

Opal Palmer Adisa

THE COLOR WHEEL

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Red

Ever since she kissed him with her lollipop-stained tongue, the pain in his heart has swelled. Last night he dreamt that a turtle rose out the ocean and crept on his bed. On its shell were written, "Remember" in blood. He sprang awake, mouth dry and called his sister.

Blue

At the wedding she choked on the cake.
He died the night of their honeymoon, as they were about to make love.
At his funeral, she tripped over his mother and broke her leg. Her cat ran away.
She couldn't stay awake.
Next time she will not wear cerulean.

Green

She wanted to bite him. Hard. Until he bled. Then she would watch him writhe.
This was not love.
Or was it? As confusing as a sun-filled day that ends in a storm. The world gone gray, dark, left alone with only the green wind as a sympathetic ear.

Yellow

She woke with the sun-flowers in bloom at her window, but knew she was still in the dream as the car slid off the road and plunged into the precipice.
She knew how she got there, in this room, when the baby sucking at her breasts bit her nipples.

White

They had always wanted a child that was the perfect manifestation of their love so when the baby was born that Thursday evening, at home, in the bath-tub, two months early, without the aid of midwife, they forgot the world outside their front door and drew the blinds tight.

Black

She had walked almost twenty miles, in the dark, on bramble and gravel, her bleeding feet leaving a trail, but she was determined this time, he would never hit her again; she heard the voice that kept insisting that she was more than the nothing he claimed she was.

Purple

He clutched the rosary in his hands, willing himself to not think about the swell in his groin, the desire that crept upon him whenever he was near. He would not sin. He would not honor his loathing weak body. He had made a promise to the lord.

Brown

She could no longer ignore the smell that engulfed her whenever she walked by the oak cabana. Although she never saw anyone, she knew --felt the hairs on her skin rise and her feet stumble -- someone was watching her, and she was no longer afraid to ask what they wanted.

Magenta

Yesterday they bought a basket full and sat on the steps and ate them all, hardly pausing to catch their breaths, not a single word passed between them. Then they saw the shadowed loomed, obliterating the joy that slid down their throats, fresh snow becoming water down the mountain-side.

Lavender

If only he had known, he would not have persisted, being so creative, but no one bothered to inform him that the Doberman was not selected for the leading role in the movie and training her to be obedient would not still her faith to be put to sleep.