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From the Editors

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FROM THE EDITORS

We write at a moment of global pandemic, which has transformed our daily lives in previously unimaginable ways. Such a moment foregrounds the relevance of genres that can help us imagine alternative ways of being; in particular, tales of wonder can help us cope with as well as criticize our current circumstances and imagine a better future. Looking to one critical site: Gianni Rodari, whom we honored in the *Marvels & Tales* 34.1 issue for his hope-filled storytelling activism, was reportedly the most quoted author in Italy during the first few months of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic (Vanessa Roghi, “L’Ottimismo cosmico di Gianni Rodari [The Cosmic Optimism of Gianni Rodari],” *Il Manifesto*, 12 April 2020); and a multitalented artist with a long history of fairy-tale performances in Neapolitan Beppe Barra offered on his *Facebook* Easter greetings a beautiful rendition of Giambattista Basile’s “La Papera” (day 5, tale 1, “The Goose” in translation).

This issue of *Marvels & Tales* foregrounds the ways in which rewritings of classic fairy tales like “Snow White,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “Cinderella,” “Hansel and Gretel,” and “The Little Mermaid” can be used to explore different forms of marginalization and resistance with respect to gender, sexuality, age, race, and disability. Drawing from thing studies, the opening essay shows the ways in which Angela Carter’s fiction is able to “hijack the ideologically invested male gaze” and queer the look through proto-museal, hybrid, uncategorizable assemblages. Next are three more essays on literary fairy-tale adaptations or retellings, respectively drawing connections with mythic intertexts and racial trauma in fairy-tale novels by Helen Oyeyemi and Tanith Lee; examining a novel by French-Canadian author Dominique Demers in contrast to the ableist ideology of many “Beauty and the Beast” seventeenth- and eighteenth-century versions; and detailing Melinda Lo’s queering of “Cinderella” in the novel *Ash*. Focusing on film, the essay on Robert Eggers’s *The Witch*

discusses scapegoating and child abuse in its revision of “Hansel and Gretel,” and the final essay explores contrasting narratives of disability in *The Little Mermaid* and its sequel. Each of these essays seeks to queer or destabilize objectifying and marginalizing gazes by revisiting classic fairy tales, teasing out their subversive possibilities, underlining how social imbalances work to sustain their abusive or dehumanizing aspects, or reshaping them to generate new, more democratic and ethical relations and realities. This issue also includes a verse English-language translation of the medieval Latin *Asinarius* or *The Donkey Tale*, a fairy tale *ante litteram* that resonates with the “Beauty and the Beast” essay and disability discourses.