

HOROSCOPE

BY SOUP
CAN SAMSTAFF
PSYCHIC

Leo (July 24-Aug. 23) Sometimes "psychic" translates to little more than judgmental bitch. Avoid grinding my nerves this week. You'll be glad you didn't.

Virgo (Aug. 24-Sept. 23) The shorts are definitely getting shorter this summer. Letting it all hang out is newly defined.

Libra (Sept. 24-Oct. 23) Service sucks in this town. Sorry, but the truth hurts. And no, of course I don't mean everybody. Just you.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Get some perspective. Even if you hate the audience, you love those tips, right?

Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 22) Less is more is always the truth, except for Virgo with the short shorts. Resist the urge to show off today, we'll all appreciate it.

Capricorn (Dec. 23-Jan. 19) Extra-tall bikes have a time and a place: the Circus, not narrow-ass Belmont during rush hour. Save your freak for the appropriate time and place.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) For most, the ability to be reserved is achieved through the wisdom of old age. Holding your groove is a strong statement.

Pisces (Feb. 20-March 20) What do you learn from what you do? You can geek out for two hours on something you already know, but to take five minutes to learn something new is a true achievement.

Aries (March 21-April 19) Sobriety is a motherfucker. Buck up, little camper. We all have to face ourselves sometimes.

Taurus (April 20-May 21) Jazz is jazz, and you are you. Embrace the here and now. Don't double back. Being self-conscious is so eighth grade.

Gemini (May 22-June 22) Every month you ask the same question, and every time you get the same answer. What are you really asking?

Cancer (June 23-July 23) Musician or no, here's a great piece of advice: Anything you can do to get yourself behind your instrument, do it. And keep your nose clean.

Author gives voice to an imagined, real world

BOOK REVIEW



"My Abandonment" by Peter Rock, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 2009, 220 p., \$22

BY JAY THIEMEYER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Riding in nearly 100 degree heat past Forest Park coming off the St Johns Bridge, I am struck by the smell of the forest. It is a different world, so accessible with its trails, so foreign to the city.

To my right in the forest's elevation, as I drive into town, is the general location where Frank and Rachel, the father and daughter living invisible in the wild, were discovered several years ago. Their home was a carefully concealed underground shelter, what I imagine the old homesteaders' sod houses looked like. On the interstate passing through the Badlands of South Dakota there is at least one of the sods retained for travelers' view.

Dislocated, would be the appropriate word for what happened to Frank and Rachel. They were doing society no harm, certainly far less harm than that long-distance runner who passed a girl perched in a tree and gave information of his sighting to the Portland police. One of the squad who responded offered Frank and his daughter a place to work on his farm, "in the real world." Frank didn't have to live the way he did, he was assured by his discoverers.

A short time later, as recorded in the daily paper, Frank and Rachel disappeared. What happened to them afterward is unknown. This unknown postscript is what Peter Rock attempts to create in "My Abandonment."

Peter Rock in this, his sixth work of mostly fiction, takes what we know about this rare occasion and adds his fictional interpretation of what happened after these two were removed from their peaceful, paradigmatic home. He uses the daughter, whom he gives the name Caroline, to narrate. Her voice is as terse and cogent as Raymond Carver's; Rock's writing as even and subtly involving, "deceptively simple," as well. It is wonderful to follow this completely credible life portrayed for us by a 13-year-old child, wise beyond her years, largely unsullied by urban America, who is candid and informed and bright — feral like a bird, and aware. It is an imagined world but thoroughly convincing. As fiction the book holds its own; the plot holds the reader due to its plausibility, even likelihood. Here is Caroline narrating their departure from the forest:

"Will someone bring my encyclopedias?" I say.

"Not today."

I put the branch across the door to our house when I have everything I can take.

"Don't worry about that now," Mr Harris says with his hand on my shoulder.

"People will take our pots," I say, "and plates and our stove and our bed even."

"Don't worry about any of that," he says. "Really. Wouldn't you like to wear shoes?"

Her language is innocent sounding, free of the rubbishy adornment which served to substitute for substance in the life her father kept her from. Life in the real world of Mr.

Harris.

Peter Rock, who teaches writing at Reed College, provides something new in the genre of discovered wild children. He imagines a voice for the child herself. We see the world as she quite plausibly sees it. And whose better voice to use than the childishly confrontal, candid voice of Raymond Carver? Very appropriate. Otherwise we would have something closely reiterating the ground covered by Roger Shattuck, the Proust scholar, in his book, "The Forbidden Experiment," about the wild boy of Aveyron. The subject of his book was discovered in southern France back at the dawn of the 19 century. The subject of movies and literature — for instance, Truffaut's 1970 film, "The Wild Child" — this wild embodiment of our discontent with our modern situation has on-going appeal. But no one has succeeded in getting inside the mind of the child and attempting to see this

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new world through his or her eyes. Peter Rock does a thoroughly convincing job. The result is simply a wonderful, believable story — especially on a day when the heat is over 100 degrees, especially for frequenters of our own Forest Park here in Portland. What was imposed on this father and daughter has to be seen in the context of two people devoted to each other. They were a phenomenon, and their whole message to us seems largely to have been lost, except for this book and those enjoying its pages.

The title derives from the following bit taken from the father's journal, according to Peter Rock:

"If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, he will meet with success unexpected in common hours. He will pass an invisible boundary. Don't forget this. Don't forget that thinking can get in the way. Forget the forgetting. We seek to forget ourselves, to be surprised and to do something without knowing how or why.

The way of life is wonderful. It is by abandonment."

"My Abandonment" can be read as an affecting story about a father and his daughter together. Or it can be read in the context of Thoreauvian anti-urban, anti-artifice literature. It can be placed on the same shelf as Edward Abbey and Rousseau's "Emile," or on the shelf of "deceptively simple" story-tellers like Raymond Carver. With what would-be lovers talk about when they talk about love or a child talks about when forgetting her forgetting.

CAMPING, from page 1

of Housing and Urban Development, Oregon now leads the nation in the number of homeless people per capita. Oregon's homeless rate is 0.54 percent, according to HUD.

According to Goracke, this lawsuit is the first of its kind against the city's no camping ordinance. Other defense cases have been brought forward but this is the first affirmative suit claiming the ordinance is unconstitutional, according to Goracke.

The named plaintiffs are Marlin Anderson, Mary Bailey, Matthew Chase and Jack Golden, all of whom are "involuntarily"

homeless in Portland, according to the court document. Anderson now lives in his van and the others sleep outdoors. In their suit, the four cite multiple incidences of police routing them from their camps or even from sitting. In 2007, Anderson was sleeping on top of his sleeping bag in Delta Park in North Portland when he was cited for unlawful camping. He pled not guilty and was scheduled for trial, but the district attorney dismissed the citation after Anderson informed the D.A. that he would have legal representation.

Bailey and Chase claim they had permission from the owner of a private

parking lot to camp there. They allege that the manager told them police threatened to "shut down" the building if Bailey and Chase did not move their belongings. They moved their personal property to the street, only to find most of it missing the next day, with a "notice of illegal camping" sign posted with no date or time given for the clean up or property seizure, according to their lawsuit.

The city moved to dismiss the case on the grounds that the violations are not a crime, that they criminalize conduct rather than status, and therefore the Eighth Amendment did not apply.