He looked hungry. She touched his face. He looked drunk.

When they found her body the next day, a half-eaten tart on the sea wall above her, it was still and quiet.

The birds strutted around like murderers who'd gotten away with it.

The hot sun itself seemed to smirk.

Author bio: I'm an Australian poet and writer. My poetry has appeared in Alliterati Magazine, Best Australian Poems 2011, Cordite Poetry Review, Eclecticism, Multiverses, PoV Magazine, Railroad Poetry Project, street cake magazine, The Night Light and Tincture Journal. My flash fiction has previously appeared in 101 Fiction. You can find me on Twitter at @mindintoword and at my blog, whatevertheysing.wordpress.com

Undertow

by Madeline Mora-Summonte

The horizon lurches from dark to light. Roscoe hides his shopping cart then shuffles along the beach. He devours dead fish picked over by birds, slurps seaweed, stuffs lost jewelry into his pockets to sell later.

The tide slips back, slaps forward. Suitcases jut from the sand like jagged teeth, water swishing around them like saliva. Roscoe stares at a dark green bag. In the still air, its luggage tag flaps, its wheels spin.

Roscoe tries to run but all around him the sand shifts, rolls. He screams as the first fingers of bone scratch their way to the surface.

Author bio: Madeline Mora-Summonte reads, writes and breathes fiction in all its forms. She is the author of the flash fiction collection, The People We Used to Be (<http://www.amazon.com/People-We-Used-Collection-ebook/dp/B00G7QXOKO/>). To learn more, please visit her blog: <http://madelinemora-summonte.blogspot.com/>

Reprieve

by Alex Brightsmith

To have escaped, only to die in a simple robbery; it was absurd. But there were three muggers, and I'd run out of alley.

The first crumpled silently, the second with a grunt. The leader span, slashing wildly. His knife clattered aside, leaving only me and the stranger.

There was a spreading stain on his shirt, but he smiled as if finding me had been the answer to his prayers, and I followed him.

By street light I saw that the stain was green, and my own blood ran cold.

He smiled.

"Missstress would not have you die sso eassily."

Author bio: Alex Brightsmith was born and raised in Bedfordshire and defies anyone who was not to place it on a map. Profligate examples of Alex's work have been blogged at <http://alexbrightsmith.wordpress.com>.

Historic
by John Xero

Joe tugged his pocket knife open. It was short and blunt, but it would serve. He stabbed with quick vicious strikes, feeling Old Man Green crumble.

Chips of lichen-green bark pattered down.

He finished. Stepped back to admire his handiwork.

JOE 4 MANDY

Old Man Green. Oldest tree in the forest. The oak that never lost its leaves, even through deepest winter. Ancient, massive, historic.

Now he and Mandy had their place in history.

He was still there next morning. Blunt knife deep in his heart, the great tree rearing over him, its bark marred only by time and weather.

Author bio: John Xero thinks you should never underestimate nature, it's been around a lot longer than you have.

His own scrawlings on history's wall can be found at xeroverse.com and [@xeroverse](https://twitter.com/xeroverse).

Twilight

by Jason Preu

In the end, Virgil and Violet Kemp sway on the creaky swing which sits out back of their country bungalow. Serenading cicadas nestle within a thick mix of black and cherrybark oaks. Tears well in their eyes as the twilight sky before them fills with an abnormal golden-green light. Violet's body tenses and Virgil inhales sharply. The sky brightens to a blinding intensity as waves of searing winds tear limb and bark alike from the old, oak trees. Soon, a rolling wall of emerald fire follows, incinerating the bungalow, porch swing, and two half-empty glasses of warm, honey-lemon, iced tea.

Author bio: Jason P. Preu lives, works, and worship avocados in the Kansas City metro with his wife and two children.

His writing has recently appeared or is forthcoming in Holdfast magazine, WORK magazine, and the anthology Vignettes from the End of the World.

Jason can be found on-line at: jasonpreu.wordpress.com

Care

by Dylan Walton

“Many before you have lived rich, full lives,” the voice crackled from an unseen speaker.

R examined his new accommodation. His furnishings were spartan. A bed, table and chair. Basic bathroom facilities. A ceiling light casting its sickly verdant glow over the antiseptic walls.

“There is no need to be alarmed.”

Three unadorned walls. A floor to ceiling mirror. No visible sign of entry or exit.

“As long as the light remains green.”

R looked up and saw the lamp also contained an unlit red globe.

“All is well.”

He exhaled, and perhaps imagined he saw the green light flicker.

Author bio: Dylan Walton lives in Melbourne, Australia. He once won second prize in a local short story contest, which he considers to be much better than winning second prize in a beauty contest in a game of Monopoly. He can be found on Twitter at https://twitter.com/I_am_DWalt.

Colony
by Brigitte Winter

I squint my eye at the tiny green bud – and growl.

I should've known. The elders have been wheezing. Something is wrong in the air. Too moist, maybe. Too warm. This planet seemed so promising – encased neatly in ash when the previous inhabitants obliterated themselves millennia ago.

Now we'll have to leave.

I picture my females at home in the caves, heavy with eggs – all the little ones who will never skitter around the planet's perfect dry beaches – and I crush the bud, driving it deep into the cracked, gray earth. I growl again, softer this time, and slink away.

Author bio: Brigitte Winter is a collector and teller of stories, a jewellery-maker, a wannabe world traveller, and the Executive Director of Young Playwrights' Theater, a Washington, DC non-profit that inspires young people to realize the power of their voices through creative writing (www.yptdc.org). Brigitte's short fiction is featured in Columbia Writers' 2014 anthology, Trapped Tales (<http://goo.gl/Bkdvnu>), and her micro fiction has been published in 101 Fiction, Nail Polish Stories, and Alban Lake Publishing's November 2014 Drabble Harvest journal, Tourism on Other Worlds. She loves boundary-busting speculative fiction, and she is currently working on a pre-apocalyptic coming-of-age adventure novel. All of her celebrity crushes are on authors. Visit Brigitte online at www.brigittewinter.com.

Thanks for reading.

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