



FICTION
NARRATIVE NON FICTION

————— Rights List | Spring 2025 —————

ilSaggiatore



I'm an explorer; I like to travel in time.

ALBERTO MONDADORI

Humanity tells stories. It is the destiny of human beings to leave behind written traces of their lives, memories that will persist over time and space; and it is the destiny of publishers to take those words and give them a form that is both unique and multidimensional. Our multifaceted reality demands attention, shouting out its existence – “I’m here” – and **Il Saggiatore** embraces it fully, eschewing genre categorization or reflex responses. For the authors featured in our catalogue, both written texts and reality are living things.

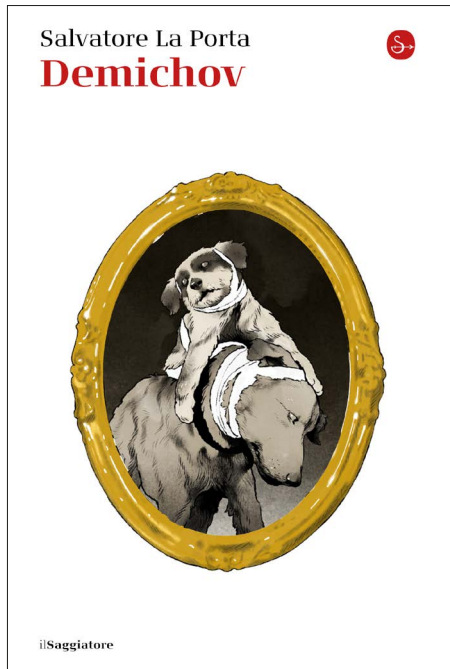
Clear the mind. Put thinking on pause and just be. Immerse yourself in contemplation. Cross into infinitude. Simply perceive, meditate, linger. Tear down linguistic walls. Put aside identities and styles. Expand, make space. These are the lights that guide us through the obscurity of storytelling.

For further information or to receive our newsletter:

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Salvatore La Porta's published work includes the novel *In morte di Turi* (2008), the short story, *Un posto asciutto* (2011), *I racconti di Azina: bicicletta e partigiana* (2012), and the essay *Il giradischi trascendente* (2015).

Salvatore La Porta Demichov

On the 3rd December 1967, the first-ever human heart transplant was successfully performed. Among the research that enabled this result, there is that of the Soviet surgeon Vladimir Demichov, who dedicated his entire life to the cause. The road of scientific progress is often a long one, filled with failures that, although necessary to arrive at the final destination, are difficult to accept. Demichov's was exactly that: born in a Russian farming family at the beginning of the 20th century, he used to observe his mother disassemble, repair, and re-assemble watches, and he began to wonder if it would be possible to disassemble and reassemble a living being too. Salvatore La Porta reconstructs the work of Demichov, known for his experiments on dogs, the most famous of all being the one with the dog with two heads, which drew ethical judgement from the government and his colleagues. The life of a misunderstood scientist considered a new Frankenstein by many, who with his work contributed to the birth of modern transplantology.



Less is More

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Demichov

EXCERPT

IT

Per quanto mi sforzi, non riesco a ricordare il momento in cui ho deciso che valeva la pena raccontare la storia di Vladimir Demichov. È piuttosto strano, se non preoccupante, perché sono anni che parlo di lui; ogni volta che una discussione ristagna e qualcuno guarda nel vuoto, io tiro fuori la mia carta speciale: l'ordinaria, eccezionale vita del dottor Vladimir Petrovič Demichov, fabbro diplomato, premio Burdenko nel 1950, ordine al merito per la patria nel 1998, maestro di Christiaan Barnard, novello Frankenstein, ciarlatano, genio, instancabile torturatore di cani.

Un uomo che, non operando mai un essere umano, ne ha salvati milioni.

Ho frugato tra le pagine di taccuini messi da parte, sui file più vecchi del mio computer, persino sui risvolti dei libri che ho letto e annotato durante le scorse estati, ma non riesco a ricordare come ho conosciuto l'esistenza di Vladimir. È ironico, forse crudele, che sia così, perché per tutta la sua vita Demichov ha dovuto sopportare lo smacco di non essere riconosciuto, d'essere di-

EN

As hard as I try, I can't remember the exact moment that I decided that it was worth telling the story of Vladimir Demichov. It's fairly strange, if not concerning, seeing as I have spoken about him for years; every time a discussion becomes stagnant and someone stares into void, I whip out my wildcard: the ordinary, exceptional life of Dr Vladimir Petrovič Demichov, qualified blacksmith, winner of the Burdenko prize in 1950, awarded the Order "For Merit to the Fatherland" in 1988, teacher of Christiaan Barnard, a new Frankenstein, charlatan, genius, and tireless torturer of dogs. A man who, having never operated on a human being, has saved millions of them. I searched among the pages of stored away notebooks, on the oldest files of my computer, even in the end pages of the books that I had read and annotated for the past few summers, but I can't remember how I came to know of his existence. That this is the case is ironic, perhaps cruel even, because throughout his whole life Demichov had to withstand the humiliation of not being recognised, of being

menticato e sepolto in vita – quasi letteralmente.

In realtà, anche questa è una buona domanda: perché voglio indagare una storia del genere?

