



Recorded Events

2015 Seattle Reads - Peter Heller with Book-It Repertory Theatre present: The Painter

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Good evening. I'm Marcellus Turner most often known as Mt. And I'm your city librarian. Welcome to the 17th annual Seattle reads. Our 2015 Seattle reads main event is a special evening of bukit Repertory Theater staged readings from the painter by Peter Heller whom I've just had the pleasure of meeting. This is the 17th year of the Seattle Public Library's renowned Seattle read series. We are grateful to all of our Seattle reads sponsors. They are the Wallace Foundation which funded Seattle reads at its Inception the Seattle Times for generous promotional support for Library. Arms media sponsor kuow public radio Elliott Bay Book Company, Rick Simonson and Karen my Ada almond for being our longtime partner in Seattle reads do visit the Elliott Bay booked able to see and by Peters books special. Thanks as well to Vintage books for generous support and finally special thanks to the Seattle Public Library foundation and thousands of people in our community who make gifts to benefit our library.

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This private support makes possible Seattle reads as well as hundreds of free library programs and services every year now. Let me turn things over to Chris sagashi program manager of the Washington Center for the book at the Seattle Public Library who directs our annual Seattle read series to introduce the rest of the program. So Seattle reads aims are to deepen appreciation of and engagement in literature through Reading and discussion. To create Community around reading a shared book to invite people to voice differences of opinion from the shared Foundation of reading the same book. We have loved our past two years of nonfiction, but I will say that it has been a real

pleasure to read a novel together this year and for me to listen to readers reflect on those themes. The novel good and evil murder and revenge Redemption love art poetry the creative impulse. So we're excited to again present staged readings by book at Repertory Theater. Let me ask how many of you have seen a book at

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Repertory Theater production.

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Okay, so but those of you who haven't so look it is different from other theater that you may have seen the book it style is for to use basically every word of that. The author has written and so the actors are going to speak both the narrative and the and the dialogue. So, let's see. I don't think I need to say very much about the book because you're going to see this and sort of know what it's about. So it is based on a real-life the character. Jim Stegner's based on a real-life artist. Jim Wagner who is an expressionist painter from Taos and a friend of Peters. If you picked up the program booklet just know that those paintings are Jim Wagner's paintings courtesy of the gallery and the paintings private owners. I mean, they generously gave permission for their use. Okay. So with that here is the painter by Peter Heller

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the painter by Peter Heller a borzoi book published by Alfred a Knopf 2014 Mayhem oil on linen 40 by 50 inches collection of the artist

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I never thought I'd be a painter that art would be something I would not have any way of not doing. Never thought I'd be a father. Or that I'd have a daughter who was his beautiful and strong like they say my mother was. I never thought I'd shoot a man that afternoon at the boxcar Pub in Taos Lauder Sims sitting at the next tool nursing is fourth or fifth vodka tonic the fucker who skated on a certain conviction for raping a 12 year old girl in his movie theater downtown Jim your daughter. I'll say is coming up. Nice. What else a long-legged like her. Mom Jim. I like seeing her at my theater. Not too skinny the hell did you say? His Lear lips wet with tonic. She's really interested in movies. Everything movies Jim. I'm going to trainer to be my little projection without thought Bank the concussion inside the windowless room was deafening Johnny my good friend and bartender lunging Over the Bar over Jim taught me from pulling the trigger again.

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I painted that moment. the explosion of colors the faces I also spend a little time in jail, too. A notion of women oil on canvas 52 by 48 inches. My house is three miles south of town 40 acres of wheat grass and Sage small pond and a dock the West Elk mountains rugged and rising up the back of my place. They tell me some years is Snow Never melts. I haven't seen that yet. This is my new home nestled down and all this High Rough Country like a train set. After spending time doing time. I needed some space 40 acres ought to do it. Yeah, I need space to gather myself and my mom.

