

Riboflavin 4%

Blue

The newest born of the lot is blue, favored most highly by those the world over. What is this color?

Some say it is the color of depression and despair. But I cannot help thinking of another blue. The infinite (or seemingly so) expanse of the sky on a summer evening about half an hour before the sun sets. The sight is known to all I'm sure. A look to the East shows the encroaching darkness of the night, perhaps with the beacon of our silent white neighbor.

I've always found the moon a reassuring thing. Like the sun, it lights the earth, though not in the same way of course. I don't need to give an astronomy or physics lesson, but the moon seems to me the greatest mirror devised. What simple genius it was to place a ball of whitish-grey dust in the orbit of the only known life-harboring planet? Not that I'm saying any one person or being put it there on purpose. Even with no god or ultimate creator, the way the universe has designed itself is absolute genius.

The blue surrounding that gleaming orb in early evening is the shade I love. Some would call it purple or indigo. But to me, it's a deep and sultry blue.

But blue can be light and airy. That same moon, shining through broken clouds on freshly fallen snow, casts a bluish pall on the night.

White on blue. There is something reassuring to that I feel. Just think of how bright pink stars would look on the blue field of the stars and Stripes...

Green

LIFE! I'm actually surprised how much green I see every day. When you think of it, there must be some naturality to the color green that invigorates a person. At intersections when driving, we anticipate the change from red to green indicating that an invisible barricade has evaporated. The great symbol of freedom standing in New York harbor is eternally known to be a pale shade of emerald, though anyone familiar with her material will know that she was once a brownish gold. Plants, the most obvious and abundant green are life itself. They create the energy that makes our own lives possible. Without green, there is death.

Yellow

A canary.

I tried to think of something other than the sun that is traditionally thought of as yellow. From one cliché to another.

I've always felt that there is not enough yellow in the world. I know there are lemons, bananas, fire hydrants, school zone signs along the road. But what does yellow really *do*?

It's a precursor to something else. Leaves, green for months in the summer, turn yellow (or red or brown or orange, but I'm just dealing with the yellow ones for now) in the fall and this yellow signals fall, death, even be it temporary. The lights that hand so passively directing our driving each day turn yellow only after a period of greenness. And of the trio of colors on those lights, yellow stays lit so little. It always leads to red in the unending cycle.

Yellow is a place holder.

And is we accept that our dear sun is in fact yellow, as the common wisdom holds, what is it holding a place for?

Red

Stop!

Fire!

Anger!

Blood!

Cars!

Cars? Yes. Too many cars in the world are painted in some variation of red. Why can't we have more yellow cars? Oh

yes. We did, but they were all just holding the places for all of the red ones on the road today.

What's the mantra in Hollywood action films? Don't cut the red wire. Fuck that!! I say cut it and have a little excitement. Be angry. Let the crimson blood flow. And isn't that such an overused adjective/noun marriage? But then I guess maroon blood or fire-engine red blood just doesn't have the same ring to them.

Do we have so many words for different shades of red just because it lies at one end of the spectrum of visible light? If that's the case, why are blue, violet, purple, indigo, etc. not lumped together into some all-consuming giant?

And so, the sun setting in the western sky and lancing its rays through the dense, pollution laden blanket of gases surrounding our pitiful planet appears red. The yellow of the sun is still only a precursor.

Orange

It begs a question. *The* question actually. Which came first, the chicken or...no, not *that* question. Which came first, "the orange" or "orange"?

You know what I mean. And don't try to pass off like you've never had that thought before. Shouldn't different shades of orange be classified somewhere under either red or yellow?

So which did come first? Did some Spanish conquistador proclaim the Floridian fruit "an orange" when he first saw it?

Or was it already and orange by name and centuries later some astute Crayola advertising executive spent a week in his corner office separating out certain yellowish shades of red and reddish shades of yellow in order to create a more perfect balance of colors in the standard box of eight? Either way, why is there no crayon color called zucchini?

Brown

The surviving brother of executed tan. It forever harbors great anger toward blue who took the place of its favorite companion.

But what is brown? What can Brown do for you? (All it does is ship my package, but that's just me.)

Brown lacks distinction. Like red, it can be many different things. Something dark as night but not quite black is brown. With hair, not what place-holder blonde (yellow), falls into the mess of brown and the descriptive "dirty" forced upon it. And of course this is appropriate since dirt itself is brown. But dirt, the decomposition of all else must at one point have been made up of other hues. Does that mean then that all in time devolves to brown, to dirt, to shit?

Of course. After all, these colors are nothing but shells. What's inside the shell? Not shit but sweet and luscious, melt in your month, and occasionally your hand if you generate enough body heat, chocolate goodness.