

**Chapter 1 : Question of the Month: Pet**

*The Susan Henderson Weblog Wednesday Book Club, with Pasha Malla This week's book: Ninja Secrets of Invisibility, by Ashida Kim (Citadel Press, ) The other day, while reading Ashida Kim's Ninja Secrets of Invisibility on the subway, a drunk man.*

He came at me swaying, the sickly smell of wine and urine and pathos pouring off him in waves, then stood before me with a finger pointed at the book, and then at my face. And then the floor. Back to my face. Why, today alone I broke two coffee cups and a wine glass, and tripped over a stapler at work! And even then, it was more bumbling and shameful than stealthy, more retarded yak than Ninja, more sad than anything else, at all. Do Ninjas wear condoms? This is something Ashida Kim fails to cover in his book. Did anyone else just feel a breeze through here? Ninjas make terrible fathers. Forget bears, those bastard-makers of the wild, the Ninja is worse than an absentee: Will the Ninja change a diaper? No, he will be gone. Do these sound like the titles of grim, adultery-themed Best American Short Stories to anyone else? Of Ninjas, it is said: What would our credo be? The wisdom of Ashida Kim is vast, however. Also of use, to both Ninja and writer: He cannot bite or claw you as long as you remain on his back. Getting there and staying there, however, are always somewhat risky. McClelland and Stewart, Reflections on Animal Families and Fatherhood. But my memories of the book burn with the intensity of a thousand cops howling a thousand poems into the blackest night i. When I first discovered Poet Cop, I thought it was a work of fiction. The cover suggests Judy Blume or one of those flyers about peer pressure that lie around high school guidance offices and nobody reads. A bottle of malt liquor? However, I did find this, by a certain J. Carpenter in an article posted on the Books in Canada website, and it makes me sad. So, I guess I should tell you if the poems are any good. In the meantime, all the residents are being shuffled off to temporary homes around the city. What would Poet Cop think of this? See, the thing about Hans Jewinski is the incredible sense of honesty that he conveys in all his poems. He cares about the crackwhores and petty thugs, the teen moms and dads, the babies. But after reading the book, that changed: Do we feel our experiences are invalid? Are we just insecure? Or do we really hold so little of value that our only options are flagrant narcissism or pointing fingers and poking fun? He goes home every night and writes heartfelt, honest poetry about what he sees. If only I had the balls to write a poem about it. Eventually, I took out one of the books I had bought at The Strand: Chester Himes Cotton Comes to Harlem. As I opened to the first page, I noticed in my semi-perverted peripheral vision that the girl across the aisle was doing the same. Coetzee's Life and Times of Michael K. So, not only was she pretty, but way, way smarter than me, too. I couldn't get into the Himes. We were both reading, sort of. What were the chances? I had to say something. Which brought me, two hours later, to my killer opening line: Want to trade books? She shrugged; she did. And she was French. But after a few minutes, she asked for her book back. This is not very good, she told me. Stuffing Cotton back into my knapsack, I promised myself at that moment I would never read another word of Himes as long as I lived. This didn't happen The Real Cool Killers is freaking awesome! Anyway, we got to chatting a little bit, me trying out my pidgin French, her humoring me politely. It turned out she was a writer, and her first book would be published in the coming year a children's book, with pictures. She asked me if I wrote, and I told her, Um. Because compared to this woman, with her book deal and multilingual literacy, I didn't. And probably still don't. Would you believe me if I told you her name was Lolita? We arrived in Montreal and discovered we lived in the same neighborhood, so we split a cab and somehow I ended up with her phone number tacked to my bulletin board. Of course, I didn't dare call. I was dating someone at the time, anyway, and besides what would I have said? Veux-tu aller la plage? I might as well have given her a copy of my fourth grade French textbook. Besides, she was moving back to France in a matter of weeks. Fast forward to March, I notice in a bookstore a children's picture book, in French, by a certain Lolita. Innocently enough, I email the publisher in broken French, asking that a message of congratulations be passed along, hoping it is indeed the same person. A few days later, Lolita emails me back, also in French. I don't understand half her message. I go out and buy a copy of Harraps de Poche: It turns out she remembers me, somehow, and is back in Montreal. I have since moved to Toronto. Do you believe in serendipity? They make movies about it. An

email correspondence develops. My French messages take hours to write. I labor over every word, every verb tense, every gendered noun. I want them to be good. My spoken French, by this point, is fine but writing? To a real writer? I read my messages and try to figure out what sort of person I'm presenting. Someone who uses multiple exclamation marks and apologizes for every sentence, apparently. But this is the thing, I find. No matter how proficient we are in a second language, we become someone else. Even if I was completely bilingual, French Pasha would still be some kind of retard. See, I open up the Sent Message folder and read his emails. The rhythm of his sentences is a gaily beaten drum made of idiocy. And all those exclamation marks! Who is he shouting at, and why? In Paris they are so dry and witty and cool, and French Pasha is a raving lunatic, screaming in a crooked beret with white froth collecting in the corners of his mouth like a rabid animal or a weird drunk. But, check it out: That is the day I am heading to Montreal to visit my family for Easter. And it is also on the evening of April 13th, by some miracle, that Lolita and I are as far as I understand meeting for one beer. Sacre fucking bleu, let's hope so. *Life and Times of Michael K. Pasha*, this is probably my favorite play ever.