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It's that old rusted Muffler caterwauling like a Harley very dramatic, which she is 28 and age for drama. I asked her to model for me five minutes after meeting her in line at the grocery store about three months ago. Can I get an extra check her up here, please. She was wearing a short knit top and she had strong arms like someone who works out of doors in a slightly crooked nose Scrappy like a fighter like me and her breasts everybody noticed. Those

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you're an artist. It's not a question. She was cataloguing the colors on my paint-spattered close.

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Outsider then her eyes went to the fishing flies stuck in my cap artist fisherman you model nude. Sure, how much 20 bucks an hour? decided violin Felon, are you I am really I shot a man in a bar. You're not going to back out the door like in a horror movie. Are you my second wife did that she was laughing uninhibited the kind of laugh that got everybody in the grocery store line laughing

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twice but not anymore. I'll do it 25 danger pay nude modeling for a violent killer convict. I didn't kill the guy. I just shot him. I was a little high and to the left. She was laughing again Triceratops grab the sides on my gravel driveway, but Mufflers putting work.

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Sophia drops her knapsack on the floor beside the easel and starts reheating coffee. What are we painting today? Something? I've been thinking about an ocean of women and ocean. Just me and me swimming all the women the fish. I thought we could give it a try. Fuck. Yeah, you ask a lot of a girl. You only have to make like an ocean just once jacocks her head and fixes me with an i. Stormy or calm

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We Begin Sophia is a champ of an ocean. And I paint fast on our side Arch swimming breaststroke will-o-ween backwards arms extended fish more fish. Brilliant. Fish hungry dark shark, looming Up From Below with a dog's pink bone. I'm lost in a sea of women fish and women Sophia has the rhythm of a dance changing positions. Kills the mood change. I love this. I'm painting myself into the canvas swimming big.

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I'm 45. It's been salt and pepper since I was 30 swimming for my life and somehow enjoying it. time Sophie is leaning into me watching over my shoulder. But I can feel I've heard artists say that they are channeling God. Well, you have to have a Cracker Jack Gallery the bill say that it's been.

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Three she tugs my beard and disappears from somewhere outside myself Triceratops revs, and she's gone. I came to this Valley for months ago and I am finally painting. I have a pretty good reputation in

the art World stegner's kind of us' swirl with a collected diversity two books about me and my boobs Club commissioned by my dealer to raise the value on your work Stephen Lily Gallery, very high-end prison. It seems increased my cash a oh Jim. You're the head anyway of the artwork. No, the Johnny Cash. I have my trademark. Yes, say stegner incorporating farmyard chickens against Criterion contrapuntal in objectivity chickens just made me laugh coltrane's to do. You just can't disagree. He's God damned good someone's just which makes it harder and harder to just find a quiet place.

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where I can just slow down and

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The cell phone rings shit the cell phone rings. This house is Off the Grid the self there's no phone lines guy who built it with some sort of environmentalist the cell phone rings. It's Steve your dealer from Santa Fe house my clean and silver genius, but us guys know me for 20 years. Talk to me like this. You are aren't you clean? I'm one of his top earners. Hi Steve. I've got good news and better news you hear FB side. L bought your painting fish swallowing all those houses. What were you going to call it the continuing housing crisis? Anyway, he came in and saw it just as we were hanging and I caught The Glean in his eye very casual to me. He says so what is Jim working on these days sounds like f then he gestured at the fish / house thing and says offhand that's interesting Instinct Jim Instinct 20 grand Jim. Jim attacked on 2,000 plus the 10% consideration I would remove because he was so decisive. I look out the window. It's the perfect afternoon to throw off some flies on the sofa

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River. Here's the better news pimp Aunt Ella wants to fly you down here for a week. He's commissioning a large portrait of his daughters. We talked about size and we came to 50 by 80. What do you mean came to I don't remember you asking me Jim your phone's been off for 10 days. He's right. I lost the charger in the seat of my truck a week. I've met his kids twins matching polka dots right? Pay him in two hours Jim he wants you to cut loose be Jin really be yourself, you know throwing some chickens or something for fuck's sake Steve be Jim. I suppose he wants a coal train to I'm just getting to work here Steve. I'm doing good work. Tell them another time. The silence is Stoney. Pim has offered 35 Grand since I made the commitment without asking you I admit I am willing to take a 4060 cuts. His voice is cool the way it almost never is I'll think about it gotta go I hang up before I can blow my top. I dig a cigarillo from the foil pouch and stand out on the covered Ramada Steve. Just when

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I'm moving on something good and true. He throws out some bullshit like a commission for to pan face little girls in polka-dots a week throw in a chicken fuck that if I finish in a day they can take it or leave it a notion of women. Damn, it is the first big piece. I've made it halfway through since coming up to these mountains a notion of women.

