

Everything Under the Moon: Fairy Tales in a Queerer Light

EDITED BY
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ILLUSTRATOR
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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid to Upper Secondary
(Language, Violence, Sexual References)



SYNOPSIS

Some damsels don't want to be rescued. Some curses don't need to be broken. And some of the best happy ever afters won't be found in storybooks.

Think you know fairy tales?
Think again.

These twelve fairy tales have been spun through a queered lens to reflect our world in stories as old as time. From the furthest reaches of space and the darkest depths of the forest to the street just around the corner, this anthology will excite, challenge and move you. Featuring stories from some of the biggest names in young adult fiction, *Everything Under The Moon* is an illuminating celebration of queer love and identity.

Lushly illustrated by up-and-coming talent Kit Fox, this collection includes stories by Michael Earp, Alison Evans, Helena Fox, Amie Kaufman & Meagan Spooner, Will Kostakis, Jes Layton, Gary Lonesborough, Amber McBride, Abdi Nazemian, Maggie Tokuda-Hall, Alexandra Villasante and Lili Wilkinson.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Michael Earp is a non-binary writer and bookseller living in Melbourne (Naarm). They are the editor of, and contributor to *Kindred: 12 Queer #LoveOzYA Stories* (2019). Their writing has also appeared in *Archer*, *The Age*, *PopMatters*, *The Victorian Writer*, *Aurealis* and *Underdog: #LoveOzYA Short Stories* (2019). For twenty years they have worked between bookselling and publishing as a children's and young adult specialist. In 2021, they were awarded the Australian Booksellers Association Bookseller of the Year for their role managing The Little Bookroom, the world's oldest children's bookstore. Representation of all people in the literature available to readers of all ages is the ethos that motivates their entire career. They have a Masters in Children's Literature and a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Teaching and previously served as committee chair for the #LoveOzYA campaign. Tea is the source of all their power.

THEMES/IDEAS

Across the stories there are a wide range of themes and ideas explored.

- Fairy tales and their tropes
- Class and race
- Politics and power

- Interpersonal relationships
- Death
- Revenge
- Grief
- Ethnicity and crime
- Sibling connections
- Heroes and antagonists
- Greed and envy
- Identity
- Artificial intelligence
- Humanity
- Social media
- Otherness and isolation

STUDY NOTES

- Read the original fairy tale associated with each story.
- With a partner, discuss the main message of each story. With the same partner, make a list of three arguments or ideas in the story that support the main message. Ensure you have textual evidence for each one. Using these notes, choose the main two pieces of evidence in your mind and write your own paragraph discussing how the author evokes the main message in their story.

IF THE SHOE FITS

- Using a dictionary or online resource define the following words. Some of these words have multiple meanings depending on context so be sure to clarify their use in the story. Then look up and summarise the etymology of these words <<https://www.etymonline.com/>> is a great resource for this.
 - Woodwose
 - Insubstantial
 - Flounces
 - Reticence
- Create a table with three columns to complete this activity. Write down dot points in the first column of what you remember the plot of *Cinderella* to be. Read a Grimms' version of the story and write dot points of the main plot points in the second column. Ask students to read the Egyptian story of Rhodopis or the Italian Cenerentola, or one of the many other versions of the story. Ask students to annotate in the third column outlining similarities and differences in plot.
 - Compare and contrast one element of the different versions of *Cinderella* and how context has informed those differences.
 - After having read all these different versions of the story, ask students to craft their own. Consider how form and context could shape their work as well as literary allusions to the various forms of the story they have read.
- Food is a core symbol used in this story. Elaborate and abstract-sounding foods are used as a marker for privilege, while the preparation of food for others and simple foods demark the underprivileged for the story. List the food items mentioned in the story and define the ones you are unfamiliar with.
 - Ask students to write a paragraph that compares and contrasts how food is used symbolically in different ways.
 - Ask students to research a wide range of foods. They might look at foods from their cultural background. Write a description of another feast for Mossy to attend.

THE INSTANT I DIED

- Identify the techniques in the following quotes. Most have more than one.
 - 'The rays shone over the grassy hill above and looked like the gates of heaven opening.'
 - 'Most importantly, we could be boyfriends without those guys from school throwing around slurs, without my

dad telling me I was going to hell, without feeling like my brain was wrong and all messed up.’

▫ ‘The days flowed by like a steady river.’

- Define what a literary allusion is. Why would the author use *Animal Farm* when they did? What is the core message of the novel and how does it counter a message of a character in the story?
- Define symbolism. What do you think the use of windows symbolises throughout the story?
- Explore ideas of culturally biased injustice for victims of crime and the reporting of crime in your area. You may wish to speak to a Legal Studies or Sociology teacher at your school to get some resources on the matter.