A pensarci bene, sembra un buon modo per procurarsi un mare di guai: è difficile comprendere chi sia questo chirurgo nato insieme all'Unione Sovietica e morto poco dopo la sua dissoluzione; lo è perché di lui sono rimaste veramente poche tracce, e quelle che ha lasciato sono deformate quanto la sua reputazione: è stato uno degli scienziati più geniali che l'umanità abbia avuto, capace di prevedere e indirizzare il futuro della nostra specie, e cosa è rimasto di lui? È rimasta l'opinione degli altri: il disprezzo, la derisione, la volontà di ostacolarlo. Demichov è il feroce chirurgo dell'Est, lo scienziato pazzo, il sezionatore di cadaveri, l'uomo ottuso, incapace di fare altro che lavorare, il marito distante, il padre che ha cresciuto la figlia in sala operatoria? Oppure è il visionario che ha immaginato il nostro futuro, la persona che – venendo per lo più ignorata – ha reso la nostra vita così com'è? La sua identità si raccoglie nelle sue mani tozze, nell'ampia fronte calva, oppure l'essenza di quest'uomo è il suo sorriso ironico, che ne smuoveva i connotati nei momenti migliori?

forgotten and buried in life – almost literally. In reality, it's a good question too: why would I want to examine such a story? Thinking about it, it seems like a great way to land yourself with a whole load of problems: it's difficult to comprehend who he was, this surgeon who was born alongside the Soviet Union and who died shortly after its dissolution; it's difficult because there remains very few traces of him, and those that he left are as deformed as his reputation: he was one of the most brilliant scientists that humanity has had, capable of predicting and directing the future of our species, and what remains of him? The opinion of others: the disdain, the derision, the will to impede him. Who is Demichov? He is the savage surgeon of the East, the mad scientist, the corpse cutter, the narrow-minded man, incapable of doing anything but work, the distant husband, the father who raised his daughter in an operating theatre. And yet, he is also the visionary who imagined our future, the person who – while being mostly ignored – made our lives the way they are? Is his identity concentrated in his stocky hands, in his broad bald forehead, or is the essence of this man the ironic smile that animated his features in his greatest moments?



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Sergio Peter lives and works in Milan. He studied Philosophy and he is the author of *Dettato* (2014).

Sergio Peter **The High Road**

A novel that explores the mysterious link between man and the wild, between the known and unknown. At the centre of this story are three young men who, pushed by the enigmatic Guido Caviezel, adventure into the Alps searching for something more than just a physical refuge: an encounter with the essence of life itself. The wolves, silent and fleeting, become the symbol of this search, a constant and unsettling presence that accompanies the journey of Filo, Bosceta, and the others. Along paths immersed in mist, and lodges in the middle of nowhere, the novel follows a community of people who confront the vastness and indifference of the mountains. The wolves appear as custodians of the landscape, bearers of a sense of primordial order and a freedom that the protagonists seek to comprehend, but that perhaps they can never truly possess. A novel about the alluring force of the wild, about fear, the fascination that wolves evoke, and the universal need to find an authentic connection with the world. Through their eyes, the reader is invited to reflect on what it really means to live in harmony with what surrounds us.

The High Road

EXCERPT

IT

Aberrazione

Quel 14 gennaio, in seguito ad anni di sofferenza per la condizione di orfano e per degli amori mai corrisposti, ho guidato la Fiat tenendo giù il piede sull'acceleratore e chiudendo gli occhi, lungo un rettilineo della ss 340, fino a scagliarmi contro il guardrail del tornante, dopo aver inviato un messaggio alla famiglia esplicitando la volontarietà dell'atto.

Era l'ultimo, il più eclatante, di vari episodi autolesionisti succedutisi nel tempo, a partire da quando, tredicenne, provai prima a pugnalarmi e saltare dal tetto, poi ad avvelenarmi, passando per la fuga da casa nel bosco fino a un precipizio. Venivo da una depressione cronica e repressa, tenuta nascosta, coperta da sorrisi e bei voti, una melanconia sfociata così in un tentato suicidio per mezzo di incidente deliberato con la Punto grigia dello zio addosso al parapetto in curva, a 100kmh, a Croce di Menaggio. Naso rotto. Un palo di ferro a dieci centimetri dall'occhio. Sono

EN

Aberration

That day, the 14th January, following years of suffering as a loner and from unrequited loves, I drove my Fiat, with my foot pressed down on the accelerator and my eyes closed, along the straight road of the SS340, until I launched myself against the railing of a hairpin turn, after having sent a message to my family making clear the willingness of the act. It was the last, and most striking, of various episodes of self-harm that followed one after the other throughout the years, starting from when, at thirteen years of age, I tried first to stab myself and jump off the roof, then to poison myself, moving on then to running away from home into the woods, and going as far as a cliff edge. I was coming from chronic and repressed depression, kept hidden, covered with smiles and good marks, a melancholy resulting in an attempted suicide by way of a deliberate accident with my uncle's grey Punto going 100kmh into the curved railing in Croce di Menaggio. Broken nose. An

volato per trenta metri giù da un dirupo, senza altri graffi. Ricovero coatto immediato, nessuna possibilità di replica, tso nel reparto psichiatria per un mese, e l'idea di aver toccato il fondo. Non potevo uscire dall'ospedale, ero considerato un pericolo per me e per gli altri.*