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Sophie is a great model. She knows when to disappear. I love that. I smoke. I breathe. I think my daughter would be 18 now. I'll say be better fishing person to me by now. Damn it at this fancy iPhone now. Steve made me get it so I can take photos of my new paintings. Don't ask me how it works. Now that I have this phone I get to talk to people. I might not have talked to again before I died. I'll say ask for a phone. I'm such an asshole. No, pop your dreamer. That's why you paint. Okay. I'm a combination of you and Mom a dreamer and a fighter. Hold on a friggin minute. Glad you did. Fucking you always want I kind of thought I was the fighter. Nope. You react that's why you're in the ER all the time. No shit. Yeah, you're so damn smart. Don't worry pop. We need dreamers more than we need Fighters. Four months later, she's dead. I better go fishing before my thoughts spiral fishing is always the best decision. I turn up Grand Avenue elbow out the window. Smell the downpour that's just passed

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ozone Grand Avenue hardware store to cafes pizza shop Mexican restaurant ice cream Barber way off the main Highway only local traffic. I passed the gravel company the orchard storage Warehouse trailer park by the river quick stop for gas to pumps one for diesel. My buddy. Bob tells me you'll be careful Jim the words will be thick with bow Hunters. Bob's the fishermen told me all the best places only told him a quarter of them archery season in two days might have to fish in an orange vest in case some son of a bitch from the Ozarks mistakes your white beard for the ass of a deer. What a way to go.

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On the other side of town. It's just the river. Drops batter the windshield no matter the wind from Upstream will be in my face wanting to screw with my cast. I don't care. I'm ready for the cold current against the legs of my waiters a floor down the straightaways downshifting up the grade patchy white clouds moving fast dark spicy sense of spruce and Fir big heavy bout branches trailing little flags of dry Spanish moss. I touch my hat five of my special hand-tied flies stegner killers. The Cutthroat are waiting up ahead the horse trailer in the middle of the road and a para hunting Outfitters in their rig horses trailer geared piled haphazardly into an F-350 diesel short man and a big hat leather vests push open by his Billy around Shootin in his breast pocket approaches. My car and attempts to wave me through got Chu juice dribbling down is exposed good farther up a big man with a bigger gut is trying to load a little strawberry roan. The word trailer the horse's head is straining bad

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and he's jerking on it hard and yelling. Yeah. She's scaring the mayor I can see you're terrified eyes rolling into the back of her head. Yeah, goddamnit rock-headed piece of shit. Yeah horse rears and tears the Rope through his hand no gloves on the man Roars. Like I'm bearing astounded the short Cowboy is staring to the big man ties the rope and three quick moves to a ring at the back of the trailer. The mayor's mouth is foaming you good-for-nothing Bucky shit. It factor and reaches into the back of the trailer unhitched. Here's our club first strike with both hands down hard on the women are scream foot legs. Fuck him out the door something at hard against the short man pushing them hard. So he lands on his butt in the dirt. Hey, I'm blind with rage just the same as the bar that day read mad. Blindness Delwood seminar Halls back and swings against the architecture of the mayor's ribs.