**Chapter 2 : Going Steady With the Singles - Digest - The Morning News**

*All in all, it's a good show, with the guys having a fun time with the openers. [ READ: September 7, ] "One Hundred Knives in the Air" I enjoy Malla's stories quite a bit.*

Personal betterment should be a constant aim. Resolutions, we discover, are made to be broken. Here, we share their recent lapses. How do people live without bread? There is little that cannot be improved by the noble noodle. I was the sort of coffee drinker who would go to bed early to expedite my way to a morning cup, but was starting to feel that sort of dependence might be unhealthy. So I gave it up, cold turkey. I feel good and my mornings are swell. And to paraphrase Method Man: Last year I was blessed with late starts, late nights, and few productive mornings. This year my calendar is marked FAIL. An alarm clock playing Radio 4 rouses me. Press reset, cry, read the walkthrough, hit the weak spot, beat the game. I vowed, unofficially, to start running again. Also, that my bed is warm? Alas laziness, that not-so-very-fierce competitor, wins again. Failing to keep one resolution is less of a negative, I would tell myself, if others were made and kept. Get my own place. Learn to play piano from sheet music. Learn to speak Spanish. Get paid to write. Father a child out of wedlock. The only solution, of course, is to forego making any resolutions for I now have a writing schedule. Now every night at 8 p. Oh yes, yes I did. If you have to hang up, adios muchacha, click. After sharing this thought with a good friend of mine in December, he chose a resolution for me: To not speak while yawning. As of today, I have progressed far enough to at least realize I spoke over a yawn and then repeat what I said. Awareness is the first step, as they say. I was chastised for only considering the chance to start fresh, instead of dedicating myself to self-improvement. I was also reminded that it was a week into January, so I was a little late on the execution. I responded to this by affirming my love of such heinous habits; I made coffee and smoked a cigarette. By not accepting one of the myriad free newspapers handed out on the streets of London every evening I would save time and mental effort. Worst of all, each typically contains three Sudoku puzzles, graded neatly from easy to hard. It had to stop. By consigning those 12 minutes to mindless amusement each and every day, my unread book pile grew higher and higher. My notebook remained unfilled and new apartment blocks rose up unnoticed alongside the tracks. So I abandoned the papers, rebuffed the pavement distributor, and ignored the dump bins of fresh copies. That is, until a commute without anything to read sent me scurrying back to the puzzle page, guilty but also thrilled to have something to do. I lasted a week. Finally, I would start my papers days ahead of time instead of hours. No longer would I dash off apologetic emails after the due date to ask for extensions. Then I was asked: I owe you my apologies, everyone. Can you give me some time to get them to you, though? Long live the pan flute, mini mafia, and Michael Jackson. More by The Writers. JavaScript must be enabled to view this email address.

### Chapter 3 : Map Quest Â· The Walrus

*-Pasha Malla At the west end of the park replica, lodged into the hills, was the museum: all ivy-dripping, rippling mirrored glass that reflected the earth and sky. If the model museum folded open, it would reveal installations by local artists in the galleries on the top floor; below that, exhibits of dinosaurs and archaeological curios.*

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Moments later, in an uncanny conflation of worlds real and imagined, I found myself reading about that same experience. A map is a spatial abstraction; the imposition of a temporal dimensionâ€”whether in the form of a chronometer or a miniature plane that advances in a straight line across spaceâ€”is in contradiction to its very purpose. Back in Toronto, booking campsites and bed and breakfasts online, Vanessa had mentioned that, years ago, her family had blazed a similar trail using something called a TripTik. TripTik, she explained, was a service provided to members of the Canadian Automobile Association. Back when Vanessa was a kid, her dad would head to their local CAA outlet with a holiday plan, and an agent would plot a route for him in highlighter on a series of coil-bound maps. The TripTik was supplemented with relevant TourBooks, which detailed regional attractions, accommodations, and restaurants along the way. In these wired-in times, getting lost seems easier said than done. One of the