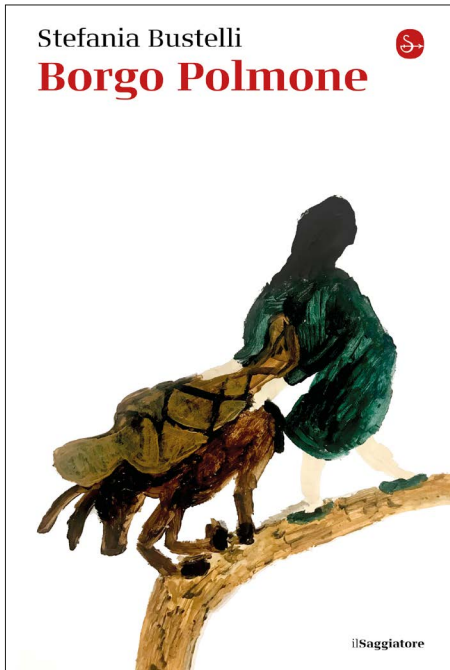
La mia storia clinica è iniziata con la nascita, come tutti. Peso 4,030 kg, parto naturale all'ospedale Valduce di Como. Bambino in carne, sorridente. Poi tutto bene, finché a un anno e sei mesi, da un giorno all'altro, senza rendermi conto per via della tenera età, persi mio padre per sempre.

* Come la luce di un astro differisce la propria posizione nel cielo per apparire spostata rispetto alla realtà, così io erravo ambendo a una felicità ultima, cercandola altrove, rispetto a dove stava veramente. Deviai dalla retta via. Guardavo in alto desiderando un luore impercettibile. Pensavo di aver carpito il senso di ogni cosa. Sottostavo, senza saperlo, al principio dell'aberrazione. Mi sporcavo le giornate di intuizioni false, traviato dalla mia depressione. Mi facevo schifo, ma volevo solo stare un po' meglio.

iron pole ten centimetres from my eye. I flew thirty metres off a cliff, without a scratch. Immediate compulsory hospitalisation, no chance of repeating, involuntary treatment in the psychiatric ward for a month, with the impression of having hit rock bottom. I couldn't leave the hospital, I was considered a danger to myself and to others.*

Like everyone else, my medical history began at birth. I weighed 4.03kg, a natural birth in Valduce di Como hospital. A healthy smiling boy. Then, all fine, until I was one and a half, when from one day to the next, without being aware due to my tender age, I lost my father forever.

*As the light of a star shifts its position in the sky to appear displaced from reality, so I wandered, yearning for ultimate happiness, seeking it elsewhere, away from where it truly was. I was straying from the straight and narrow. I was looking up, wishing for a slight glimmer. I was thinking I had figured out the meaning of everything. I was submitting to, without knowing it, the principle of aberration. I tarnished my days with false intuitions, led astray by my depression. I repulsed myself, but I wanted only to feel a little better.



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Stefania Bustelli grew up in Molise and lives and works in Vicenza. *Fort Town Lung* is her first novel.

Stefania Bustelli **Fort Town Lung**

The protagonist of this literary debut from Stefania Bustelli is a fort town. This dark town, lost in space and time, is actually a lung, tumescent, full of metastasis, in which there live frail figures without an identity, who are trying to kill each other. The town is a creature, that has its own life, that breathes, eats, sleeps, dreams, prays and emits radiation; little by little, it is dying, along with all those who live there. One day, a poor wayfarer ends up among its alleys. He doesn't know how he got there, but more importantly, he doesn't know how to go back; his only hope is to climb up above the summit of the highest bulge and find a way out. But to do so, he will have to overcome many challenges: presiding over cannibalistic banquets, loving and abandoning a human-limb collector, and praying to the god of this place through pre-historic artificial respirators. All for his salvation, all for his escape. To overcome the darkness that dwells outside and in.

An original story full of dark charm that captures the reader from the very first pages.



Fort Town Lung

EXCERPT

IT

Incontro i portali delle prime abitazioni, non sono più solo. Ma dentro, dentro è un'altra cosa. Mi fermo presso una casa con le finestre che danno sulla strada, avvicino il viso per guardare all'interno. Dopo pochi secondi, dietro il vetro iniziano a delinearci le sagome di alcune figure dai tratti somatici indefiniti. Alzo una mano in segno di saluto «Salve, sapete dirmi dove sono? Mi sono perso». Restano ferme dietro la barriera verticale, senza rispondere alla mia richiesta di aiuto. Fingono di non udire ma queste pareti sono troppo sottili per isolarle dai miei lamenti e da quelli del mondo. Chiudo i palmi a pugno e inizio a battere sulla finestra. «Per favore, potete aiutarmi?» ripeto. Le mie parole, inascoltate, si infrangono contro un'indifferenza crudele. La respiro e vado avanti.

La strada di accesso al borgo termina in una piazza quadrata, gremita di bambini che si rincorrono da una parte all'altra passandosi una palla di fortuna ricavata sovrapponendo ritagli di giornali. Fanno una confusione incredibile. Intorno, disseminate ovunque, bambole, matite colorate, mat-

EN

I come across the gates of the first dwellings, I'm no longer alone. But inside – inside is something else. I stop at a house with windows that look onto the street, I move my face closer to look inside. After a few seconds, behind the glass, some silhouettes of figures with murky facial features begin to take shape. I raise a hand to say hello. “Hello, would you be able to tell me where am I? I'm lost.” They remain still behind the vertical barrier, without responding to my request for help. They pretend to not hear, but these walls are too thin to insulate them from my laments and those of the world. I close my palms into fists and start knocking on the window. “Please, can you help me?” I repeat. My words, unheard, shatter against cruel indifference. I breathe it in and I move on.

