

**word nerd**

By RYAN HUME

**Haystack**  
[he•stæk]

noun

1. (Agriculture) a large pile of hay covered with thatch or other material with plenty of ventilation for drying

2. *Haystack Rock*: this 235-foot sea stack juts out of Tolovana Beach near the southern end of Cannon Beach and can be approached by foot during low tide. Designated a protected Marine Garden by U.S. Fish and Wildlife since 1990, this massive intertidal monolith is home to many sea birds and mammals and has appeared in numerous films, photographs and paintings

**Origin:**

*Hay* enters before 1200 as *hei* by way of the Old English *hæg*, which referred to grass cut specifically for fodder. The compound *haystack* was commonly combined by 1450 during the late Middle English period.

The monolith takes its name from its resemblance to the agricultural pile. References date back to the late 19th century. A

U.S.G.S report dating from 1980 mentions that the sea stack was at some time called Inspiration Point.

Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach is one of six natural rock formations in Oregon registered with that specific name; two others are present on the Oregon Coast, at Pacific City in Tillamook County and in Coos County near Bandon. The Clatsop County Haystack is surrounded by smaller rock formations known as “The Needles” in reference to the idiomatic phrase, “like finding a needle in the haystack.”

“In 1968, the rock became a liability. Visiting tourists, who fancied themselves rock climbers, continually stranded themselves upon the rock. Rescuers had grown tired of this almost daily event. As a solution, Haystack Rock was blasted in such a way to make it inaccessible to climbers or climbing enthusiasts.”

—Elaine Murdy, “The Seven Wonders of Cannon Beach – Haystack Rock,” *Cannon Beach Gazette*, Aug. 29, 2014, P. A4

“Rock formations, rugged and weather scarred, break the shore line. There is Haystack rock, the Needles, Silver point, Arch cape, Jockey cap, Humbug, Hug point—the names are simple ones, but they are eminently expressive of the appearance of these formations.”

—Charles E. Gratke, “Cannon Beach,” *The Sunday Oregonian*, July 12, 1925, P. 1

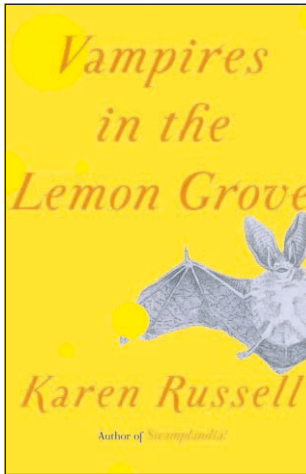


**BOOKSHELF**

By RYAN HUME

**Just finished**

**“Vampires in the Lemon Grove” by Karen Russell**  
*Alfred A. Knopf, 2013*



**Plot Notes:** In the title story of her excellent second collection, a pair of centuries-old vampires retire to a lemon grove in Sorrento, Italy where they drain armfuls of sour citrus to satiate their thirst for blood, though at least one of them may harbor a desire for more. Here, too, you will find imprisoned women in feudal Japan transformed into silkworms only to be robbed of their thread and schoolyard bullies confronted by a scarecrow that looks an awful lot like the boy they used to terrorize before he one day disappeared.

**Take Away:** Armed with a poet’s sense of metaphor and other verbal pyrotechnics, Russell invokes impossible worlds rendered in lush, descriptive prose in these stories. These aren’t worlds you’ve seen before, but they wring emotional truths that feel at home in our own dimension. Many of her narrators are young, and these stories brim with humor and keen observation. I would gladly enter any world Russell asks me to.

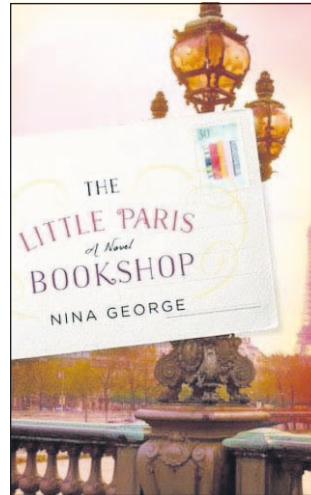
**Recommended For:** Fans of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Gunter Grass, Aimee Bender and Kelly Link. Verbose teens may also apply.