LUZ AZUL

Before Reading

- Is there anything that justifies homicide?
 - What if they would otherwise kill a loved one of yours?
 - What if killing this person stops a war?
 - As punishment for someone who has committed a particularly heinous crime?
 - To kill one person to save the lives of many? (You could look at the trolley problem here).

While Reading

- The author has infused the cadence and syntax of Spanish into the story. Find three examples of this. What impact does this have on the audience’s understanding of character and setting? How would it make audience members who don’t understand Spanish speakers feel?
 - How does this connect with Azul’s feelings?
- On p 38 there is a description of the Casa Azul. Ask students to research and define the terms used to describe the building.
 - Using this research, draw up an architectural plan of the mansion. It might be helpful to work in a group.
 - Why do you think the author constructed such a strange architectural feature? In the original story the mansion seems far less complicated. What is the significance of this change?
- Villasante draws on the nature of palindromes throughout the story. What features of palindromes do you think connect most with the themes of the story?
- Look up what a bone flute looks like. Azul comments that the flute-key in the story ‘has seven holes’. Ignoring the different possibilities of half hole coverage and breathing techniques, how many two-note combinations can it make? (The answer is 16384.) What does this say about Azul’s plan to find the ‘key’?

THE CHERRY BLOSSOM QUEEN

Before Reading

- Brainstorm as a class the worst vices that people can have. Try to group them and discuss where we see them in everyday life or popular culture. For instance, ‘waste’ might be seen in trends such as fast fashion or the popularisation of picture-perfect food due to *Masterchef* or Instagram.

While Reading

- List the riches the dog finds for the poor family.
- Define tone and point of view in your workbook. The opening paragraph sets up the tone for the story. ‘Before we start, you need to know: the dog does not survive. This is the way of fairy tales sometimes, and life as well. For that I am sorry.’ What tone is established here? How? Why do you think the author ‘warns’ readers that the dog dies?
- What do you think the dog symbolises throughout the story? Find two quotes that contrast with each other to show how the changing experience of the dog connects with the bigger abstract message it is symbolising.
 - What do you think the cherry blossoms symbolise in the story?
- Research traditional Japanese bridal wear. Draw an image of what it entails and annotate it with details.
- ‘Didactic tales’ refer to narratives intended to instruct, particularly in reference to values and behaviours. They use both positive and negative fictional examples to encourage behaviour. The clear examples lead to an expectation of

moral perfectionism. Draw up a table of with the headings The Poor Man, The Poor Man's Son, The Rich Man and his wife. Note what values are used to describe them throughout the story.

- Using the table, clarify what is the didactic message of this story.
- List three values that you think reflect good character. List three values that you think reflect poor character. Write a new version of the story that highlights these traits.

LET DOWN YOUR H.A.I.R.

- Define science fiction and the metalanguage used to identify it as well as its tropes. Once you have a list and their definitions, find examples for each term.
- Read the opening paragraph. How do the authors signpost various tropes of science fiction in this opening? Find three different examples.
- Define pun and symbolism. Find three core elements from *Rapunzel* that have been appropriated in 'Let Down Your H.A.I.R.' Some elements are cleverly inverted. Write a paragraph to discuss how the authors play with and transform the original text.
- There have been lots of examples of AI characters in SF history. Discuss how the AI in 'Let Down Your H.A.I.R.' compares to others you have read or viewed. What is their personality like? How do they help or hinder our protagonists?
- Write a short scene where you wake up in the morning and you engage with your own AI house to get ready for school.
- Define mythical allusion. The authors use a range of mythical allusions to name the ships in the story. Make a list of these and note which myth they are from and some core information about that character. Write a paragraph outlining how the authors use mythical allusions in their story.

FAIREST OF ALL

- Apples are a core symbol in this story. How are they used differently in the original *Snow White*? How are they used similarly?
- The author makes use of a lot of different forms of literary repetition. Explore and define the following specific types of repetition and find examples of them in the text. Many of the textual examples could fit into multiple definitions depending on what you focus on:
 - epizeuxis
 - anaphora
 - mesodiplosis
 - epistrophe
 - symploce
 - antanaclasis
 - diacope
 - gradatio.
- Jake struggles with his sense of self throughout the story. Write a paragraph utilising at least two quotes from the text that explore his character.
- Why do you think the author has written the story from the antagonist's perspective?