The entry road to the fort town ends in a square, packed with children who chase each other from one side to the other passing around a makeshift ball made with overlapping newspaper clippings. They are making an incredible scene. Around them, strewn everywhere, are dolls, colouring

toncini. La prima, vera presenza umana sul mio cammino è un campo minato che vocifera in una distesa di giocattoli. Attraverso lo spazio re stando a lato per non dare nell'occhio, ma arrivato a metà della piazza le urla diminuiscono, fino a diventare un brusio di sottofondo. Le ombre irrequiete cessano di disperdersi e accorrono stringendosi attorno a me. Dall'alto, osservo le loro minuscole teste dalle ciocche colorate e disordinate. Alzano gli occhi curiosi. Resto immobile, in silenzio, mentre mi scrutano da quelle grotte con le ciglia lucide di sudore. Non sono a mio agio con questi sguardi puntati addosso. «Non puoi giocare con noi!» esclamano in coro. «Non voglio giocare...» faccio per rispondere, stupito da quell'affermazione, ma perentorio arriva un altro «Non puoi giocare con noi!». Quella frase, come una molla impazzita, rimbalza ai quattro angoli della piazza, penetra nelle mie orecchie e aumenta di volume rimbombando nel cranio. Gli occhi adesso si fanno inquisitori, li sento percorrermi il corpo, bruciarmi, in un attimo sono nudo, legato ad una catasta di tronchi e fascine sfavillanti, col fumo scuro che sale lento, nel puzzo delle mie membra combuste. «Cosa sta succedendo?» chiedo disperato, mentre il pallore delle loro coscienze traspare da quei bulbi teneri e scuri come pece.

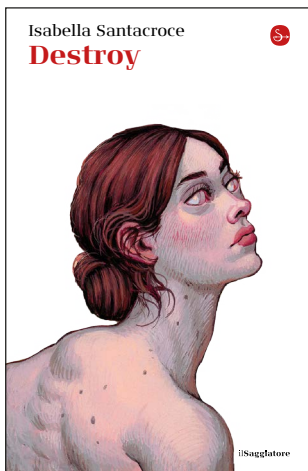
pencils, bricks. The first real human presence on my walk is a chattering minefield within a mass of toys. I cross the space keeping to the side to not draw attention, but arriving in the middle of the square, the cries diminish, until they become a background buzz. The boisterous shadows cease dispersing and rush to close in around me. From above, I observe their tiny heads with their colourful, untidy tufts of hair. They look up curious. I remain immobile, in silence, while they scrutinise me from those deep set of cavernous eyes with eyelashes shining with sweat. I'm not comfortable with all these eyes fixed on me. "You can't play with us!" they cry out in chorus. "I don't want to play..." I try to respond, astonished by that declaration, but then along comes another peremptory "You can't play with us!" That sentence, like a spring gone wild, bounces around the four corners of the square, penetrates my ears and turns up the volume thundering around my skull. Their eyes now become interrogative, I feel them run across my body, burn me; in a second, I'm nude, tied to a mass of logs and sparkling kindling, with dark smoke that slowly rises with the stench of my burnt limbs. "What's happening?" I ask desperately, while the pallor of their consciousness filters out from those tender, tar-black bulbs.

TRILOGY OF DREAD



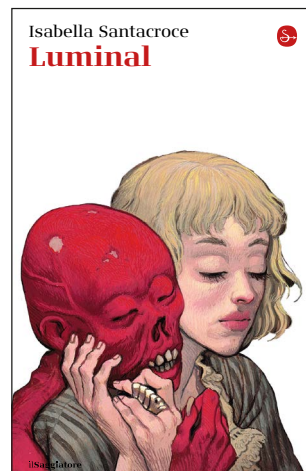
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Without Isabella Santacroce, a lot of contemporary literature wouldn't exist.
In many, we derive from her as much as we owe her.

Teresa Ciabatti

Isabella Santacroce debuted in the literary landscape in the middle of the 90s, with the publication of *Fluo*, the first book in the **Trilogy of Dread**, which came out in 1995 and followed *Destroy* and *Luminal*. *Destroy*, in particular, became a literary event in Italy, and Santacroce's name came to be associated with the group *Giovani Cannibali*. In 1997, together with some members of the group like Scarpa, Nove, Ammaniti, Brizzi, Ottoneri, Ragagnin, and with Tommaso Labranca and the singer Garbo, she took part in the project for the creation of a philosophical-literary movement called *neuroromanticism*, which had the unease of existence as its field of study.

Fluo

Stories About Young People in Riccione

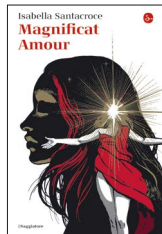
The protagonist of these Riccionese stories tells, in first person, of her summer spent in an apartment shared with friends, and going around places inhabited by a parallel world that rejects the “normality” of adults. The book, in its imaginative style, narrates the life stories of young people in the 90s, who live an accelerated existence, dissipated, sometimes irresponsible, and who together, they are transgressive, dreamers, hyper-consumers and invincibles.

Destroy

Misty , the twenty-five-year-old Italian supports herself in London working in her spare time as a semi-celibate prostitute. Between aerosols of psychedelic substances, gratuitous vandalism, orgy parties, and a lot of sampled dub music, this nihilistic and ultra-consumerist novel feeds off all of the most extreme grandeur of contemporary antagonistic culture.