Like a thud of a hollow drum. The horse is screaming. Hi something human Alma. I'm on the man. I topple

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him they rails. Dickhead exams great punching he'll swing again. I feel something give the pope of his nose. He scrambles back up the embankment. What the fuck was this? He's looking down at me holding the club. I stand slowly buddy. What the hell was that Dell is not particularly perturbed, which makes him a dangerous man. You're going to kill that horse my horse, not yours headed for the glue factory. Anyway, Dale, what are we going to do with her? She won't load cut her loose. Mr. I suggest you mind your own goddamn business now and Evermore the big man. The one called Dell walks to the edge of the embankment his eyes flat with contempt and snorts allowed Hawk and spits. The phlegm hits the side of my neck. Then he shows me his back the metal door of the trailer clang shut the engine revs and rattles is truck and trailer go down the road. The mayor Muse when I approached her. She's cut deep when I touch her shoulder. She flinches from my hand, but she doesn't step away. I stand beside

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her and breathe man and horse just standing there.

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Breathing breathing a gentle the mayor over to a tree and call my neighbor Willy an elk Rancher. Will he pulled up in his pickup with his blue six horse trailer. He loaded the feed bag with oats and spoke to her gently like a person who has been injured and aggrieved. He got the bag over her ears and let her eat and calm down.

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Willie spat on the road deep afternoon shade the creek running below a deer 5 buzzing around us. Willie spat. We watched the mayor shake the feed bag for the last dose raising her nose. Like to see your painting sometime. Won't hurt my feelings if that's not something you do come over anytime. I couldn't get it out of my head the man Swinging with hatred not caring if he killed or not. We watched the little mer. Willie spat

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so what happened here? Some hunting outfitter Del something try to kill that Rome. You know that guy Dell Willy's eyes go blank face gets Tony I can keep her at my place if you're okay with that. However, this fucker Del is there's no way he's getting her back. Stay away from trouble like that. This is supposed to be my time of peace my gathering. I pretty much fucked that up this afternoon. I drove back through town and stopped at Bob's at the gas station just before closing time sitting in the office with a 12-pack of Bud Light. What else it's beer-thirty. Delwood simoneau Jesus Jim that guy could ruin anybody's day Delwood. I gather you traded words. I do know that you got blood on your shirt that Del he's a mean SOB elk poacher. God knows what else half his horses are so broke down at the end of the season. He trucks the whole bunch down to his brother in Arizona who sells the used

ones up to the Killer's fucker. You be good now it just small town gym better to stay out of other people's

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business. You read my mind. I'm reading your face.

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But Digger oil on canvas 20 by 30 inches.

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I get home and I squeezed out a tube of Mars black and a splotch of cobalt Violet with a tint of white. I begin to feel better. Then comes a bird large and looming. What a crane Noah Raven a man in a garden digging for more birds deep black violet. No, not a garden a grave a man digging a grave. That's what it is and they're vultures carry and feeders.

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When I say died, I got out of Taos and moved closer to the Rio Rio Grande back. Then I went fishing every day. I would say was gone. I didn't know what else to do fishing was the only time I forget myself forget my girl. less than a year after our said was

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after she went and my first wife Christine left, I remarried wholesome Minnesota Red had once been a Playboy bunny. We got along we moved back to Taos and I wondered 50 times a week why I married her is that strange to be able to feel so much tenderness for a person as I did and a powerful attraction and yet feel no love.

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It's an engine grief. It doesn't fade what they say with time. Sometimes it accelerates and sometimes if you're lucky. You don't feel anything. I drank. She was only a teenager. Nah, that's not just 16 incher a cup bow. I put them back. No shit 50 Cent. Oh shit. I dollar damn it. Pop we keep swearing your go broke.

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I painted that moment with a rod and reel kind of the canyon releasing a 16 inch cut bow first and only good painting I made in the year after you'll be good now. Nothing ever happens how you want it

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even though I told her I wouldn't.

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You should knock I'm hoping I'll catch you in flagrante delicto with whom your Muse wrestling an angel. Maybe you should knock. You're serious today tell me tell her about Dell and the horse we end up out back on the edge of the Ramada overlooking the valley. She links my arm. We watch a big

Hawk fluttering low over the stage. Let's kill the and the violence now stand side-by-side watching the hawk. It's why Trump flashing Rising. I'm almost breathing free and clear until her fingers migrate down my arm and slip onto my I see me naked all the time. Does that do anything for you? Her head tipping downward quarter profile. It's the prettiest angle of the human had a beautiful woman's head. Yes. Don't answer. do you I get when you're arching your back, I sometimes I get a boner her hamsters and finds me under the loose leg of my shorts Commando. I Well this be workplace harassment Sophia takes his hand and leads him. Um and into the bedroom, I feel a surge of something simple and clean relief

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happiness oxygen.