**Bonus:** Russell, a recipient of a MacArthur “genius” grant and a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, recent-

ly relocated to Portland. Perhaps this is why a new ghost story, “The Prospectors,” which appeared in The New Yorker’s summer fiction issue is set in Depression-era Oregon. It is available to read for free on the New Yorker’s website. In an interview on the magazine’s blog, Russell had this to say while discussing the landscape of her new home state, “Astoria seems to exist in the palette of memory; it sort of ghosts away and reasserts itself with the changing light.”

**Other books**

**“The Little Paris Bookshop” by Nina George**  
*Crown, 1st Edition, 2015*  
**Recommended by:** Alex Brandon of Beach Books in Seaside



**A love letter to books:** Monsieur Perdu owns the titular bookshop in George’s 26th novel, which happens to be located on a barge floating on the Seine in the middle of Paris. Not one to sling the latest bestseller, Perdu considers his shop to be a “book apothecary,” Brandon said, his quest being to find books that will heal his readers. Adventure comes when the appearance of a lost love letter unmoors Perdu’s shop and he travels down the Seine through the French countryside with two cohorts in tow. “It’s just one of those nice summer reads,” Brandon said. “It is a love letter to books.”

**“Ready Player One” by Ernest Cline**  
*Bradway Books, 2012*  
**Recommended by:** Rebecca Sedlak, Coast Weekend editor



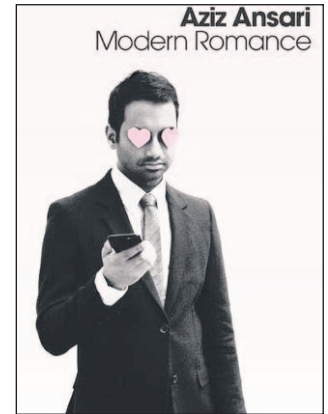
**1980s mania:** Reality in 2044 is depressing and ugly: famine, no jobs, natural disasters. But the virtual world offered by the OASIS? Exciting. Magical. Paradise. The OASIS, designed by the late video game genius, billionaire and 1980s-obsessed uber-geek James Halliday, is humanity’s favorite toy — people spend most of their days inside it, designing the perfect avatar, exploring new worlds and having fun. Before he died, Halliday hid three keys inside the OASIS that lead to a hidden Easter egg; the first person who finds it will inherit his vast fortune and control of the OASIS. Poor 18-year-old Wade Watts dreams of finding the egg. He spends his days going to school in the OASIS and studying clues left behind by Halliday. Until one day, his quest for the keys begins in earnest.

**Recommended For:** Fans of the ‘80s (movies, music, culture, etc.), classic video games, sci-fi and adventure.

**Bonus:** At one point in the book, Wade makes his way to a mansion set at the base of the Wallowa Mountains in

Oregon. Surrounded by waterfalls, the picturesque scene is likened to Rivendell, the home of the elf Elrond in “The Lord of the Rings” series. It makes a nice shout out to our home state.

**“Modern Romance” by Aziz Ansari**  
*Penguin Press, 2015*  
**Recommended by:** Rebecca Sedlak, Coast Weekend editor



**Dating can be hard:** In his debut book, comic Aziz Ansari (alum of “Parks and Rec”) teams up with NYU sociologist Eric Klinenberg to delve into the topic of why love can be so confusing in the digital age. Young people today marry later, are looking for a soul mate, and have thousands of choices at their disposal; sorting through them can be tough. As expected, technology plays a part: Online dating websites, dating apps like Tinder, texting, sexting, emoticons — all are tools prior generations didn’t have. Ansari and Klinenberg interview young people, parents and grandparents in small towns and big cities, anonymous Internet users on Reddit, and even venture across the world to Tokyo and Buenos Aires. It makes for an interesting, often hilarious take on the tragedies and triumphs of modern love.

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