

MOONFLOWER, NIGHTSHADE, ALL THE HOURS OF THE DAY

by JD Scott

MEDIA KIT

HOOKS AND TALKING POINTS

HOOKS

- **Story Collections are Trending** – With the success Carmen Maria Machado’s *Her Body and Other Parties*, George Saunders’ *Tenth of December*, and Lauren Groff’s *Florida*, JD Scott’s *Moonflower*... fits in with the growing interest in contemporary story collections.
- **Goodbye to Arbitrary Genre Borders** – This collection features a wide range of stories that move between literary fiction, psychological fiction, YA, fantasy, speculative lit, horror, fairy tales, Southern Gothic, and experimental prose poetry. Each story is unique and varied.
- **Hello Fabulist Fiction** – The stories in this collection recall the genre-bending works of Kelly Link, Manuel Gonzales, Aimee Bender, Toby Barlow, Helen Oyeyemi, & Julia Elliott.
- **Beautiful, Purposeful Prose** – In the spirit of writers such as Ben Marcus, each story has an attention to language. Scott creates measured sentences that are lyrical and poetic.
- **Queer Characters and Themes** – Many of the stories contain LGBTQ+ characters and themes. Scott would be perfect for Pride Month lists, articles, and author interviews in June.
- **Florida’s Literary Renaissance** – With the success of writers from (and books about) Florida, Scott’s work is in conversation with writers like Karen Russell, Kristen Arnett, Lauren Groff, Alissa Nutting, Laura van den Berg, and Jeff VanderMeer.

TALKING POINTS

- **The Winner of the Madeleine P. Plonsker Emerging Writer’s Residency Prize** – The author won a prestigious prize that came with a residency to spend three weeks just north of Chicago to complete this short story collection. The prize also included a \$10,000 honorarium, book publication, a public reading, and classroom visits at Lake Forest College.
- **“I was immediately smitten with the idea of the queer body as an epistemological site, as well as a real place where narrative meanings are generated and negated endlessly. The prose is breathtaking as it weaves its way through what appears to be real and then beyond, challenging what we mean by plot in the best ways. I am thrilled to imagine what innovations this writer can conjure.”** –Author Lydia Yuknavitch, on Scott’s writing, which she selected as the Plonsker Prize winner.
- **Innovative writing** — The Plonsker Prize highlights innovative work and Scott’s writing aesthetically experiments while making emotive inquiries into the human condition.
- **Characters coming of age** — Many stories feature young adults or characters going through major life changes, like gentle teenage Joshua, who is growing up inside a shopping mall and waiting for his life to begin. Inside these fictions are themes of solitude, loss, devastation—but beyond that—desire, wish-making, transformation and transcendence.

BOOK INFO

BOOK DESCRIPTION

The sly fabulism of JD Scott’s fiction casts its own peculiar spell upon the reader as it outlines a world unsettlingly similar to our own. Scott troubles the line between what is literary and genre, fairy tale and parable. In one story, a perfumer keeps his boyfriend close-at-hand by dosing him with precise measures of poison. In another, a comical domestic drama hinges upon the life and death of an ancient chinchilla. Scott pushes liminality with magical scrolls, a drowned twin returning from the sea, and a witty retelling of the Crucifixion where a gym bunny chops down a tree in the Garden of Eden—only to transform the wood into a cross for himself. This debut collection ends with an epic novella where a heroic teenager comes of age inside an otherworldly shopping mall that spans the entire globe. Visceral, dreamlike, and full of dazzling prose: *Moonflower, Nightshade, All the Hours of the Day* announces the arrival of a distinctive talent who challenges us to see our own endless possibilities.

BLURBS

“The stories contained in *Moonflower, Nightshade, All the Hours of the Day* are true bursts of light. JD Scott has curated a collection that takes all the wild magic of youth and love and transformed it into tender aches, beautiful little pains. The stories sit lodged in your chest and refuse to leave. Compulsively readable and immaculately written, Scott has honed their incredible craft into a book that readers will return to again and again.”

—Kristen Arnett, author of *Mostly Dead Things*

“This strikingly original collection is at once magical and achingly real, distinctive in its formal invention and its sly, inviting wit. Scott’s characters grapple with loss and desolation, but this is also a book about possibility and transformation. *Moonflower, Nightshade, All the Hours of the Day* marks the arrival of a major new talent.”

—Dawn Raffel, author of *The Strange Case of Dr. Couney*

“I didn’t read JD Scott’s vivid and visceral collection *Moonflower, Nightshade, All the Hours of the Day* as much as I absorbed it. Scales sloughed from my eyes. These richly saturated fictions flood the senses endlessly and everywhere. Look, there are new blues! See, there is a spectrum of ultra and infra delights! Not since Edmund White’s *Nocturnes for the King of Naples* have I felt so steeped, immersed, swaddled in liquid syntactical fictive maps, scaled to disorientated worlds of words more detailed than the things they represent. This light is all osmotic. These fictions, I see, make me see to see.”