great ironies of the coast around Silicon Valley is that the region hosts a number of wireless dead zones. So, faced with the prospect of being technologically marooned, we decided not just to TripTik our route, but to forgo satellite navigation entirely—no GPS, no Google Maps, no smartphones. Maybe freeing ourselves from virtual mediation would foster a more engaged travel experience; maybe it would be inconvenient and irritating. In , nine independent chapters in the United States banded together to form the American Automobile Association, and eleven years later, an equivalent federation formed north of the border, officially becoming the Canadian Automobile Association on March 8, A hundred years later, CAA counts roughly 6. After almost seventy years of guiding intrepid Canadians around the continent, the association stopped handing out their hand-drawn offerings last year. Instead, they now direct road-trippers to their online TripTik Travel Planner, accessed by about a million people a year. So our trip to California, we like to think, was guided by one of the last handmade TripTiks ever. Although CAA was phasing out the service, the Brantford, Ontario, office agreed to put together a paper package for us: Cut to a sun-washed beach hours later. The same twosome strolls along the shore, water lapping at their feet. Then, at a swank urban bistro that evening they sit across from each other savouring a sumptuous dinner. This would soon be us! The TripTik seemed dubious: I was reminded uncomfortably of what travel used to be: Now that cartography includes a fourth dimension, mapping is no longer a guide so much as a project of perfection: That we were heading to another country without that sort of guidance felt as foolhardy as it did liberating. What if we drove off the page? Salesman thwarted, we got our car and hit the road. And though it was circled on our TripTik as a single location, Big Sur actually encompasses a broad swath of stunning coastline, bordered by Carmel in the north and San Simeon in the south, from which the Santa Lucia Mountains heave inland. TripTik aside, on our daily excursions up and down the coast, we were often so flabbergasted by the views that we overshot exits and missed turns. And there were limits to its purview as well: Once, we even got lost in time. Since the route skirts the ocean for twenty-five miles, much of it is passable only at low tide and requires strict adherence to tide charts unless you wish to be swept out to sea. A spot on the horizon seemed to correspond to this marker, so we set out for it with one eye on the ocean and the other on our watches. The walk, over loose stone and wet sand, was gruelling, especially with our matching his-and-hers bum knees MCL and ACL tears, respectively. On and on we trudged, and that little promontory grew no closer. An hour passed, then another. We stopped for water; we hurried past a bear and her cubs lumbering around in the trees up the bank. And still our goal seemed unreachable. Then Vanessa looked back. It can be kind of nice to get lost—for a little while. It seems a human enough tendency to comprehend through association, but I had to confess: So when I travel, I require an anchor. And though the TripTik was just a few sheets of paper, it started to serve as a sort of cultural touchstone. The TripTik became my link to home. I began to enact a sort of archetype of Canadianness: A paper map has edges; a virtual map sprawls limitlessly over the surface of the globe. The spatial limitations of the TripTik created a sense of finitude and constraint; you have to trust yourself a little more, especially when you find yourself beyond its pages. After we checked in, Vanessa fired up her phone to prepay our toll across the Golden Gate Bridge and asked me the date. I will not claim to have been happy about racing down Highway at 2 a. Nor would I suggest that a mobile device, programmed with some sort of alert or alarm, would have entirely prevented such a thing. Those were a silent, tense few hours in the car, each of us blaming ourselves and the other equally. But by the time we got to the airport, our moods had lightened. I smiled, kissed her back. This, too, had already become just another story. Get the weekly roundup from *The Walrus*, a collection of our best stories, delivered to your inbox. [Click here to sign up:](#)

Chapter 4 : [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com) | All in a Weekend

*Pasha Malla is the author of The Withdrawal Method (stories) and All Our Grandfathers Are Ghosts (poems, sort of). His first novel, People Park, will be published in late Reprinted from FreeDarko Presents: The Undisputed Guide to Pro Basketball History, published by Bloomsbury USA.*

