

SAPPHIC

MAGAZINE



LAVENDER SCARE

You may have heard of the Red Scare where in the 40s and 50s Americans were interrogated and accused of being communists. During this time, many found themselves needing to overcompensate with overwhelming support for everything capitalism and the hatred of communist /socialist ideals. In the background, the Lavender Scare also had a grasp on the American public. Much like the Red Scare, gay workers were forced to resign after being interrogated about their sexualities. Those who were not caught went into hiding for their own safety. Not only did the Lavender Scare break up communities, but it also normalized homophobia and discrimination in America.



Her

Mimi Birnbaum

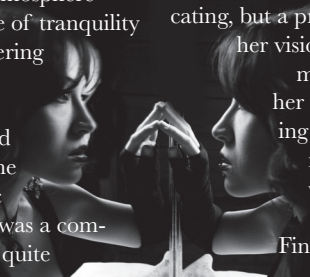
She finds her tired mind in a frantic daze, her mind caught in a strange limbo between dream and reality. All too often She has seen sleepless nights of uncertain panic, mind tortured by reoccurring visions of a figure tormented by its existence. A cool gust sweeps through the moonlit room, the eerily familiar sensation of the wind eliciting a strangely calming chill. Shadows dart across the room with a curious vivacity, flickering in and out of existence with haste. The faint glow of moonlight casts elongated figures that writhe against the walls, twisting into the nightmarish figure that frequently haunts her dreams.

The elusive shadow dances atop furniture, slipping between the draped curtains, leaving behind a lingering sense of unease, the figure gone yet the presence lingers. She shudders, the atmosphere cold. She feels an overwhelming sense of tranquility wash over her, overpowering the lingering unease. The cold calm is achingly reminiscent of a fond memory...*Her*.

She finds the attention of her mind always finding its way back to *Her*. The thought of *Her* always eases the panic out of her racing mind. The woman was a complete mystery, and yet She always felt quite

close to *Her*. She finds her blood pressure dropping suddenly, her breath calming. The twisting shadows no longer ooze of unease, but now seem like a hypnotic dance under the moonlight under her new tranquil state. The shadow spreads, enveloping the room in a calming blanket of cool. The delicate shadows paint soothing patterns on the floor, reminiscent of bittersweet longing of a time long passed. It was as if the room itself had sighed, allowing the light and dark to intertwine in a graceful, reassuring waltz, turning the once oppressive atmosphere into a gentle embrace. It feels like *Her*, She's certain of it.

The whispers of the cool wind are reminiscent of *Her* voice, the fleeting shadows like *Her* gaze. She can't help but yearn for *Her*, especially when She sees *Her* in every little thing. She feels a weight pressing down on her chest—not heavy, not suffocating, but a presence, soft and insistent. She finds her vision blurred, only the faint glow of the moon is perceivable. A chill slithers up her spine, and yet she doesn't move, finding herself strangely at ease. She cannot move. She knows the sensation—this whispering, inescapable calm—but it has never felt this close, this real. Fingers, delicate and unseen glide across



her collarbone, barely touching her skin, tracing slow, deliberate patterns. She shudders, but not from fear. The touch is tender and intimate, though it feels as if it belongs to something just out of sight, out of reach. She can hear her heart pounding in the silence, paralyzed in the strange tranquility that has overtaken her. She feels a breath on her neck—icy, ethereal, almost like a caress. *Her* mind spins, grasping for reason, but every coherent thought is smothered by the ever-deepening calm that consumes her being. *Her* pulse quickens, blood pounding beneath the surface of her skin. She doesn't know why, but she tilts her head slightly, baring her throat, her breath shallow.

A swift, piercing sensation, gone almost as soon as it begins, is quickly overpowered by an enveloping sense of warmth and surrender. She finds her eyes fluttering shut, her body trembling as the world narrows to this singular feeling. A dark, quiet pleasure seeps into her veins, mingling with the cold that now envelops her entirely. She should be afraid, but fear is distant, forgotten in the face of this sickly sweet sensation. *Her* heartbeat slows, as she feels a weight lift from her, now left in a daze of tingling emptiness. She breathes deeply, her neck still throbbing faintly with the memory of a bite, and her mind, slow to return, finally is certain.... *Her*.



