



Blue Shudders

Gabriella Garofalo

To W.

Who's that, can't you see it's only
A matter of time, and seeds everywhere,
A red ochre on rough white rocks,
If she distrusts his smile, look, her sky bites
When handling trees, or limbs-
But words have nothing to do with it,
Words, her stale bread, her damaged goods, yes,
They can't bite a bastard winter, or dirty sunsets,
So stop showing off, stop shouting for answers,
Stop trees, or limbs, and rush
To brambles, to blades of grass,
The answers you set to tangle her mind,
Just think of her women, the black that shines
If you foul up the trees, the sky, the moon, the grass,
If a tricky light breaks your desire for a lost creation—
And you, Father, please don't waste your time
Carving comets, or trees, while in her lounge
The grudge springs up, stays on,
Such a lovely bush, whenever you lend
To her dirty time sighs, blades of grass,
Young lovers on the road,
On the trail of runaway stars—
Give it up, she can't see the music of wombs
They told you again and again,
When desire is just around the corner,
That disgraced blade of grass of no interest
To deaf souls she sees lost in the undergrowth,
Still dreaming of bold moves,
And to your wait for a fall where at long last
You might even bend to light.

To B.

Free entry to the Father,
No need to tender,
Clouds, thoughts come and go, and you, loss,
Cursed among winds and forests,
Maybe you look for them, maybe you get them,
Even life gleams, what's your choice,
Her or Caiaphas' seed that stamps you out
Worse than wheat, or so they say,
And who'll give it away to Father?
The missing, the shepherd, the Scripture?
You better don't move, trees,
If butterflies spring on flowers,
Foxes on wolves—
Such a shame, thank Heaven
At home blue curtains stop intruders,
And ceilings look invulnerable to her voice—
Don't talk too rough, Nature,
If to words the grass climbs late,
If mazes and your lives
Drive you to write your breath,
A teen tangle against the missing in your eyes—
A bit of self-control now, look,
Among April's creatures,
A green display, or naked briars in November
Fathers gently touch you, then go lost:
Water, roots, 'cause you forget the seed
When souls live them as angels,
When Eden throws a scant light and days come back,
Grab borders and sunsets—
They're getting old, they quit the game,
And so does her soul, too many times betrayed
When asking for a heaven,
Among crippled thoughts,
A sky who never stops to wait.

To A.

Why not? To every night a moon
Ablaze with fire, strewn with fear,
No use your stares, if they set them ablaze—
So stay awake, mind, if a dyslexic light
Parts life from limbs, and souls lash out
If you dare help them out—
Say ‘thanks’, stand fast, if branches
Send no shade, but thwart your eyes
As the sky gets dirty, or the gods play it cool
When you dye a white dress, or manes—
Give thanks, just stop to ask them
On a date on the riverbank,
If prophets hide behind the trees,
And her bloody dancer runs for the hills—
Bite your lips, soul, not silence, but loss,
Blazing rows, cryptic smirks,
The only answer you’ll get,
A starving wrath her heaven,
If the chirp of cicadas, the sound
Of many summers ask for God, downers, light,
But who can snuff out her fear,
Or shoo shadows away if she lit
So many fires eager to tear
The leaves apart, or snap at clouds,
Fires waiting for the wind to leave,
For the growth of trees to die,
For the speed of fields to silence her loss,
From generations of starving lights,
Or shadows—
And who’s your prophet, anyway,
A falling tree, a broken stem,
Or shattered symbols?
Who knows, just a matter of choice,
I’m afraid.



Donut Original Plain

Lucas Liu

I'd liked to have been liked, just a little bit more. The first few times I'd had it I'd found it to be quite plain. Still, and stolid, I'd relented.

The average person hardly seemed to try. I hadn't noticed much about it. In the mornings, I found that I had a few gaps, and a stutter, to the quality of my voice. Unsure of myself, in my dirtied-mirrored reflection, I found it hard not to see myself.