Luminal

The story of Demon and Davi: elusive, divine, demonic, the two eighteen-year-old protagonists of this incandescent novel know no limits. Irrepressible lyrical outbursts, delusional affection enunciated by a psychotic doll, extreme environments on the concrete of schizoid cities like Zurich, Berlin, Hamburg. Their adolescence is marked by Luminal, the spirit drug, in the throes of which they throw themselves into several erotic experiences.



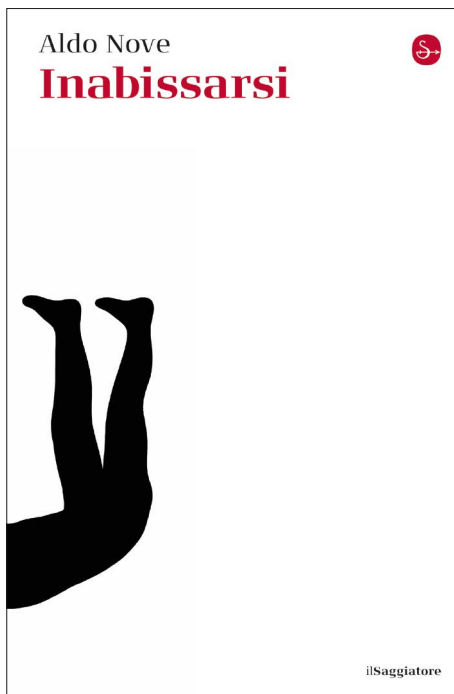
Magnificat Amour

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Aldo Nove *Sinking*

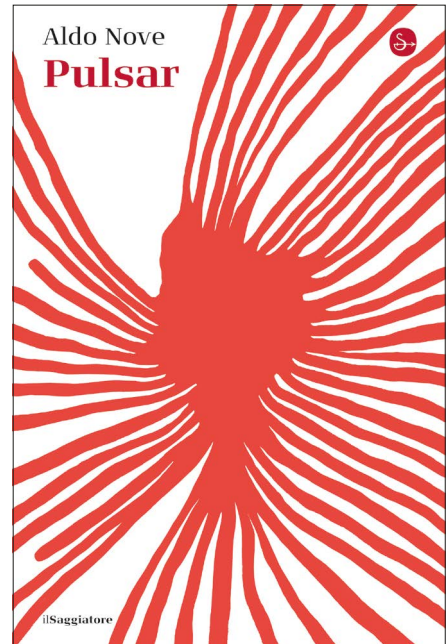
Sinking is the story of a descent into the depths of existence, of that space in the soul defined by memory, poetry, and life, which we experience in our most elementary and inevitable act: breathing. In this story, composed of lyrical reflections and apparitions, Aldo Nove explores the human condition, suspended between matter and spirit, between living and surviving. The protagonist travels across real and internal spaces, grasping memories that materialise like flashes of light in the dark. Every experience, from intimate pain to the discovery of art, reveals itself in fact to be an act of inhalation and exhalation; the primordial act of receiving the world inside oneself to then transform it. *Sinking* is a wander around images and illusions, in which consciousness expands and contracts as if language itself was breathing through its own words. The author pushes us to look inside ourselves and beyond, using our breath as a metaphor for existence: an external movement, fragile and powerful. Every vital act is a balance between immersion and reemergence, between presence and disappearance. Because if it's true that every moment in which we breathe anchors us to reality, that moment allows us also to comprehend how thin the boundary is between life and the unknown that awaits us beneath the surface.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Pulsar

The story in this book starts off in 1967, when the narrative voice was born and begins to emit heart-generated waves of love. A voice that tells us about the love for its mother and its grandparents, about the little village where it grows up. This voice is the pulsating star inside any one of us and whose waves influences who we are and who we are going to be. Readers are taken through a chronological succession of years and happenings, as one year for a child is like a century and an uncontrollable explosion of life. But, there is a point when the “I” of the individual life story transmutes into the “we” of a community’s and must tell a collective history, incomprehensible and violent. As the story undergoes momentous events and calamities, decade after decade, from 9/11 to the Coronavirus pandemic, from Britney Spears to the Teletubbies; this “we” moves on to hope for the continuation of the star’s pulsating echo, to the hope that childhood never ends and that, actually, it can transform the collective, our history, and our future. Because childhood is the supreme act of Love. An undying star.

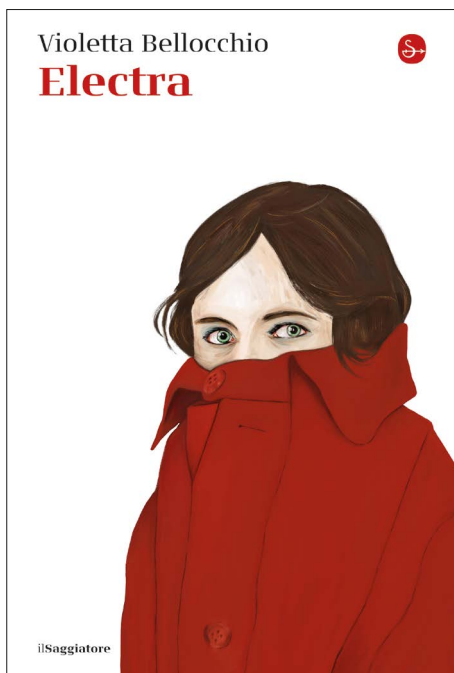
Aldo Nove released his debut novel, *Woobinda and Other Stories Without Happy Endings*, in 1996. A decade later, closely attuned to social issues as ever, he published *My Name’s Roberta, I’m Forty and I Earn 250 Euros A Month*, and Edoardo Sanguineti called him the last author of the “avant-garde” century. A playwright and screenwriter, Aldo Nove contributes to a range of daily and weekly newspapers and he is also an enthusiast of songwriting, covering music for several industry magazines.