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There's a sliver of moon tonight. We used to fish at night Alice saying me under a Moon magical throwing flies for fish. We would never see until they leptin to The Seer lunar gays. I slip out of bed pull my arm from under Sophia and kiss the back of her head. I find my jeans my flannel shirt dress fast and go quietly out the screen door. the end of summer with the chill sent fall. There's a faint scent of rain in the air with this Moon trout are probably Wide Awake. I don't remember much of the drive over the bridge the sudden drumming of tires rolling over the planks that sudden smell of water at the turnoff where I usually go but tonight I swing right through a rugged opening into a clearing of Willows and stop out of the truck waiters and Boots rod and Cat my signature flies. Jim stegner Keller's and a shiny copper John. Into the water up to my knees. I began to cast. wood smoke drifts down from Upstream I cast and cast walking carefully Upstream through the pools of blip a gulp the

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double note of nose and tail the rod bends hard the old you for you. You're all right. Come to me fish careful. Come to me. Around the third Bend I See Fire Light but really gone a mile high shifting flicker cutting across the Shadow

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and then laughter the fire pops and stir. The string of Sparks is someone throws on a log you fuckers are on good behavior. We might just see what less knows about pushing Sunday. Maybe it was him a couple of those gals from the mill might come up and party with us. This is pussy you fucker. Only dream about Del. Hey Del. We think you should call one. Now that skinny gal in likes to dance you all just place your orders this weekend. You'll get it when you get it. He turned and Swagger down to the river to piss. I went still barely breathing. I couldn't have moved if I tried Dale dropped his beer can into the dirt big man in the dark Carhart coat walking with a hitch. I watched his progress through the scrim of Willows as a cat watches a A bird he got to the water's edge and undercut Bank, maybe two feet above the current he Shrugged and unzipped someone turned on a boom box and started to sing. He was less than 15 feet away. I could see his back his left ear the curve of his cheek and I

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could hear the stream of urine hitting the slow water. I heard the whimper of that mayor in my head like a human baby Eileen the rod against the branch squatted and felt the fit of a Move the Rock in my hand and stepped out fast. He turned what the fuck is splattering the leg of my waiters you his hand went to his waist and came up with a hunting knife swung hard as hard as he had swung at that little horse, but Rock caught the side of his right eye at the Temple of warm prickled pattered my face. I shoved and the knife clattered onto the stone Yale splash face down into the creek. I pivoted in through the rock as far Downstream as I could I watched until I was sure the only movement was the back and forth rocking of the posting current breathe. with Jim Bree turn pick up your rod. walk away I kept to the game in Fisherman's Trail along the bank through the thick brush and dark open Groves virgin Firs and Pines had a pool. He knelt and dunked his head into the icy water scrubbing and scrubbing

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his face and hair with both hands waited in up to his waist and let the current wash the waiters. Then he picked up his rod and walk Pretend This Never Happened driving through town. No one he passed the turnoff to Grand Avenue and took the back road breathe Kim. God damn it free. I turned my truck onto the pavement pulling on the headlights. right shape fills the windshield swerving Jesus a big white owl wings as white as the Swift and gone. I'll say it flew and it was silent. That's what I thought. I'll say. It was a spirit. I had not one doubt in the world. He crawled into bed and curled around so sleep came stubborn and slow, but it came and carried him into the Dark Storm swept in and it rained hard. Inside the roar. I spooned her and we floated slowly cradling her breasts pressing my cheek into her hair curling around her warm and letting it wash me and then I was gone.