My eyes were dark, and I could see my skin, which was dull, and lackluster. A few eyelashes poked out from the tops of my lids. With my fingers exposing the top of my eyelid, pulling it backward so that I could see the red, veined inside of it, I saw them, each of the roots of my eyelashes.

Holding my face between the two of my hands, I stared at my face. Still, and quite pained in its expression, it looked no more than to be a root vegetable in my reflection. To myself, I held it there, my face, in-between my hands.



Two Journal Entries from Maine

Allie Ray Thaller

8/10/25

someone sleeps on the grave of
rose lee wright. a dirty mattress
laid out underneath the headstone
who's husband died at sea in 1785?
and the oak tree marked 133
seems to be slipping from it's roots.
the earth is slippery,
you know. the earth is not as resilient
as she seems. and connecting, skin to grass
even just for three minutes while
waiting. while waving and wavering,
it's slippery, you see. for everyone
starts moving backwards, turning left,
and spinning around. everyone is walking
backwards faster and faster. it's alright,
she is still, save the rustle. still save
the shadow cast by passing gulls. Even
jesus was not so still. he moved with
urgency. he took the taxi. he got off at
myrtle-broadway and spat at the feet of sin.

7/12/25

hey i think you're so cool, sea glass-strong
and stormy long. i can be a wild-waving
witch with bells on my toes and a ring in my
nose. waving from the shore. waves crash,
battling but you don't cry out. you sigh out
leonard cohen chords. gentle brushing down,
pinecone embedded in spine. brush brush,
crash crash, those waves- oh those waves,
bellowing down starlight-soaked shoulders.
you, yeah you- only becoming more fortified,
fighting tossing battering waves. waving
(those arms), tall oak, those arms could carry so many
things.





The Light Darkness

Kushal Poddar

A dark and silent rectangle
appears in our tenement.

We fought awhile ago, and both lost.

It eats away every square inches
of our home. Rain begins, and its drops
materialize under the roof, drop
from the ceilings, into the life, lives.

We move the bucket around and give up,
sit on a sofa with our legs tucked.

We hallucinate rowing across
a neon black, luminous but devouring.

Its ripples carry the reflection
of the strong wind one cannot see.

My hand reaches for yours, and
yours for mine; what we seek isn't discerning.