But we can agree that we need James Franco to sell books. She explains her decision here. Psychology and the American Search for Spiritual Assurance, None, unfortunately, were detailed enough to tell me what the ridge on the back of my head means. But his study of phrenologists did give me a new phrase: You can read Chapter 1 here. Posted by Jessa Crispin link We did a little server migration, and when it looked like everything had worked on Friday afternoon, I jinxed myself. As soon as I said all is well, the entire back end of the site disappeared. I slaughtered a she-goat on the altar of Mercury, and he revealed to me that my Local Site Path was fucked. The sexual situations Minor sets up are baleful, uncomfortable, sad. He explores the shadowy pockets of our hearts and heads, the places we avoid, because what we find there is weird, off, wrong, and sort of scary. A harrowing, uncomfortable act. It was the first time he had undressed her. Yeeuch, you think, the horror. A lovemaking punctuated only by the involuntary blinking that for brief but too-long moments breaks the illusion, the spell, of complete connection, two sets of eyes locking upon one another in near-inviolable attention while bodies perform their lesser task. The pleasure of that deepest kind of intimacy, sure, but the terror, too. The complete giving and undoing of self. Self-annihilating, in the most powerful, and, as Minor says, terrifying way. I can think of only a small handful of times, half a dozen or less, that can be categorized this way. In a large chair in my parents house. In a bedroom on the North Shore of Massachusetts. It should be rare. We cringe to think, and retreat from the thought, our noses wrinkled, needing a shower. With Jack making the link between bathing his mother and making love, you think, not now, not this, wrong, wrong. Oh total being, oh no. Our reaction is strong for a reason. I guess one would suppose they lived sitting around in their pajamas, thinking. A C Grayling argues that the lives of philosophers are more exciting than we think, and he praises the recent biographies and studies of the greats. Socrates perverted the youth of Athens and had to drink hemlock. Abelard suffered castration for his illicit romance with Heloise. Descartes was present both at the Battle of the White Mountain and the subsequent massacres of Bohemian Protestants and might have been a spy for the Jesuits. Locke had to flee into political exile. Bertrand Russell went to prison for opposition to the First World War, while his pupil and later nemesis Wittgenstein served in the Austrian army and wrote his Tractatus on the Eastern Front. Sartre was a Communist, Heidegger a Nazi. Camus played football and died in a car crash. Not a few of them were preternaturally amorous. An Alternate History, calling it an "equivalent of a brilliant graduate course from a feisty and exhilarating teacher. The popular German novelist Rudolf Ditzen, was pressed into service first by the Nazis, who wanted him to write an anti-Semitic tract, and then by the Russian occupiers. He died in, at a decrepit Berlin hospital, by his own admission "nothing more than a weak man. Anthony Lane at the New Yorker. I hope I am not too old to take it up seriously, nor too stupid about machines to qualify as a commercial pilot. I do not feel like spending the rest of my life writing books that no one will read. It is not as though I wanted to write them. Thanks to Joey for the link. You can listen to the interview at PBS. Tell me about A Disobedient Girl. Where did your story come from? The story is about the underclass in Sri Lanka, my native country. As the only girl in my family, with two older brothers and a host of male cousins, I was much favored but not spared the burdens that fall to females in Sri Lankan homes: For me, the only relief both from those external pressures and the internal chaos came from the servants. I spent a lot of time with them and sought out their company and in some ways, identified with them as individuals who were, like me, constantly beleaguered by the needs of others. That affinity with servants stayed with me as I traveled to the States to attend college. Many of my closest friendships have been with custodial staff, particularly older men and women. I tended to write about servants a lot, even as a child, so it was perfectly natural that when given a prompt, by Lynn Freed, to write about anything, even this far away from my home in Sri Lanka, I would choose to write about servants and, eventually, about other women and men whose lives are either expected to be mundane or are altogether invisible. Where did the plotline come

from? I began writing the book about an older woman and she began in a very dark place, but in the second chapter I began to talk about a little girl. I just started to follow those two threads, seeing where they would go, and how they might intersect at some point. It was as much a discovery for me, the way these two stories might come together, as it was a relating. They are, really, two very distinct stories. One, the older woman, is narrated in the first person and takes place over the course of about seventy-two hours; and it is very closely observed. The other, the story of the little girl covers three decades and is told with a certain distance. It was hard, at times, to switch between those two because the one would plunge me into despair and the other, no matter how difficult the moment, lifted me up. Latha and Biso both feels she deserves something other than she, but they go about acquiring those things in different ways. Latha does it from within her predicament, Biso seeks it somewhere else, by running away. What do you hope to achieve with your novel? In the aftermath of the tsunami, I headed up a relief program for the state of Maine. It made me very much aware of the yearning that many Americans have to learn about places that are vastly different from their own habitat. I think that desire is often buried by politics and religion and regionalism, but it is there whenever you engage with people one on one or in smaller groups. I think that is missing here and it is too bad. It is also a gift to my country of birth. With regard to Tamil authors, there is at least the possibility of people being able to read those stories in other Tamil-speaking countries. That is not to say we have no authentic story to tell, but only to point out that the opportunity for having our stories published and distributed widely is correlated to our residency abroad. So I hope this book turns the attention of readers toward the country as a whole, and its writers in particular. In this regard, I have great respect for places like Bread Loaf, which awards the Michael and Marylee Fairbanks International Fellowship for African and Caribbean Writers , as well as Words Without Borders and PEN World Voices , both of which are active in helping international authors writing in their native tongues, to be heard worldwide. Where did you first start out? I started out when I was seven or eight years old, by criticizing the President of Sri Lanka for timing an address to the nation during a comedy program that I happened to like watching on TV. I think I called him a joker. I come from a family of writers; the letter was published by a good friend of my father, who found it pretty hilarious. And everybody was involved in political activism so that, too, was just the way things were. I studied political science as an undergraduate and in graduate school and continued to combine those two things, writing and politics, through my journalism. But I have never enjoyed being told to write something. When someone tells me to write something all the passion goes away and I find myself staring at pages and pages of useless meandering thoughts. I have been fortunate enough to be able to write what I want, most of the time. I think that if a person feels very strongly about something and they write about it or speak about it, they will be heard. Fiction, though, that is harder to place because it is much more in the eye of the reader, less about what the writer wants to say and more about what the reader wants to hear. Can you elaborate on where you were coming from? At one point you say you cannot call it an interview. There were two things that infuriated me about that whole business. First, I firmly believe that if an artist asks that people buy their music, their books, whatever, that they owe their fans the truth. To use the status you gain through your creative work to hoodwink people who are putting their faith in you is just plain despicable. Arulpragasam is a woman with many talents, but no amount of talent gives you the right to lie to people. It is easy to do in America precisely because of what I mentioned before: And that is aggravated by our complicated and tangled and often warped view of majority-minority relationships here, so much so that many Americans tend to automatically condemn any majority anywhere in the world. But the real fault lies with the journalist, because it is he, in this case Tavis Smiley, who facilitates communication between his guest and his audience. There is no excuse, ever, for not doing your research when you are a journalist, and one with a national audience. Instead of enlightening people, he was thrusting them further into the dark. To Smiley, it was just a scoop to have a very pregnant rapper nominated for a Grammy and an Oscar on his show. Who she was, for whom she was speaking, questioning the veracity of what she was saying, these things did not matter to him. To see that on PBS was probably the rudest shock of all for me.

