

## THE NO-COLOR COLOR OF LOVE

Danielle Truscott

I'M DOWN IN THE darkroom where Blue Jane thumb-fucks the sick girls. Blue Jane got hands like a coat made of twilight-leather and all the dimes in her cigarette-throat mix up the words when she calls out for us: *Sleepy*, she calls, for me, because even the chemicals don't develop me, some days. Happy and Bashful and Dopey and them don't remember their names. But I'm Rose. *A Rose is a rose is a rose*. You know that one? Ring around the stop-and-smell-them. Are red. O, The Yellow of Texas. Would smell as sweet by any other name. *Lord*. We all of us grow so tired sometimes balancing our big, heavy heads. Not a one of us stands higher than a tall one's hanging-down hand.

BLUE JANE GOT a scratchy white smock and she likes the pans full of hot sting where dreams arrive. We sing some thing and pray down and down the hole with handles and ropes and sacks and blades. The dying rubies we axe and carry from the night-mines on our backs float up tricky and feverish into black-and-white, sad and sandy. Then all-of-a-sudden pure. She nails those pictures to the wall so we see the codes: *Snow White* means we got appley places that need to get fixed, maybe some silky, stinky maggots humming to our skin. A bruise, some cuts from *Who's-The-Fairest-Of-Them-All*. Blue Jane peers and plucks the camera-button with her thumb-flick! click!-and later in the red light it don't hurt anymore. Later in the pulpy red light we got faces the no-color color of love. Beautiful! Like jewels came to settle and nap in the gashes, or we spied out a candy-sweet translation for *hallelujah*. It's almost cold then but you can smell a distance lying down plain gray flagstones in the air.

USED TO, I DIDN'T always live here. One time I wore a pale yellow bell-dress and the sun came out and said, *Hey, daffodil*. Twirled me around the place all the way to laughing-over dizzy with my face tilted toward the sky. It was butter and perfume and slit-open grapes and the longest ribbon in the world. I whispered to myself *you feel so good I could give yourself to somebody*; and he got mad. You ever seen him? I only talked to him once. He was just the tiny size of a mouse, but he had teeth so sharp they could bite out a new country while you blinked. He had eyes made of cardboard and his breath was full of sore buzzards and pointy, strict silhouettes. I told him a joke to make him laugh but he didn't get it. I said *Who are you, anyways?* He said *Rosie, that is not funny, that is not funny at all. Go to your room, and do not come out again until it is so clean and tidy you can eat your words right up off this floor.*