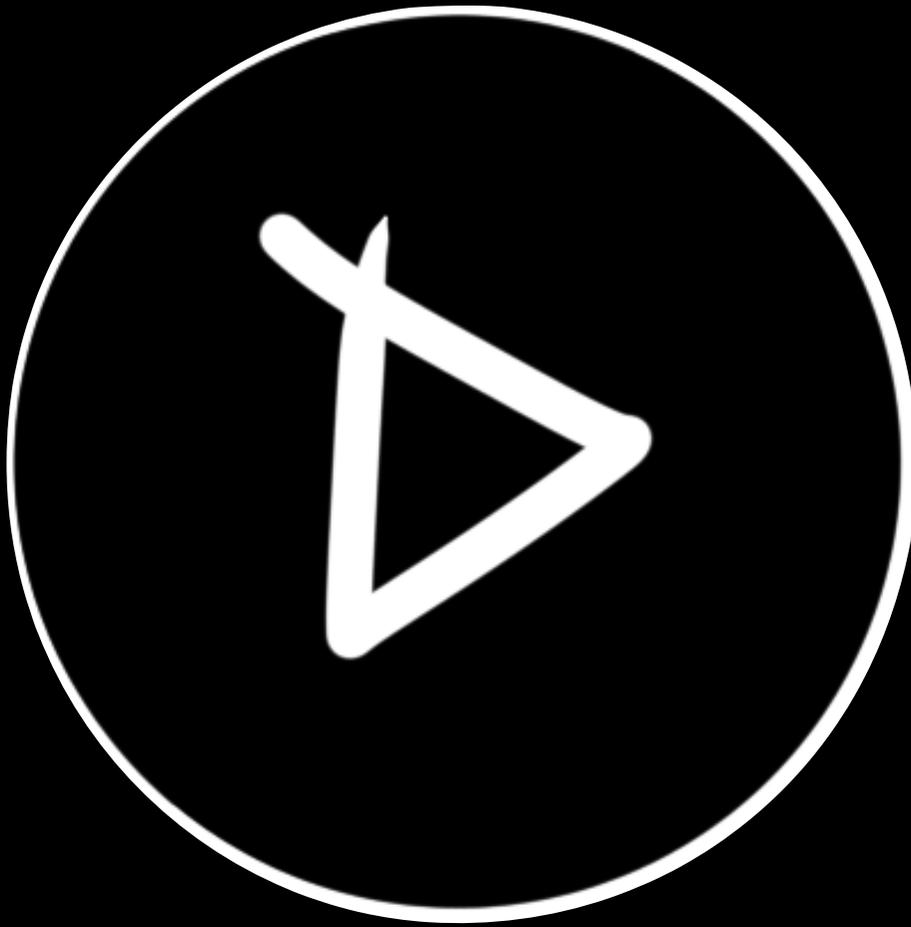
MAGfest '26

airport

sweaty conference halls
and cosplayers and who
is anyone in
a crowd.

where the eye
leads is usually
an ass, costume, ass.

waiting for an enby
to put down Animal
Forest, in Japanese,
on an N64; waiting
for an addy to wear off
so sleep will come but I'll
dream, dream
the dream: male bonding
past 30—achieved.



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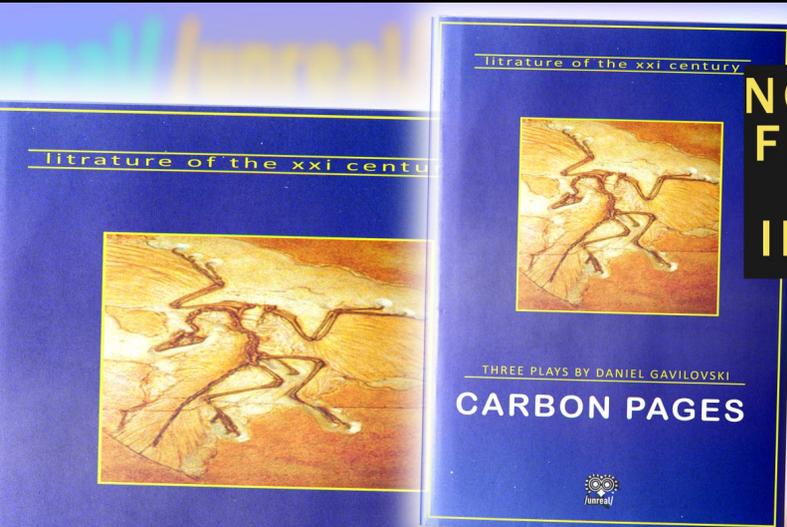
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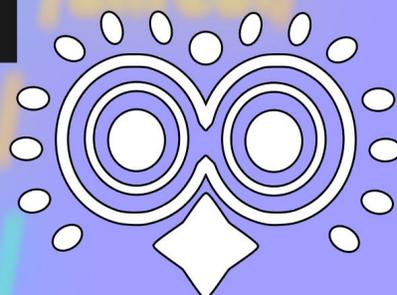
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You come from 4chan's darkest break,
 They fell off harder than the B.S.R of one james krake,
 Their own birthspawn /lit/ called a defect,
 Unreal has no time for dogs—guess that's why they're always chasing Tales.
 From Ogden to Rhyme And L.A to New York,
 from northermost China to Australia they glaze your work,
 at the Rolling Stone launch parties the same whisper snakes about:
 "When IS Crash Test coming out?"
 Unreals are winners—Uploads? We don't do that here.
 Their podcast is so old Dan Baltic still had hair
 They have the fat stack, one article is plenty.
 Should we do some work? Eh... maybe next year.
 Your anthologies are fairest by far,
 Only thirty dollars a page, it's cheaper than a car,
 I took out a mortgage and sold my thirdborn,
 it still didn't cover the islamagood bazaar,
 But I digress, all this tangent, this whole poem's not the best
 Let's return to juicy questions; when do preorders open for Crash Test?
 When will the postman be McNaughton on my door?
 quoth the raven: nevermore.

