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Variations of Red and Blue

As I weave my satin and gossamer ribbons like jewels around my wrists and ankles, knot them tight as a corset and press them between the scissors and my callusing thumb to trill the ends into curls, I wonder what it would be like to not feel the pressure of diamonds behind my eyes always trying to sparkle and smile their way out. Straining the satin tighter I can make sunsets bubble and blossom from compression, milky clouds clearing away for the beaded brilliance of the sun, rays golden as ripe pears before blushing with surprise and crushed roses. You might say I'm wearing cherry-tinted glasses but the peachy perfection of the clouds outside my window is the same for everyone and begs to differ. And the sun begets strawberries and rhubarb: so many shades of red twisting from the skin of the Earth. You see, I must continue to tie my saccharine satin ribbons for without the pearl of gold the fleshy sky remains powdery, devoid of current jam spread thin as silk, of rubies and garnets strung together over pink lace. Lacking in the shades of life.

Glint like a pearl of gold through the gossamer bubble of the telescoped window, powder blue froth blots the ground dots the sky waves from one form to the next like the growing wet of making love across your navy sheets, midnight blue like eternity through the lens of the hubble, pixelated and fuzzy, a robin's egg of remoteness in its effort to reach Earth, but how to describe the blue of the sky through the window through the icy-stark branches? Azure, periwinkle, cobalt, words that bring colors to mind but when held to the sky are naught but grey, instead the sea swathing a rocky shore of undefined trees, save for the peaks and valleys curving their points, or a duvet of silverblue satin plush against the trees' aching backs, the stretched cyclical infinity of time, a smokey-blue haze whipped into clouds in the distance and splotted with sapphire stars, an itchy, woolen sky, a sky of clover and cotton and candy floss, blue raspberry, color of my eyes and how I wish they would look, matte as foundation and Mac lipstick and fine sand and indigo, purpling like swollen skin, frosting and freezing into a prussian blue night

Elie Doubleday is a Sophomore at Hamilton College, studying creative writing and Spanish. She is originally from Portland, Oregon and has been published in *Voiccatcher*. She spends most of her time staring at the snow and sky outside her dorm room window in an effort to discover the words to accurately describe it. She is otherwise involved in Latin dance, puzzle solving (physical piece-puzzles, sudoku, crosswords), working as a barista, and noticing every passerby dog.

Sweet Vandalism

~inspired by a photograph of Gillian Anderson as Morticia Adams

Give me a black sheath dress
sharp as a sword
and ending in tentacles.
Let moonlight come in
through gothic windows
brush it indigo.
Portraits of Poe Lovecraft
Baudelaire Rimbaud
will look from eyes blackened out
by a silk marker
see only darkness and laugh
at the permanent eclipse
that is their lot
knowing she in the midnight
dress committed this sweet
vandalism.
The ebony settee with gnarled arms
waits to embrace her form
while scarlet walls propose to her
their sconces burning
throwing shadows that grapple
with each other
at her feet.
Watch her hair as it ripples
from her scalp sways
at her waist serves as a ruby rod
for your lightning desire.

*Three of **Taunja Thomson's** poems have been nominated for Pushcart Awards. She has co-authored a chapbook of ekphrastic poetry, Frame and Mount the Sky (2017); her chapbook Strum and Lull placed as a semi-finalist in Golden Walkman's chapbook competition (2017); and her chapbook The Profusion will be published in 2019. When she's not writing poetry, she's kickboxing, gardening, or petting cats.*

Old Gray Bones

I often walk here just to clear my mind.
Who knows what secrets or sweet words I'll find?
I often walk when I'm all alone
among these old gravestones and these old gray bones.

These grassy rows, I know them well.
I walk them blind; I know their smell.
In the valley deep, the sun's never shone
on these old gravestones with their old gray bones.

Old Judy Wise died in eighty-four,
lost all three babies in the Civil War.
She joined them here so not to be alone
with their old gravestones and their old gray bones.

On yonder hill lay my Uncle Sam;
he was a good liar just like I am.
They buried him with all he owned--
just an old gravestone and his old gray bones.

This old graveyard, I come here often.
Under these stones they'll lay my coffin.
One day I'll return this body on loan
to these old gravestones my old gray bones.

Laura Plummer is a Massachusetts-born writer. You can view more of her work at lauraplummer.me.

Unsilence

body
dipped in water song,
its slick dubs smooth
on tiny hairs,
 sing symphony
 over
back and legs,

through hollows
 where bubbles
 burst
against trees
 unplugged
from roots
under the broom

of wind,

which walking the shore in slappy steps,
whispering some crazed chorus,
 stops, holds in
 its warm mouth

you and I and silent earth,
(the soft suffocation of moss under feet

cracking) who
ingest the sound
and release its fine rhythm
back to cloud

Abigail Rebecca -- "*Unsilence*" was written along the reservoir outside of Indiana, Pennsylvania, where Abigail is a Phd candidate. She currently lives in Ventura, California with her cat, Pebbles, and her loving partner. Her poetry can also be found in *The Anthology of Appalachian Writers*, *One Person's Trash*, and *The Voices Project*.

Overwhelmed

The red ball slipped into the pond we haven't cleaned in seasons,
the way I submerge the alarm under sleep, bleep happiness, as an act
to remember doing, as almost empty. I can run on fumes. I brag to the
doctor/mechanic/mother picking her child up at school who says she
could park her car in the dark circling my eyes. I could conceal, but
callery pears are blooming so white over all the empty lots and smell
like piss. Invasive. I carry emergency numbers in my pocket that pinch.
I've grown full. I don't remember promising to stitch the lapse in this
world, offering to carry the water. But here I am, afraid my hands are
the sliver chipped into the painted cup. Indigo. Bone.

Megan Merchant *lives in the tall pines of Prescott, AZ. She is the author of two full-length poetry collections: Gravel Ghosts (Glass Lyre Press, 2016), The Dark's Humming (2015 Lyrebird Award Winner, Glass Lyre Press, 2017), four chapbooks, and a children's book, These Words I Shaped for You (Philomel Books). She was awarded the 2016-2017 COG Literary Award, judged by Juan Felipe Herrera. She is an Editor at The Comstock Review and you can find her work at meganmerchant.wix.com/poet.*