

Highly Commended 2018 OutStanding LGBTIQA+ Short Story Competition

Blinking by Jake Martin

I blinked my eyes and the party was over. I awoke regretting the things I could remember and fearing the consequences of the things I couldn't. The boy I'd met that night was already calling me for a first date. 'Hey, it's Andrew. What are you doing Saturday?'

I blinked again.

...

The words beamed across the television.

61 per cent.

Yes!

I turned to Andrew, tears of happiness streaming down my face and he kissed me without hesitation.

He asked the question and I answered, blinking again.

...

It was at a vineyard in the Hunter. There were roses and lavender everywhere and the smell of grape was in the air. Andrew and I arrived at the ceremony separately, chaperoned by our parents. We alighted from our horse and carriage and our parents walked us down the aisle on either arm, giving us away to each other.

We wore suits. White was out of the question, but Andy wore his red poker-dotted bow-tie and I wore a large pink lily on my lapel.

'I now declare you husband and husband,' the celebrant said. 'You may kiss each other.'

We embraced one another and pressed our lips together. All our friends and family stood, clapped and cheered and we presented ourselves to them as man and man.

I blinked once more.

...

I almost gave poor Andy a hernia as he insisted on carrying me across the threshold. It was cutely tragic but nowhere near the realms of romantic. He grunted, heaving my body into his arms and kicked the door to our new house open, only to drop me flat on my arse.

'My back,' he whined, slouching.

'Let's never do that again,' I griped from the hard floor.

We both stepped inside and tossed the bags straight into the hallway.

'Our life begins here,' he said.

I smiled and closed my eyes as I pressed my head to his heart.

...

I opened my eyes and it was 5am at the hospital. I had dozed off from all the waiting.

'Any change?' I asked.

'No, Jane's still in labour,' Andrew answered.

A nurse approached and asked us if we were the fathers. After a nod she took us to the delivery room. Jane was in the bed, a baby in her arms and Claudia was standing over her.

'Who's the father?' the doctor asked.

'They both are, and we are the mothers,' said Claudia, kissing Jane's hand.

'Well congratulations, you two are the fathers of a beautiful baby girl.'

'Say hello to Lily,' said Jane.

Claudia handed her to Andrew and I looked over his shoulder at her gorgeous face. We both became teary, knowing no love would ever match the love we felt for this child. I put my arms around them and blinked again.

...

The nurse opened the curtain and revealed Lily laying in the hospital bed. Her husband Scott was standing over her on one side and Claudia and Jane were on the other.

'Dad!' she screamed, seeing Andy.

'Pa!' she screamed, seeing me.

'You look well considering you just gave birth,' Andy said.

'Lots of morphine Dad,' she answered.

'Here she is,' the doctor said, rolling the baby into the room.

'Mum, Pa, Dad, Ma, say hello to your granddaughter, Willow.'

We all gushed over her and all fought to hold her as the nurse shut the curtain.

...

The nurses told us there wasn't much time left so I held Andy's hand while he laid there, and I cried as he told me he loved me. I said my goodbyes, but he told me it wasn't the end.

...

I was ready to see Andy again. It had been so long since I'd said goodbye. Now everybody was saying goodbye to me.

'What's next grandpa?' little Willow asked me, too young to understand.

'Something big sweetheart, something big.'