

The Girl on the Swing and At Night in Crumbling Voices

Peter Grandbois

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Comparisons between Peter Grandbois's eerie stories and *The Twilight Zone* are inescapable. Though the previous two volumes in the series visited classic horror films from the perspective of the monster, *The Girl on the Swing and At Night in Crumbling Voices* explores two lesser known tales.

In "The Girl on the Swing," a young girl swings so high she seems to disappear into the sky for a moment. And when she comes back, she's changed, psychologically at first and then physically, morphing into a plant. Chapters alternate from the perspective of her increasingly frantic father to a scientific study done on their family. Though the story starts filled with a fantastical light humor, the moments of creepy horror ("She still operated under the assumption that this was her daughter, while he was no longer sure") grow in frequency and length, matching the father's descent into madness.

"At Night in Crumbling Voices" revisits a little known '50s classic, *The Mole People*, who ostensibly live underground and steal people away from the surface. The story moves between a lecture series given by a professor on mole people and the hollow earth theory, the recorded reports of a police officer investigating the disappearances, and the voices of the mole people, which are heard by the vanished before their disappearance and give voice to their most secret and desperate desires. Language again plays a rich part in this story. One word in the language of the mole people translates into a whole phrase in English, a feature Grandbois carries over into the sections where they speak, which read like beautiful prose poems.

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