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I woke with the rain. With the first halting tattoo on the metal roof tentative few scattered drops, then a clatter like someone throwing handfuls of seeds until the beets run together into a dark flood that silences all thought. A notion of women on the easel a dead man in the creek and my friend in my arms. My only thought I could die now. And then Oblivion again. Jim stegner, I was expecting it. I untangled myself from Sofia and pulled on a pair of paint-spattered khaki shorts. There were two of them when I shot Lauder Sims. It was just a sheriff who was a friend of mine because everyone knew what I had done this time, there were two of them because they were not here to arrest me Jim stegner. Yeah, I'm sorry. Did we wake you very polite he held up a wallet badge detective Craig Gaskill Delta County Sheriff's Department. We'll just call him Sport and a rookie kid with a fade in a flat top. I was standing holding the door open with my right arm and smelling my fishing vest hanging on

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a hook two feet from my head. It was spattered with blood the kid could see it in sport could to mr. Stegner. Are you okay in there? To cover myself. I hear myself asking you boys. Want some coffee Sofia? Call the bedroom. It's all right, honey, we have guests. honey, seriously We bullshit about the rain and the weather and the smell of fresh coffee.

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She's not social this early in the morning. I gave detective sport the elk mug. I was going to say Bull and then I gave flattop a choice between the bucking bronco or the NASCAR cow a happy Holstein framed by the border of black and white racing checks for myself. I took the ugly mug.

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You often fish in the middle of the night? Mr. Stegner? Yeah, my daughter and I used to pretty off when there was a moon. Where's your daughter now? She was murdered. I'm sorry that appeared genuine. She's 15. We all looked into our mugs wasn't there a moon last night before the ring? I guess there what did you go fishing last night last night? I slept while you're waiting Boots Are puddling by the front door. Must bend the rain there in under the roof. Nothing else under there got wet. That's right. I put my whole kid out on the grass to dry. And when I got up to pee I thought oh fuck so I went out and I put them away. This is good coffee. What is it Folgers? No taste better when you put in fancy jono. I'll have to try that. But you brought your vest inside that vest by the door is flecked with the old blood fish blood. I'm guessing No, that's man's blood tell you the truth recent flattop stared at me. And then at the detective like he was watching a tennis match man's blood. You. Don't

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say yep hunting outfitter named El simoneau till simoneau you say Yeah the fight because I assaulted him day before yesterday gave him a bloody nose because he's just a big pussy. Now. He's filing charges. He probably didn't tell you that he was in the middle of killing a little mayor Del simoneau is dead. I was wearing that fishing vest when I Tak murdered in Cold Blood. The hell do you say middle of last night? Would you mind telling us where you were last night all of last night? Certainly, you you think I killed him because I was mad enough to give him an a bloody. No, I don't think a thing. I just want to eliminate you as a suspect I'll bet. Detective guys Gil pulled out his pencil and Pad. Why don't you start by telling us what you were doing starting say Thursday morning. I was getting good at telling this story painting going fishing big man killing that little mayor rolling in the ditch his nose bleeding. I made sure not to leave that part out the girl in the bedroom. She's your

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model. Her name is let's see Sophia right Sophia her last name. I don't know. Okay, she was modeling for a painting yesterday morning. Is that the painting can I take a look at it? You may I moved around beside the easel like a kid at adjudged show waiting for my ribbon detective gaskell's eyes moved over the canvas as the picture overcame him the way light Trails a cloud Shadow over taking a hillside. Have a name yet. Yeah a notion of women. There's a shark in their deck of sports admiring smile. It turned into a big Grim that make a man happy all those women flattop stood before the easel his hand on his holster gun blinking. It's here. It's the first original painting I ever saw except for the Western paint-by-number seen my aunt has hanging in her dead and this one here. Before I could stop him sport lifted the Grave Digger painting the one I hadn't even shared with Sophia. Wow. Carefully by the edges as if it were covered in fresh blood diverse my mind dark. I don't see your girlfriend

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in this one. Is she your Muse? She's my model. I sometimes I paint from imagination. That's a man. Isn't it hunched over and digging a grave? Is that the kind of thing that's on your mind? Mr. Stegner? I was that what you see Dan. Um, Those look like blackbirds right there, but I'm no artist expert Ravens. Mr. Segment. Well, maybe vulture. Oh, yeah them could be vultures. Smells fresh. What do you call this one