ALDA, AYSEL & THE EDISTO RIVER

- The author makes use of a lot of different forms of literary repetition, both worded and sonic. Poetry traditionally uses a lot of repetition to help with our listening enjoyment as well as to underpin key ideas. The author uses a lot of patterns in her writing to support ideas of balance and relationships. Explore and define the following specific types of repetition and find examples of them in the text. Many of the textual examples could fit into multiple definitions depending on what you focus on:
 - accumulation
 - alliteration

- assonance
- consonance
- sibilance
- cacophony/plosives
- euphony
- ‘A good story is feast that must be eaten whole’. What do you think Griot means by this?
- Define tone and perspective. In the second poem from Alda’s perspective, we are given a change in perspective and tone. Find two examples that contrast with Griot’s perspective and tone in the previous poem. Why do you think the author shifts perspectives and tones throughout the poem? How does it add to our feelings about the characters and their experiences?
- Define biblical allusion. Discuss the symbolism of the ‘snake-skinned journal’ the pastor owns. What are the four ‘bad’ behaviours he records of Alda and why do you think they are considered ‘bad’?
- Find the Edisto River on Google Maps. Why do you think the author has set her story there?

SEEING COLOUR

- The author uses a lot of beautiful and specific descriptions of colour throughout the story. Make a list of them.
- Define pathetic fallacy. Find three quotes that describe the weather or setting throughout the story. Link them to the mood of the plot. Does the author use pathetic fallacy or do they invert the pathetic fallacy implications?
- ‘A painter’s brush should last them their whole life if taken proper care of.’ What do you think the brush could be a symbol of? What kind of care could this be referring to? How do we see brushes used throughout the story, how could this extend this message of ‘lasting’ and ‘care’?
- ‘The house’s inside is completely at odds with its outside.’ Read over descriptions of the house. Use this quote and another to discuss what the house symbolises in the story.
- Why is the colour magenta important in the story? What do different characters say about it?
- Draw a haunted-looking house. Colour it with paints or markers of all different colours. Explore the notion of contrasting the setting with the mood.

THE WOODEN BOY

Before Reading

- Ask students to think about what it means to be human. Ask the class to come up with one word and get everyone to come write it on the board. Challenge students not to repeat what’s already there. Find links and ties and discuss word choices.
- Divide students into groups and assign each group an animal. Ask each group to identify the similarities and differences between that species and humans. They will need to do some research. Aim for at least five similarities and five differences. Once complete, each group shares with the class, with a scribe filling out a column of human and non-human traits. Look over the list and find patterns.
- In pairs create your own ‘puppet’. Annotate it with the five values you consider essential to making it as human as possible.

MORESEL

- Synesthesia is a condition where some people experience sensory stimulus as though it is another stimulus. In other words, senses can become mixed up or perceived differently. Synesthesia is used throughout this story. Define synesthesia in your own words and identify three examples of synesthesia from ‘Morsel’.
- What are the crumbs in the story?
- Imagine you are Harry or Gret. Write a poem that explores their feelings throughout the story using synesthesia. These can be embedded in metaphors and similes as well.

THE KEYHOLE

- Define literary motif in your workbook. The author uses a weather-based motif throughout this story in how they

describe Rory's interactions with and feelings towards others. List all of these descriptions.

- The whole story is structured in contrasting episodes of day and night which can reflect the very nature of Dym and Bo. Write a paragraph that discusses how the author uses a literary motif to enhance the characterisation in their story.
- Define cliché in your workbook. When Earp writes ' . . . all's fair in love and war' they are using a cliché. However this is juxtaposed with the unconventional moment. What impact does this have on the reader? Incorporate a quote to support your answer.
- Create a plan for a film version of 'The Keyhole'.
 - Look at costuming designs for film and television. Use the descriptions of the outfits to inspire two costume designs. Annotate your costume with quotes and details about the characters.
 - Look at casting guides. Create a casting guide for the characters in the story. Identify key values of all your characters and a mood board for the types of actors that would be in your mind a great fit for the roles.

MOONFALL

- Define mythical allusion. Discuss how the author draws on the mythologies of her named characters within their story.
- Define sensory imagery using the following quote. 'The walk was always quiet and smelt of humus, the branches of trees covered in ferns and lichen, rabbits darting silently across the leaf litter.'
- Find shots of three to five different settings. Ask students to imagine they are walking through them and to write a snapshot of sensory imagery.
- Both willow and brambles are used as building materials in this story. Compare and contrast the use and impact on Nyx of these materials. Use quotes to support your answer.
- Discuss how the author uses symbolism to explore the notion of growth in Nyx. Utilise quotes to support your answer.
- In pairs, create a poster of the moon, Nyx, Ealadha or Oisín from Celtic mythology. Annotate details of their mythological features on your poster.
- You have been asked to take part in a new community garden based in the school. In pairs, research and create a poster explaining step by step how to grow something from the story; beans, potatoes, carrots or mushrooms.