

## Wilderness House Literary Review 12/3

*Gabriella Garofalo*  
**A Blue Bench**

Hold on, desire is looming,  
Moonlight chairs in radiance  
Over the vault of wisdom:  
Nature, you'd better paint in blue  
Mushrooms, flowers so gaudy in their red,  
Or have them hide from star to heaven:  
Is that yours, the mighty lure of thirst?  
No way -  
Ever the light monger she glides along  
As waste, stubble and bushes burn ablaze -  
Forget it, fire, those souls are hounding  
Darkish rooms, silent stones  
In the evening's last starvation,  
Will light pop in out of the blue?  
Not that she cares if the air is shaking  
Or you feel roots among shivering grass -  
Ask her if she's on time, fire,  
While words go to shreds  
And my eyes desert your voice -  
Demise, you're but an outsider to her whys,  
It's only fair for light to dwell in other places,  
Where troops cruise the streets,  
Black Marias speed like hell,  
Riots all over, wolves howling again,  
Do they need her?  
Of course, that's why young women bother  
With hidden dreams -  
Or lace as second best, when dreams go awol.

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I'll be honest, I'm feeling guilty,  
Take for instance my darling friend Persephone,  
So close to my heart:  
Well, I can't help being green-eyed,  
Free as she is to dive and hide into the abyss  
Anytime she fancies to, the gutsy girl!  
See, I always leave the door of my bedroom ajar,  
Just a tiny glimmer of light, as the dark spooks me  
Despite my lust for waves,  
And yet we are great pals, aren't we,  
We chat about his wanderings, my still life,  
Funny indeed he left full of blast  
Dying to get a kick out of battles and wild sea,  
Funny indeed he left with a crew and twelve ships,  
Yet came back alone, only to find his flat  
Rife with scroungers, an obsessive wife, a dying dog -  
And no, don't get me started with his many gfs,  
A lady of mature age who wolfed down the crumbs from his table,  
A conjurer who saw men as they are and played along,  
A naive young girl so sweet on him -  
Was she head over heels in love with him?  
O dear inconsistency, such is life -  
I know, the warriors who struggle with the sea  
Entice us women, how can we resist?  
I for one find his sweet talk so charming  
As to ask him for lunch twice a week -  
Know what, once an ancient light tore my soul to shreds  
So I can't, I just can chase no sky,  
Luckily my friend shelters me in his eyes,  
If not his heart,  
O dear inconsistency, such is life -  
I'm a compliant castaway in a shaky truce  
The silent hideaway where we hang out,  
No waves for me, no shipwreck, no 'coming home baby',  
Just the words the stars whisper to me sometimes,

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Not that I understand them right -  
Maybe their fault, maybe I'm tone-deaf -  
But mark my words, one day I'll get the guts  
To blame the trees:  
They act rude, particularly those twisted  
From the very day of their birth -  
Takes one to know one, right?  
I know, my ambivalent knowledge  
Can't set my days straight, meantime  
Draggy balloons are plodding through a steely sky -  
Shame blizzards failed to blow in and rupture at last  
Balloons, clouds and time.

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### To JHS

No ifs, no buts, no whys, our skies are filthy:  
The gig at full blast when the youngest stars  
Went wild, a blue hustle, and blue the blitz,  
So couple of smashed limbs fell down to the earth  
And hit a folk-singer -  
Darn, just as she was trying the first chords of a ballad?  
Anyway.  
My darling sky, no need to cop out, the girl croaked  
Among those leaves down the corner,  
They were sneering at you, maybe mad at the sun gone awol -  
Death never bothers them, of course -  
Look, you bastard, who are you to blame  
The fading chords echoing away in the sun?  
I know, you've got way too much time  
On your hands filthier than the skies,  
Yet you never learnt to chart the grid points  
Of starry vaults and heavens -  
And don't you play you bastard  
The good ol' card of him and his patient wait,  
Not their fault, I'm afraid, if dark is a sniper,  
Not their fault, I'm afraid, if he nabs down  
The farthest stars -  
I know, slim chance for you to go even,  
But who bloody cares, maybe life?  
Nope, she's too hung up on smokes, mirrors and riddles -  
Lovers, fathers?  
Nope, look at their hands, a swift ruthless wipe  
And lo and behold, all your beloved tat falling down,  
Refugee camps cleared from roots and children,  
The trees ablaze and foliage eating up your ancient altars -  
And don't you bolt out 'cause these are your clothing,  
These, the greedy leaves bolting down your wind,  
Limbs and skin, in a cosy tea party till dawn,

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When your eyes at last bend down  
To every gleaming gone lost -  
Now, you done?  
Well, not bad a script for an indie flick,  
But be an angel, ask for a cup of tea  
While blonde caregivers push empty wheelchairs,  
And the kitten ensconced in my chest wail,  
Are they by any chance in heat?  
There, there lie our cards, a party, some tea,  
A bedlam of sighs, the unasked-for birth,  
Unshadowed silence from a sky so great at strife -  
No, I can't, I simply can't act wild or grow blue grudges  
Only the sky can, I know, I know,  
But please go on, my wandering prophet,  
Please do shout light to us, them,  
Deserts, fields and wild blue waves -  
To life, yes, even if it's not my cup of tea -  
Pure drive, who else?  
It's I.