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Gravedigger with carrying feeders and the paint's not as dry on this one as on a notion of women. When did you paint this? Mr. Stegner before or after your altercation with? Mr. Simoneau? I Let Go My Breath. There was no point in lying yesterday about what time maybe it's time I get a lawyer. That's your right if that's something you feel you need to do. I feel I'd like to ask you both to leave understood detective Gaskill returned Grave Digger with Carrie and feeders to the empty place along the wall where he'd found it flipping it back side and leaning it carefully. So the paint wouldn't smear would you ask the young lady Sofia to come out and talk to us for a second? No, I think you'd better leave detective Gaskell took one last long. Look at notion of And an even longer look at me just like one of those TV detective shows.

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I wanted to be an artist when I was growing up. Then I got married. He said like he'd made the right choice after all. Thanks for the coffee. He left the way he came in me guilty him with all the proof in the world flattop followed him tipping his head as we passed looking like he'd been hit in the face with a cow the second they left the bedroom door. It out make it a non-fire a whirlwind tossing dark hair and curves and huge eyes flashing. You killed that son of a bitch last night. She stood just beyond arm's length check out breach in the middle of the night, but I went back. Sleep I thought you were paying your some kind of insomnia. I thought you are beautiful. I heard your truck pull up start the rain. Did you kill him what with a knife with your bare hands just look ahead like trying to clear water from her ear. Look at me. She was looking with all of her her eyes her breasts hips the sparse thatch of dark hair. You didn't kill him. You got up to pee once and to get the gear out

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of your truck out of the rain to hang it up. You're in my arms all night, right? I don't remember much else about it. Do I. Because we were sleeping. We were sleeping. Well, you better have a good fuck. You better store some up who knows how long it'll be before they get serious about you. I stood there transfixed come on. She turned and walked bare-assed into the bedroom. The search warrant was executed that afternoon. The bloody vest was more than enough for any judge. I'd be a fool not to expect it. So I was careful to leave the vest alone. You got up to pee. Ones to get the gear out of your truck. They didn't take much rod and reel boots waders. And of course the vest took photos of the to painting verse separately and then side-by-side. I thought was pretty sophisticated of them get a clay sample from the undercarriage of the truck and an imprint of the treads on those tires for all for all in all it took maybe 20 minutes the whole thing there didn't toss the place. Mr. Stegner. Ma'am

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my under arrest now no. Can I go fishing up to the sulfur the sulfur where you fought with? Mr. Simoneau? You can but I wouldn't recommend it Dell's Brothers flying in from Tucson this afternoon. I'd rather not have any more fights. What about New Mexico? Were you planning on going there? I have a commission in Santa Fe a portrait. I can't keep you from going anywhere. But do me a favor. Keep me posted, right? He handed his car to Sophia. Would you come down to the office and make a statement? No, no. He was with me all night. That's all I've got to say. We fought twice once fast slept spoon. I understand we fucked again really slow to orgasms that time to more than it

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that was fresh slept Tangled in each others arms until two assholes came knocking on the door. That's my Statement Sophia handed the detective back his card turned. Into the house

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that evening. I tried a new fishing spot. Son have gone over the canyon in the wide run of slow water reflected the Green Banks silvering the dark surface. Before I did anything I stood knee-deep in the cold water and close my eyes. And the Silence of the evening, I could hear the chortle of current and the tiny blips and gulps of trout Rising spreading silent Rings across the mirrored Edge without leaving a wake. You're a killer. Perhaps maybe you leave any behind anything important few paintings right anything worthwhile. I'm a father were she's dead too. Am I still am shit a lot of dead in your wake you're a killer twice over you miss the first time by a hair, but you got the heart of a killer. Be careful around that pretty one with a nice tits. She's got your balls in a vice in the cop shows. They always talk about motive and murder weapon and hard evidence and eyewitnesses to build a solid case. They want facts that are Beyond dispute. They want black and white. Maybe that's just what