—Michael Martone, author of *Brooding* and *The Moon Over Wapakoneta*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JD Scott is the author of the story collection *Moonflower, Nightshade, All the Hours of the Day* (&NOW Books, 2020) and the poetry collection *Mask for Mask* (New Rivers Press, 2021). Scott’s writing has appeared in *Denver Quarterly*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Indiana Review*, *Best Experimental Writing*, and elsewhere. Accolades include being awarded a Lambda Emerging LGBTQ Voices fellowship and being awarded residencies at the Millay Colony, the Edward F. Albee Foundation, and Writers at the Eyrie.

BASIC INFORMATION

Author: JD Scott

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Story Locale: Florida, New York, The South

Distribution: Northwestern University Press

COMP TITLES/AUTHORS

- *Her Body and Other Parties* by Carmen Maria Machado
- *Black Light* by Kimberly King Parsons
- *Get in Trouble* by Kelly Link
- *The Miniature Wife* by Manuel Gonzales
- *Gutshot* by Amelia Gray
- *Florida* by Lauren Groff
- *The Wilds* by Julia Elliott

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PUBLISHER/AUTHOR LINKS

- **Distributor Site:** <http://nupress.northwestern.edu/content/moonflower-nightshade-all-hours-day>
- **Publisher Site:** <https://www.lakeforest.edu/academics/programs/english/press/andnow/>
- **Author Website:** <https://jdscott.com/>
- **Press Kit:** <http://jdscott.com/moonflower-nightshade-all-the-hours-of-the-day/press-kit/>
- **Teaching Guide:** <http://jdscott.com/moonflower-nightshade-all-the-hours-of-the-day/teaching-guide/>

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Q&A WITH JD SCOTT

Q: Your stories are often lyrical, imagistic, and attentive to sound—what some might call “sonics.” What kind of formal considerations do you make while writing? Are you building stories on the sentence level?

A: Poetry has always been a type of internal homeland for me. It’s what I read and wrote before I ever approached fiction. Previously, I held this idea that poetry and fiction were incompatible. There was an unlearning that had to take place. Poetry and fiction do not have to be at odds, nor does an interest in plot and character mean that your attention to prose has to be sacrificed. This is what makes story collections so special when compared to novels: you get to re-write the rules and language between each one. Like this they become self-contained snow globes, and sometimes one sentence is enough to create a portal so you can enter and begin.

Q: “Portal” is an interesting word choice that seems to resonate with your work. Are you familiar with the concept of the portal fantasy novel? I see that type of worldbuilding within some of your stories.

A: I love this idea. I grew up on books like *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and the *Chronicles of Narnia*. Many literary writers use fairy-tale-like tropes in softer ways—they just don’t think of themselves as incorporating genre elements. Even opening *Moonflower*... with “The Teenager”—an arguably more realistic story where a privileged teenager enters a swamp and comes across a homeless camp—is a type of portal fantasy. In “Chinchilla,” the narrator leaves the city to return to the suburbs. In “Cross,” the speaker goes to the Garden of Eden. All of these stories contain types of magical doorways, even the ones in more mundane settings.

Q: You mentioned genre in your last answer. Can you talk about how genre influences your work and the experience of structuring a story collection with surrealist or fantastic works next to more realist fictions?

A: I didn’t even know what “mimesis” meant until I took a graduate creative writing class. I don’t think it would be wrong to say the reality I write is close to the reality I experience: slightly magicked. The earliest story I remember completing was one I wrote in high school; it was about a man who visited a crone in the woods who made a soup that could erase all memories of grief. Fabulation and verisimilitude are not polar opposites. My work has always fallen on the gradient. I’ve never fully understood why genre is shunned among certain literary circles (even if this judgment seems to be slowly subsiding). I resist that idea that a realistic story about a teenage boy who shoplifts in the suburbs should be considered more artful than and one where a teenage boy lives inside an enchanted shopping mall and goes on fantastic quests. They’re both coming-of-age stories; why should the presence or absence of fabulation result in one being considered superior or inferior?

Q: Setting seems important to your work. Although you have stories set in NYC & fantastic malls, the South—specifically Florida—seems central to your writing. Can you talk about place inside your work?

A: Florida is *Ipomoea alba*, or moonflower. Mangroves. Bleeding hearts too. Manatees and spoonbills and alligators. It infects my language-making and my worldview. To the outsider—and especially with popular internet memes like “Florida Man”—there is something wild and weird to my home state. I’ve cumulatively spent over 20 years here. The irreality of Florida is how I normally meet the world. The thing to keep in mind is this: my Florida is only one Florida out of many. There are Floridas, plural. I see “setting” as props, lexicons, shibboleths, experiences, and almost imagistically as a sort of theatrical stage. Place feels like this inside my writing: a diorama of a house with the paisley wallpaper and the tiny furniture and all the doll parts on display.