**Chapter 5 : Gapers Block: Slowdown - Literary**

*Pasha Malla's debut collection of short stories The Withdrawal Method was a huge success. Praised as "weird and wild and wonderful," it became a Book of the Year in both the Globe and Mail and the.*

But then I wondered if the novel might be better served by disorientation—that is, the city and book being intentionally bewildering at first. I like books that teach you how to read them, an experience analogous to travelling somewhere new: In this excerpt, too, are all the placeholders I used for neighbourhoods and transit stops before I figured out what everything needed to be called, and many other things I ended up excising from the novel—including, of course, this prologue in its entirety. If the model museum folded open, it would reveal installations by local artists in the galleries on the top floor; below that, exhibits of dinosaurs and archaeological curios. There was a wing of medical oddities, conjoined twins in jars and the great meaty lumps of cysts and tumours hovering in glass cases, and another displaying various feats of technology and science, including a hall of medieval weaponry, maces and broadswords and lances and chainmail, and great suits of armour standing at attention on either side of the doorways. A bulbous addition housed the planetarium and a climate-controlled, woodsy habitat that traced local flora and fauna from the prehistoric era to the present day; an amphitheatre hosted lectures and parties. What was missing from the model were people. The miniature version was a ghost town, and Debbie felt as though she were looking back upon some post-apocalyptic future. The only movement were the monorail trains, which traced their looping, fractal routes around the city. When the world ended, she thought, watching them, all that would survive would be machines, how depressing. Debbie began to imagine life into the model. Down the hill that sloped from the museum toward the reservoir she pictured kids tumbling, then standing dizzily at the bottom and staggering about. Over the reservoir arced a bridge where Debbie liked to stand and watch the goldfish rudder by below; around it paddleboats would be scudding about over the water and on the benches old folks would be chucking bread at the swans and shooing away the pigeons. From the boathouse emerged a newly wedded couple, showered with rice and confetti; they made their way down the steps to the docks for photos, flanked by relatives and friends. Beyond here was the meadow, the gazebo, and to the south of that the woods, all the native species of poplar and elm and pine and maple and birch, shrubs of sumac, and of course the willows, and now that it was springtime here the squirrels would dart up and down their trunks and go bounding out over the lawns. When things quieted at dawn or dusk you might see a deer timidly nosing its way out of the trees. There were rumours of wolves, or at least a wolf, though no one had heard anything of wolves in years, if there had been even one it was likely long dead now. There was never any howling, not even at the full moon, which had just passed that week, and now was fading again, another slice nightly nicked away. The woods bled into the campground that bled into the public beach along the south shore, while along the top end of the park ran the big wide boulevard of People Park North PPN to locals. Past the meadow on the east side of the park were the boutique stores and art galleries, the cafes that scattered tables and chairs onto the sidewalk. It was a lovely place for a stroll, the lamps were fashioned in a gas-lit style and fluttered Silver Jubilee banners. The old cathedral had been converted into lofts, the original stained glass intact, the clock tower frozen now, Debbie recalled, and was it working again? From there the students took the Green Line toward the airport, the trains dumping them along the way at various points near campus, some rode all the way to campus, to the dormitories—here was the train, now, whizzing around on its rails across the model, out to the eastern shore, through the student ghetto, a grid of houses flaking paint, their lawns dead or dying, a neighbourhood that used to comprise a working class contingency of self-made labourers and their stay-at-home wives, and in many of the driveways used to be vans bearing the insignias of various painting and construction and plumbing companies. They were prefab houses, the work only had to do with choosing colours and styles of sink. The houses here had front porches once the site of family barbecues, now littered with empties, bicycles chained together, random street signs stolen during drunken escapades. There were others of course who got along, who felt a sort of grandmotherly or grandfatherly kinship with their young neighbours, who might even take over some tarts or cake; and the students would listen to their stories and remark afterward how much