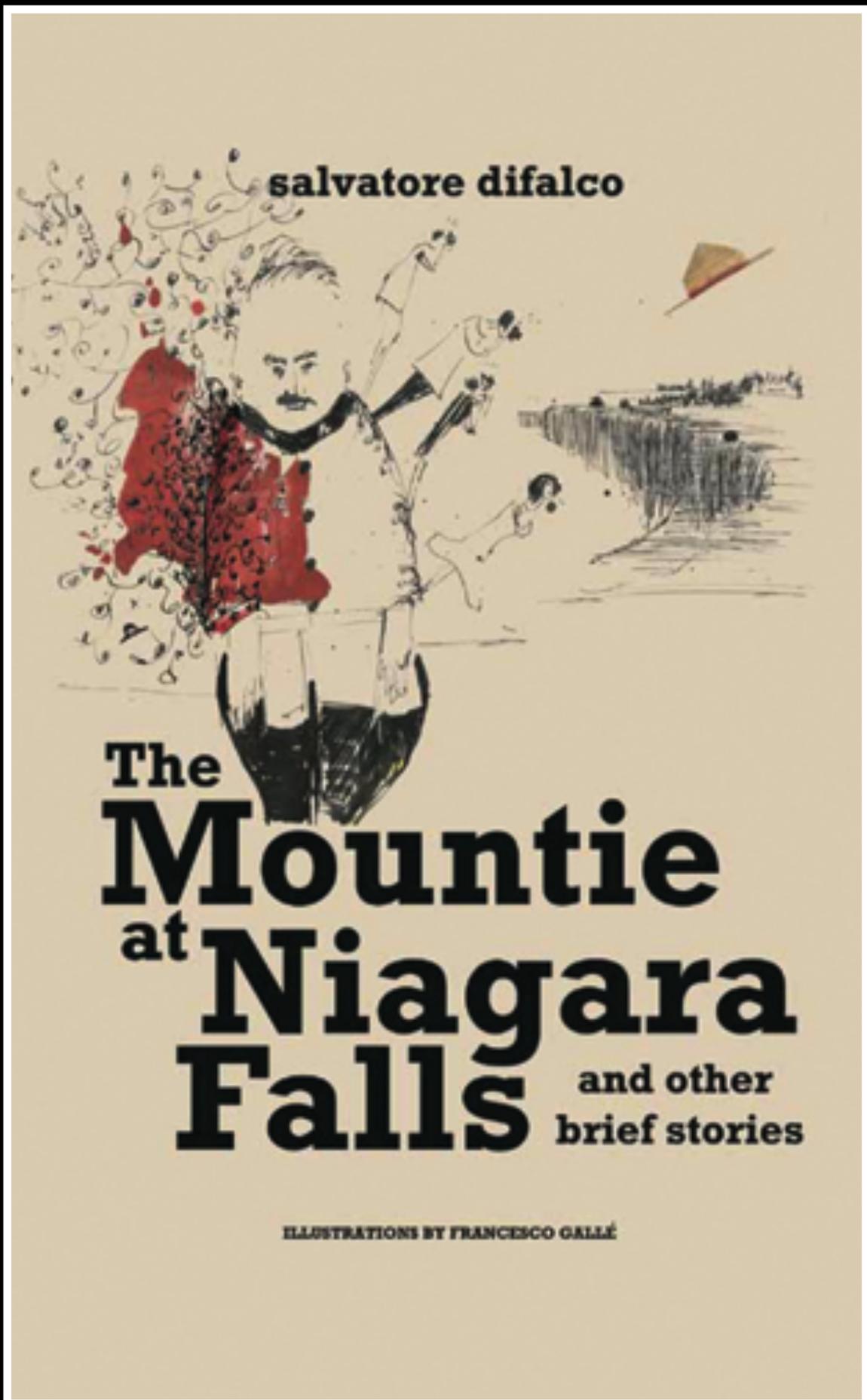
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