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Audiorights Italian (Emons)

Violetta Bellocchio is a writer, translator, and journalist. With her pseudonym **Barbara Genova**, she has been published in various online magazines in English. In 2022, she was shortlisted for the Best of the Net Award and the Pushcart Prize.

Violetta Bellocchio **Electra**

How many times, in the course of a day, in the course of our lives, do we think about how nice it would be to disappear into a bubble where only we exist? How many people have we “hidden” on social media to not hear any more about them? The right to silence is a human necessity. Violetta Bellocchio decided to disappear, erasing every trace of her presence on Earth after a man raped her on her way home.

Violetta cut off every single one of her relationships. She threw away her phone, and the dresses she wore on TV ended up in clothing-donation bins. Her alter ego in that period was Barbara Genova, the identity that she lived with, worked with, and published for two years, far removed from her mother tongue, as she gradually became a stranger.

The push towards the destruction of her own identity comes from trauma, from the urgency to distance herself from her now compromised daily life.

Barbara then allowed Violetta to return to the light – with time for herself and solitary work while her face changed and her nervous system repaired itself. Was it Barbara who invented the Violetta of today? Or the other way round?

In this world, sometimes, disappearing seems like the only solution possible.

Electra

EXCERPT

IT

Sono una di voi. Una come tanti. Sono al lavoro. Presento domanda per centinaia di incarichi, residenze, borse di studio. Riordino il curriculum: si allunga l'attesa. Prendono qualcun altro. Non importa. Vado a guardare cosa cercano gli agenti, per amore dei vecchi tempi, solo per scoprire che oggi viene chiesto a noi di specificare quale sia la nostra piattaforma – il nostro pubblico, il nostro palcoscenico – e quale genere di campagna promozionale ci staremmo immaginando per un prodotto che siamo lontani dal consegnare. *Ah, fate un podcast. Ma che carini. Quanti ascolti per episodio? Diteci subito (età, sesso, posizione utenti).* Mando centinaia di messaggi sperando che uno o due vengano aperti nell'arco di un mese. La posta elettronica potrebbe venir cancellata in blocco. Dato il volume della corrispondenza... La moda consiglia di avvisare in anticipo: il silenzio equivale al «no». Non siete adatti al ruolo. Forse siete dei cani, in effetti, ma non vi azzardate a chiedere un chiarimento. (Cosa non darei per una lettera di rifiuto copia e incolla. Sono bellissime.)

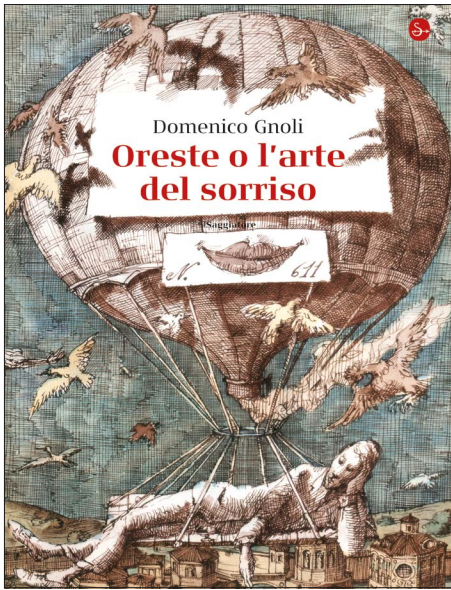
EN

I am one of you. Part of the tribe. I do the work. I apply for hundreds of jobs, residencies, grants, I update my resume; a lot of waiting. I get passed over. It's fine. I query agents, for old times' sake, only to find we are asked to specify what our platform is, and what type of media promotion we envision for a product we are yet to deliver in full. *Oh you have a podcast. That's cute. How many downloads per episode? Share data (gender, age, location).* I send hundreds of messages hoping one or two will get opened in a month. Emails may get deleted in bulk. Due to the volume of queries... It's become fashionable to warn in advance: no response means no. You're not a good fit. You might be terrible, actually, but don't you dare ask for clarification. (What I wouldn't give for a neutral of rejection. I love those.)

Mind you, it was exactly like that back when I had a face. The ones dealing with sustained silence were my handlers.

Badate bene, andava tutto così quando ancora avevo una faccia. Il silenzio lo dovevano affrontare quelli che lavoravano per me. Essere un volto noto significa bruciarsi dalle tre alle otto ore al giorno nel vano tentativo di far cambiare idea su di te agli sconosciuti. *Lo vedi? Non sono un mostro. Non sono la ragione portante dello schifo che fa la tua vita. Forse potresti aggiustare la mira.* Sorridi, ci metti il tocco personale. Li guardi negli occhi. L'onere della gentilezza casca sulle tue spalle. (Piccolo aneddoto: non mi pagavano mai.) L'ultimo manager che ho avuto riusciva a piangermi al telefono, *siamo sommersi*, quando non stava lì a ridacchiare per disperazione oppure partiva con moglie e figli per una vacanza fuori stagione a Istanbul. E che cazzo ci fai in aereo, gli avevo detto, invece di dire quello che volevo dire: *tu credi che la Morte smetterà di inseguirti se prendi l'aereo?* Ogni posto di lavoro era sotto organico a un punto tale che il linguaggio stesso andava in frantumi. Se non scattava un'operazione di marketing articolata su più livelli attorno ai fatti del tuo corpo per dodici mesi dodici, niente rompeva il muro dell'indifferenza. Tu annegavi. Si violavano i contratti, scadevano le opzioni.