there was to learn from older people, nod sagely, then dip to take a deep long hit from a towering bong. Campus was a giant parking lot studded with cement blocks: Debbie remembered how at night it was lit in sporadic blue pockets; the airport was so close that too much lighting would distract the incoming pilots. Overhead flew planes all day and night, the sky streaked with their cloudy trails. They lowered blinking from above or roared up into the sky while on campus the students trotted around with their backpacks and prejudices and enthusiasm and hangovers, disappeared into lecture halls and came out an hour later, some knuckling sleep from their eyes, others ready to take on the world. Or on the street outside Cathedral Station the tourist buses would also be parked, parades of vacationers filing aboard. Here tour guides done up in period costume led groups through the ramparts and dungeon, narrating the old days of battle beside cannons clogged with cement. Or from Cathedral Station the Red Line curled northwest, up into the newer subdivision of Northshore, where a twisting network of streets was crammed with duplexes and semi-detached units and garages with no driveways, only street parking, on every other roof a satellite dish; antennas graced those between. Here was a place where as its inhabitants liked to say you had everything you needed: Why go elsewhere in the city? Many people here did not. It was safe, most of all, for kids to play in the streets; to call them in at dinnertime all you had to do was yell. Further west on the Red Line was the Canal Street Stop, where few passengers got off, few people got off here anymore. This had once been a popular place for family fun, thriving with a Twirl-a-Whirl and a Funhouse and Freakshow, reduced now to two rides appropriated by the city as Historical Sites: Beneath the rides the city-employed workers, high school drop-outs and kids on placement, slumped at their posts, bleary eyed and distant. And then of course was Northbridge, that great stone slab, so thick and secure it looked as though the land had been added to it on either side, rather than the other way around. It was like the spine of some great prehistoric beast stretched over the river, daring anyone to cross it. Gargoyles perched on its abutments, the date of its founding immortalized on a plaque over which loomed the words, this bridge we build with each step across. Here at the parking lot a few mainlanders would have left their cars, and off the trains they came and into their cars they went, back over the bridge and home. And those that continued on the Red Line would pass Island Stadium where the baseball team used to play, but because of low gate receipts had moved elsewhere. Now the stadium was used for poorly attended soccer matches and rock concerts and the odd monster truck rally that always ended in multiple arrests for public urination. It was a harp-shaped structure looming out of the model, grey, and at Stadium Station the miniature monorail braked and Debbie imagined the real thing: This was the last stop. And so the train slid out of the station, back the way it came. His most recent, a novel, is called *People Park*. Please follow and like us:

**Chapter 6 : the silence in the park | Download eBook PDF/EPUB**

*By Kate Harris, Viviane Fairbank, Pasha Malla, Monte Paulsen [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com) "All the explorers I worshipped in high school turned out to be hacks. The Polos, the Columbuses, the Franklins of the world were less seekers of truth or beauty, as I'd naively believed based on romanticized accounts of their exploits, than servants of commerce or.*

A shadow memory and I struggle to place the year. Much of my childhood suffers from this amnesia of sorts. I never really remember the sequence of events I remember some episodes and place them in context by the other moments and feelings around them. I just remember clearly that it was Christmastime. I have no recollection of my mother at all. My parents had a troubled marriage and by this time their troubles had me being cared for by my grandparents most of the time. Not every woman is maternal. Some of them have to leave. My father tried his best to take care of me over the years. He tried to find little things to fill the space that might have been left by his separation from my mother. When I was small it was the holidays that put those efforts on full display. A time where most families have extra props on hand to make it appear that they are making the kind of happiness expected of the season. I wake up in the morning to a tree overflowing with gifts. At this time I was the only grandchild. I would be the only grandchild in the family until I was 13. Every Christmas was my day until then. I only remember one gift from this year. There was one box under the tree with a loose fitting lid and a length of ribbon gently tied. Not the tidy secure wrapping of all the others. I was told to unwrap this package under the tree, not to move it from its spot. I pulled the ribbon and lifted the lid. When I looked inside I saw sleepy brown eyes looking back at me. A puppy of no certain breed with a soft golden coat. Even in my mind now, every home and every child needs a dog. It is that sensation of instant love that is so rare in any life that it must be something required of happiness. This pup erased sadness as I pulled him out of the box. All the other gifts were forgotten. I loved the softness of his fur. The smell of him, the kisses he showered me with. Everything about him was happiness and love for me. The grownups asked me if I had a name for him. In the limited vocabulary of someone that was late to start talking I found the sweetest name I could think of. I called him Sugar. Sugar was my first real lesson in love. He is also my truest life lesson in the tenderness of my boyish heart. The photograph of a boy and his dog is an example, it tells a story that appears normal. From my first moments with my first dog my education of how to love started. Outside of the photograph I was given a list of the things I should not and could not do. I should not carry the dog. I should not hug him too tightly. I could not allow him to sleep in my bed. I should not follow him. If I expressed love, I would ruin something or something terrible might happen. At night Sugar was expected to sleep on top of an old blanket in my closet. I was an obedient child. Always a bit shy and frankly scared. I wanted him to be able to sleep next to me though. I would get tucked in for the night and my pup would settle into his spot. The house would calm down, everyone would drift to sleep and I laid in my bed awake until I thought it was safe to move. I would climb down from my small bed taking a blanket with me and I would lay on the closet floor next to my beautiful puppy. I would pull the blanket over my shoulders and hold him close. I would fall asleep perfectly happy. I knew that I loved Sugar and that he gave me the same love in return. The grownups always found me like this and returned me to my bed, never allowing my dog to sleep with me. Just always warning and cautioning me on the chances I was taking. The puppy will die if you hold him too much. I worried terribly throughout my early childhood that such things might be true. I loved my parents and they were never close to me. I loved most of the grownups in my life and they were distant. These thoughts and ideas grew with me and I learned that if I expressed love and affection I would ruin everything. After a few years together our living situation changed and he went to live with someone else. I thought they had taken him away because I loved him too much. But the seed of the lessons remained.

