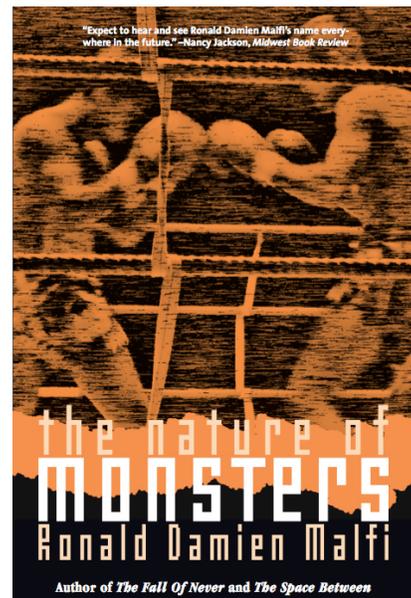


The Nature of Monsters

by Ronald Damien Malfi

author of **The Fall of Never** and
The Space Between

"Love is the seed embedded in the skin,"
Donna whispered, "germinating."



Robert Crofton, a socially inept and naïve young farm-boy, arrives in Baltimore to write his first novel and to reacquaint himself with an old hometown friend: poet-turned-prizefighter Rory Van Holt. In an effort to resume their peculiar and mysterious friendship, Robert abruptly ensconces himself in Rory Van Holt's circle of friends. Robert soon finds himself sinking deeper and deeper into the quagmire that is their lifestyle. They are corrupt and privileged socialites, damaged by extraordinary wealth, gluttony, greed, arrogance, and power. Dreamlike, the characters float in and out of Robert's life with inebriated casualness while Robert's innocence invites these characters to subtly abuse and ridicule him while also accepting him, for the purpose of their own relief against monotony, into their monstrous society.

When Nigel Sweeny, Robert's eccentric and doomed cousin, falls in love with Rory Van Holt's fiancée, Donna Taylor, they all suddenly find themselves trapped in a bizarre and often contradictory love-quadrangle.

The Nature of Monsters is both uniquely modern and delicately classic in its style and execution. The story is an exercise in human frailty and love, while exploring the struggle between personal gratification and the damning, acquisitive allure of monetary wealth.

AUTHOR INFO:

Ronald Damien Malfi is an award-winning novelist and short fiction writer with over 500 publications to his credit, including the modern gothic novel **The Fall of Never**, which was released in 2004 to critical acclaim. Malfi started writing **The Nature of Monsters** in the late fall of 2002. Due to the story's unspecific genre Malfi tucked the finished manuscript away, unsure what to do with it. As the author has stated, "So it sat and waited. And waited. And I waited. And together we both waited. And we drank some Red Stripe and smoked some Al Capone cigarillos and boiled pots upon pots of Ramen Noodles and still waited." Until now.

Ronald Damien Malfi's previous and forthcoming titles include the novels **The Space Between** (2000, **EricaHouse**), **The Fall of Never** (2004, **Raw Dog Screaming Press**), and the forthcoming novel, **Via Dolorosa** (2006, **Raw**

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James Cosby-Wolf, Publisher

The logo for 5 Story Walkup is a large, stylized, light gray graphic on the left side of the page. It features the number '5' at the top, followed by a large 'S' that curves around the right side. Below these, there is a stylized house shape with a gabled roof and a chimney on the left side. The house has several rectangular windows and a door at the bottom. The entire logo is rendered in a light gray color.

Dog Screaming Press), as well as a variety of short fiction published in numerous print and online magazines, collections, and anthologies. Currently, his co-authored screenplay **Triggerfish** has been optioned for a major motion picture from **Paramount Pictures** (with representation on this project by **The Pitt Group**).

Midwest Book Review says:

"Expect to hear and see Ronald Damien Malfi's name everywhere in the future."

More praise for Ronald Damien Malfi:

"**The Fall of Never** is a dark, suspenseful descent into the wild heart of dream, where the primal power of the imagination can turn reality into nightmare. Ronald Damien Malfi has crafted a novel you will not want to miss, filled with mystery, wonder and terror. Smooth writing, a sure voice, and emotional truth keep his engaging cast of characters rolling through the lonely territories of the human heart and mind. Grab this book and settle in for a hell of a ride that ends, as all journeys worth taking must, with surprises, thrills and chills."

—Gerard Houarner, author of
The Beast That Was Max and Road to Hell

"Part modern gothic and part psychological nightmare journey, Ronald Damien Malfi's audacious **The Fall of Never** seethes with simmering danger and suspense, proving that 'quiet' horror can still quicken the heart. With allusions from Shakespeare to Poe and a cataclysmic climax, Malfi's second novel reminds us that our minds are sometimes more frightening than the monsters of yore."

—William D. Gagliani, author of the
Bram Stoker Award-nominated novel *Wolf's Trap*

"I enjoy books that make me think... I think that I will add **The Space Between** by Ronald Damien Malfi to that list now, too... [Malfi] does manage to evoke some beautifully poetic images throughout this 'literary suspense'—my words, not the publisher's."

—SFF.com

About the Publisher:

5 Story Walkup is a new publishing house that concentrates on unusual and cross-genre stories that would otherwise never find a publisher or a home on the shelves. At **5SW**, we believe that literature doesn't have to be easily categorizable in order to be worthwhile reading. We trust that you'll look for our logo wherever it appears on the shelves and know you'll be getting something you can't find anywhere else.

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