Being a known quantity means burning three to eight hours per day in the futile attempt to get strangers to change their mind about you. *See? I'm not a monster. I'm not the core reason your life sucks. Maybe sharpen your aim.* You smile, you get personal. You look them in the eye. Burden of politeness is on you. (Fun fact: I made zero money. None.) The last manager I had, he straight out whimpered over the phone, we're swamped, when he wasn't tittering out of desperation or taking extravagant family vacations off-season. The fuck you on a plane for, I went, and what I wanted to say was, *you think Death will stop chasing you mid-air.* Every workplace was understaffed to the point that language itself broke down. Unless there was a year-long multifaceted coordinated marketing campaign about the facts of your body, nothing broke the wall of indifference. You drowned. Contracts got breached, options expired.



Pub. date 2024 | 76 pp.

Material available Full English PDF
Full Italian translation

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Domenico Gnoli (1933–1970) was an Italian painter and illustrator, who had great success in France and the United States. Author of watercolours and sketches for the theatre, he was nominated for the 1966 Illustrator of the Year award by the Society of American Illustrators. *Orestes and the Art of Smiling* is his only book, originally published in the US.

Domenico Gnoli **Orestes** or the Art of Smiling

If you try to find Terramafiusa on today's maps, you won't find it. Until a few years ago, it was a small principedom hidden among the mountains of Central Europe. There, surrounded by a court of petty functionaries, lived Orestes, Prince of Terramafiusa, Who learned how to smile at the age of twenty and has been smiling ever since.

This is the story of his smile and how he achieved it, aided by the sage strategies of Lucien, the liberal parrot, by the gaucheries of the portly Prime Minister, and – of course – by the love of Violante, beautiful lady-in-waiting, whose Smile No. 611 brings a happy conclusion to Domenico Gnoli's delightful tale.

And yet we wonder – is it really a story illustrated with drawings? Or are the drawings complemented by the charming story? In either case your journey through the improbable countryside of Terramafiusa will be as surprising as it is delightful.

Orestes and the Art of Smiling

EXCERPT

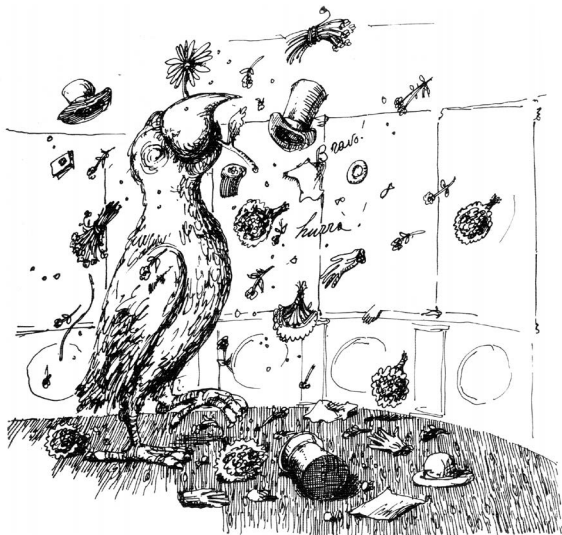
IF YOU TRIED to find Terramafusa on today's maps, you wouldn't be able to find it. Until a few years ago, it was a small principedom hidden among the mountains of Central Europe. The improbable voyager would have marveled at the luscious vegetation of the land, embraced by a jealous belt of high white walls. In Terramafusa's small town, he would have found comfort and ripe carrots, and the simple citizens of that forgotten principality would have pointed with candid pride to their palace, perched on Terramafusa's highest hill.

There, surrounded by a court of petty functionaries, lived Orestes, Prince of Terramafusa, who learned how to smile at the age of twenty and has been smiling ever since.

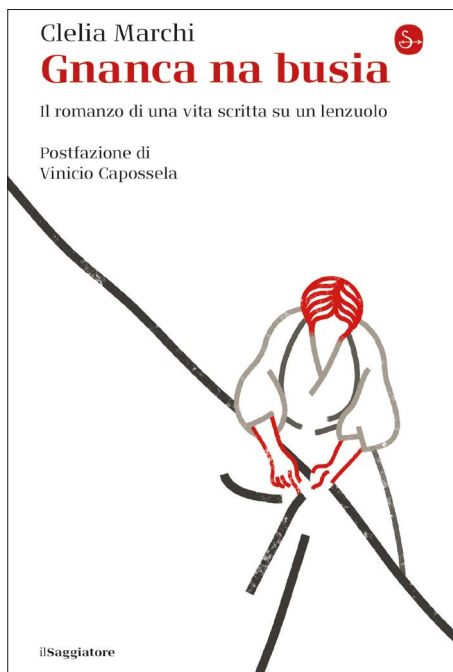
Mine will be the story of his smile and of the people who contributed to it. For this purpose, I have assembled Orestes with the other main characters on an old oak, on which they shall remain quietly seated until their personal introductions are completed.