**Chapter 7 : Broken Resolutions - The Morning News**

*Essbaum, the author of four collections of poems, has a knack for structural cohesion, and a tautly composed symbolic system interweaves several narrative and thematic threads throughout the book.*

After a night of seeing the Rheostatics, how could I not go and revisit some more shows. This time from I get a kick out of the shows that are listed in a town but with no club attached. I wonder how many clubs there are in Fredericton? Anyhow, this recording is really quiet, but it is quite clear, which is nice. Someone is out of key and forgot to use a capo as the song starts. They were so political that night! They are typically atypical as is this one. Set in a grade school, the kids are all delighted to witness their guest performer, Jenny Balak, who is a knife juggler. I love the idea that a school would bring in anyone whose sole juggling item is knives! But more than simply juggling them, Jenny is able to keep one hundred knives in the air at a time. The knives hover way up in the air like a cloud, as she somehow touches only one or two which seem to keep the entire group aloft. The children even Yusuf, the one kid who can never sit still are transfixed. And then Jenny starts telling a story. The story is about Gregory, the knife who could not cut. He felt really bad about himself, but the other knives were never mean to him. He just really wanted to cut, like his mom and dad. Not a string pulled taught, not even a pat of butter. As she is going on with the story, which is getting darker and darker, the cloud of knives seems to lose some of its buoyancy. Jenny even drops a knife but manages to get it back aloft with a cool flick of her ankle. But soon enough, she begins dropping more and more—daggers, cleavers, butterfly knives—she is even cut by one. And slowly the kids are taken out of the auditorium, as Jenny tries to recover. The only child who remains until the end is Yusuf. Jenny tries to keep her composure and feels a bit bad about what happened, but Yusuf is amazed. And he runs up to her, full of adulation. But perhaps Yusuf has ulterior motives for his enthusiasm. What really struck me about this story is that the story which Jenny tells, about Gregory the knife, is never finished. I am shocked and delighted that Malla left this story in a story unfinished in the midst of her own completed story.

Chapter 8 : October Â« Â« Pickle Me This

*This is important to remember for all of you newfound atheists, agnostics, and practicing satanists. Religion has been around for a long time, so they've learned a few tricks, and judging by the numbers, they work pretty well.*

Wed, 4 Oct From: This was not just a friendly greeting but a plea for help. You were preparing your new book, Mountain Man Dance Moves: You asked me and talented others if I could produce some. I said I could. The following day I delivered to your electronic inbox not one but two such lists. And while this might seem exceedingly generous on my part, let me explain something about my frame of mind at the time. I never received my copy of the book, but I hoped it had been donated to the children of as well. I had not even turned to Page 30, however, before I received a shock. This is not just an outrage but a betrayal. If these demands are not met within 10 business days, I will have to insist that you cease distribution of this book. Sincerely, Carlton Doby P. Adding insult to injury, you edited one of my Irish-joke punch lines in order to make it grammatically correct, but now the joke makes as much sense as MapQuest directions written by Mark Danielewski. Even a barely conscious Tara Reid laughed at that one when I told it to her at the Vanity Fair party. Tue, 3 Oct From: This is an unofficial prescript only, like the Flag Code, and will not result in jackboots kicking in your door at 3 a. Mon, 2 Oct From: I totally agree with Pasha Malla that Toronto fans have the worst hair in professional sport. It is not easy speaking truth to power, and P. Malla deserves our praise, support, and gratitude. Fri, 29 Sep From: These FreeDarko folks do some of my favourite writing about basketball, anywhere, and Dr. From keeping Vince over Tracy to picking up a near-geriatric Hakeem Olajuwon ever see a 7-footer airball a breakaway dunk? When he was finally canned in , he left a club in shambles, with what remains a bleak future. For Zeke to hire Grunwald now feels a bit like the captain of a sinking ship inviting a giant squid on board to help save passengers. And that squid is hungry. And it has a mullet. And it thinks paying Antonio Davis a billion dollars a year, or whatever it was, is a smart move. That said, Grunwald was the one who saw a future in Chris Bosh. And who knows, maybe his last two years away from basketball have given him time to reflect.

