

### **From Issue 3: Alvin B. Cruz**

From Issue 3: Into Oneness

my assigned gender violets are blue

*-Alvin B. Cruz, Philippines*

In the same way we are assigned gender at birth, we are assigned a color. In many countries, pink is currently associated with girls, and blue is associated with boys (interestingly, boys used to be associated with pink). On the color wheel, violet is a mixture of pink and blue. Extending this to gender symbology, violet could represent a nonbinary gender identity — an identity that is not fully “girl” or fully “boy” — perhaps between these two extremes along a gender spectrum.

“Violets are blue” is a line from the childhood rhyme “roses are red, violets are blue.” Paired with the meaning of “blue” as sadness, the poem speaks to the sadness, perhaps in childhood, of being assigned a binary gender to which they do not identify. The poem draws upon multiple cultural associations to present a life-long struggle in just six words.

That said, there is a hopefulness to be found in the center of the poem, as if the protagonist’s inner reflection has helped them locate their “gender violets,” which with nurturing and light can blossom and grow. This adds to the complexity of this short yet potent poem.

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Originally published at *whiptail: journal of the single-line poem* on May 29, 2022.