Naturally, the first one to be presented will be the young Prince Orestes, sitting on the lower left branch. His abandoned posture tells us of a melancholic nature, his somber face speaks of unstable moods, of a heavy heart, and a sulking soul. Orestes spent his childhood with his grandmother, the Princess Palmira, an eccentric ruler with a despotic disposition.

From an altitude of twenty mattresses, Palmira constantly held political discussions with her parrot Lucien, the only friend she had. Their voices, often excited by arguments, shook the whole palace and made the timid Orestes hide, trembling, under his own bed. As a consequence, he developed a strong fear of, and hate for, loud words and brutal voices. He relieved his offended ears by running away into the woods, where he listened ecstatically to nightingales and sparrows, turtledoves and tomtits, until his angry grandmother sent her guards to drag him, weeping, back to the palace. The sound of birds in the dark woods was the only pleasure Orestes knew, though not even the slightest smile appeared on his lips. He grew misanthropic and lonely.







Pub. date 2024 | 112 pp.

Material available English sample
Full Italian PDF

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Stage rights optioned

Clelia Marchi (1912-2006) spent all of her life in a small village in the North Italy countryside. Her embroidered bedsheets are preserved in the National Journal Archive of Pieve Santo Stefano (Tuscany).

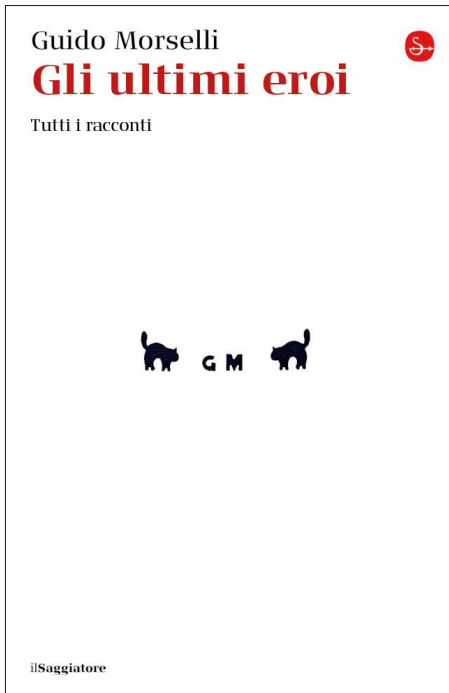
Clelia Marchi

Your Name in the Snow

The Story of a Life Embroidered on a Bedsheet

Clelia Marchi was a woman like many others who lived through the 20th Century. Born into a family of very humble origins in 1912, she died in 2006 after losing four of her eight children, living through two world wars, and enduring an entire existence of sacrifices, poverty, and struggle. When, by 1972, Clelia seemed to have earned herself a quiet life, surrounded by the affections of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, her husband Anteo, the love of her life, died in an accident. To find a release from the pain and make it bearable, Clelia, almost illiterate, began to write. And she wrote her life, first in notebooks, and then onto a bedsheets. Her embroidered bedsheets, this story “on the thread of sincerity”, became the deeply moving and introspective *Your Name in the Snow*.

With an afterword
by **Vinicio Capossela**



Pub. date 2024 | 640 pp.

Material available English sample
Full Italian PDF

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Guido Morselli (1912-1973), his works were only recognised and appreciated after his death. Among his novels: *Rome without a Pope* (1974), *Counter Present Perfect* (1975), *Amusement 1889* (1975), *The Communist* (1976), and *Dissipatio H. G.* (1977).

Guido Morselli

The Last Heroes

The Collected Stories

“I hold no grudge”: the last words of Guido Morselli, left next to a pile of editorial rejection letters before he took his own life. The iconic author of *Dissipatio H.G.*, considered by the New York Review of Books as “one of the most extraordinary Italian authors of the 20th Century,” returns to book shops with the complete collection of his stories, still unedited. Scattered in magazines, gathered in hard-to-find volumes, or salvaged from never-before-published paper manuscripts, *The Last Heroes* presents, for the first time, a parallel life of the writer, a path on which it is possible to rediscover all his themes and obsessions, his historical inquiries, and his violent reflections on evil. From *Rome without a Pope* to *Dissipatio H.G.*, these stories were the space in which Morselli measured and constructed the visions that he would insert into his novels. Titles such as *The Last Heroes*, *The Great Encounter*, and *The Vindication*, which remain unjustly in the shadows, allow us to revisit the genius of the most isolated and misunderstood Italian author of the 20th Century. They also allow us to profoundly scrutinise – not without remaining unscathed – his solitude that always transformed itself into his dogged passion for writing.

Recent Acquisitions

Narrative Non Fiction

Kathryn Scanlan - *Kick The Latch, Aug 9* – Fog (David Higham)

James Rebanks - *The Place of Tides* (United Agents)

Lydia Flem - *Lettres d'amour in heritage* (Édition du Seuil)

Sheila Heti - *Alphabetical diaries* (Sterling Lord Literistic)

Geoff Dyer - *Homework* (Wylie)

Fiction

Mircea Cărtărescu - *Theodoros* (Humanitas)

Alexis Wright - *Praiseworthy, Carpentaria* (Giramondo)

Emma Glass - *Mrs Jekyll* (David Higham)

Eduardo Halfon - *Canción* (Casanovas & Lynch Literary Agency)

Olga Ravn - *Voksbarbet* (RCW)

Yoko Ogawa - *Mina's Matchbox* (CAA)

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