Chapter 9 : blog | Reviews index

*The men aboard the boat are a captain, a correspondent, an oiler, and a cook. The men were aboard a larger boat that crashed off the coast of Florida and are now searching for the safety of a light house they remember.*

Eden Robins and Andrew Huff co-host. But do get there as close to 7 as you can, because the room fills up quickly hence no admittance before 7. The show starts at 7: Admission is free, but you must be 21 or older. Doors open at 8: See the event page for a complete schedule and for advance tickets. Free jug wine at 7: Poets are invited to read 3 poems or for 5 minutes. The show is free, donations requested to pay the featured poets. Chicago author June Skinner Sawyers wrote the adaptation. Leah Pickett and Naomi Huffman host. Kocurek celebrates the release of her book *Coin-Operated Americans*: He will be discussing the fifteen year journey of writing the novel as well as reading some excerpts. Aras will be joined by world-class violinist Maria Storm for a short performance of a fugue. You can read a review of *The Fugue* over in Book Club and admission is free for this event. Snacks, wine and cider will be served, and singer-songwriter Gerald Dowd will perform live. Doors open at 8pm. Doors open at 7: Three matches of Chicago writers and performers taking up opposing ideas, with the audience picking the winners. Show starts at 7: Free with museum admission. The theme of the show is "house of lies. No cover, but donations will be collected for the Greater Chicago Food Depository. December 13, Half Off Sale! Open Books West Loop Still looking for holiday gifts for your favorite bookworm? Doors open at 9: December 12, Half Off Sale! December 10, Lies! Fiction Reading Cafe Mustache Lies! Fiction Reading December is tonight at 8: This event is free! Palmer and Angela Benander. Sponsored by Norwood Park Senior Center. Then, stick around for a screening of *The Room* at midnight! The book will be available for purchase, and author Steve Krakow will be available for signing! And in addition, Bobby Conn presents "My Chicago: December 03, H. Local cartoonists will read aloud from their work accompanied by a projector at Cards Against Humanity Theater, N. Event is free and BYOB! December 01, Tuesday Funk Hopleaf The chill is in the air and the holiday season is well under way, but make sure to leave room for Tuesday Funk! We are back in the upstairs lounge at Hopleaf , N. Rosamund Lannin and special guest Alicia Swiz cohost. No cover, but donations accepted. Pick up some books and enjoy free hot cider. Doors open at 6: There is no better way to celebrate Thanksgiving! Buy books from local presses and authors in the book fair and expo, attend workshops and discussions , and bring something to donate to the Open Books book drive. Admission is free, but donations are accepted. Peterson and Jason Fisk will read, as will four of the contributors to the recent *The View From Here* student anthology. Hear poems written by Chicago poets responding to visual art. Green, Liz Baudler and Courtney Abbott, and there will be a few open-mic slots too. Open-mic signup starts at 7: Ian Belknap hosts as writers take opposing sides and fight for the favor of the audience. In honor of the upcoming holiday, attendees are asked to bring their Thanksgiving stories to share with the audience. Full details at the Facebook event page. Chicago Edition , tonight at 7pm at the Annoyance Theatre, W. November 12, Bawdy Storytelling Martyrs Martyrs hosts Bawdy Storytelling, the live lit series focusing on sexual stories. Read review in Book Club. Full details on the event at the Chicago Nerds site. Grand Ave for another show. Mitchell, author of *The Bone Clocks* and *Cloud Atlas*, will talk with Wachowski about his latest novel, *Slade House*, as well as his other books and work. A book signing will follow. November 08, *Serving the Sentence* Towbar *Serving the Sentence* , the reading series in which all the stories begin with the same line, is back at Towbar, W. Free, but donations accepted. Over 30 local and regional book sellers, publishers, and presses will be represented. Stop by to check out the library and view performances, readings, storytelling, and interactive neighborhood history discussion. More details on Facebook. This conversation is presented as part of the Chicago Humanities Festival. Parker School N. A book signing will follow the event, which is presented as part of the Chicago Humanities Festival. November 06, *Not Dead Yet*: November 05, *Not Dead Yet*: Open mic sign-up starts at 7: Magazine issues will be available. Andrew Huff and Eden Robins co-host. Doors open at 7pm and the show begins at 7: Doors open at 7pm. Sedaris will sign books after the show. Lily Be and Clarence Browley host. Hosted by Rosamund Lannin and Carly Oishi. Foster for her new book *Furiously Happy*: Doors open at 3: October 24, *Empty Bottle Book*

Club: Admission to book club is free! The even starts at 7: Full details and advance tickets at the Music Box site. October 23, 20x2 Chicago Schubas Gapers Block presents 20x2 Chicago , a show in which 20 people from all different walks of creative life -- writers, musicians, filmmakers, web geeks and other bon vivants -- get two minutes each to answer the question of the day in whatever way they like. The results can be as varied as the emotions and reactions they evoke. The show is tonight at Schubas, N. His interactive history book for kids age 9 and up offers personal stories and firsthand accounts of key events in the LGBT movement and for this event, the author will share photos and short films that did not appear in the book. October 21, Story Lab Mrs. Each month, an entirely different lineup of up-and-coming storytellers will share their freshest pieces. The theme this month is "Turning," and featured stortellers include Elizabeth Gomez, Kevin Gladish and Maura Clement, plus a couple of open mic slots. Doors are at 7: Naomi Huffman and Leah Pickett host. Doors open at 5: Doors open at Clark tonight at 7: The book brings to light the struggles that women in the sciences are often hesitant to admit and provides hope that changing attitudes and behaviors can bring more women into fields in which they remain significantly underrepresented.