0:44:45

the TV audience wants but there are so many colors tones and shadings to consider. Murder weapon none that rock is gone motive sure. A lot of people have some motive to murdered Del Simoneau hard evidence aside from my brain side for the brains on my fishing vest tire tracks Road dust. I fished there at least twice a week Alibi. I had two orgasms and we slept till morning do more of that is that I have balls in a vise my man. So you say I waited two weeks, but I didn't hear from detective sport. I decided to drive down to Santa Fe to paint those two pasty-faced little girls in their polka dots in the meanwhile. I spent my mornings drinking coffee with Sophia fishing and a lot of not painting. You know, I hold your nut sack and my strong little fist. Oh, yes. I know. I don't want your nuts. No matter what your knots are your knots I will never change my story. I believed her sure. You don't want to paint today. It's been a while. So if he leaned forward, we're in one of her signature spaghetti

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strap top and squeeze your biceps into the sides of her chest today. I think I need to paint a loan. Okay, call me later. If you want to swim with any naked girls. She tugged in my beard if I didn't play this right my nutsack will be spending time Behind Bars.

0:46:21

I put a 24 by 36 pre-stretch canvas on the easel squeezed and squeezed 10 measures of pigment onto a piece of plastic covered fiberboard lifted a medium stiff brush out of a glass of spirits and began. I painted a road cracked tarmac running over the Desert Hills burnt brush cracked clay with washes of white alkaline lowlights hot hot on the road. No relief in the shade Aster's. Blue and purple leaching out the last color moisture brush to Spirits to palette to Canvas moving faster without pause palette knife rag Spirits than a bush. The shape a girl's arm her body at the base of the Bush for birds on a rock perched watching black and huge ever present with the unrelated heat and Relentless Sky the phone rings. Huh? static on the line voice scratching D familiar stegner

0:47:20

Who is this stranger? I want my horse. Whoever this is. It's not your horse. You cracked my skull and left me for dead. What the fuck good job tossed me in the creek like the rock to my head who the fuck is this tough guy using a lot of grown-up cuss words. Well, it sure as shit the fucking Dale thanks to you. I'm hanging up you hang up. You'll be dead like Del cross. Our I hung up the phone rang for more time. I let it blocked number silence. I went to the armoire and pulled out my old Smith & Wesson a 41 magnum the one I shot Lauder Sims with a thumb the cylinder loaded good lady next to my tubes of paint. I dug my short-barreled Winchester 12-gauge pump the Marine because you could drop it in the swamp and it would still fire and I loaded it with Buckshot. But at close range it could ruin someone's day. picked up the iPhone and punched in Sophia's number I don't come by here. I was just threatened on the phone Jim get yourself out of town. Stay with friends. Just get out for a week or

0:48:28

so.

0:48:32

It was bad. Go now soon as you can't I'll call you you call the go promise me. I dialed Willie. It's Jim. I better come get that horse you to everybody wants that little round today. He called you too. Yep just now said he was coming over to take her who Grant simoneau Del Woods brother. I told him the horse was no longer his or his brothers. And then I'd be set foot and my place I'd put a new button hole in his shirt. He told me I would dearly regret my attitude. Jim. I've been regretting my attitude my whole life. I wish I'd thought to tell him that. I meant to tell you that I didn't hear your truck start up in the middle of the night and rattled back up your drive about three hours later before the storm. You tell detective Gaskill about what you don't hear. Yeah, Craig came by here the other day asking about your fishing gear from when I picked up the little mayor and my trailer kept asking about a vest my fishing vest. It seemed to me if he was so concerned. It must be some kind of

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evidence I told Him as far as I could recollect that you were wearing that vest when you gave Del a bloody nose, he got real pissy after that. So I said to him Craig the blood on that vest made a deep and Vivid impression on me and I would be sure to mention it in court if it ever came to that probably makes you a suspect as much as me Jim till would Seminole was a snake but his brother Grant is a meaner snake than him by far you get out of town. Town for a while. Take a vacation you'd be in jail. Right now. The police said anything on you. I resolved right then and there to give Willie a painting

one that Stephen Lily would never know about but I didn't take the vacation Willie suggested. I pulled out another canvas and started to paint this one a road coming toward me no blackbirds but a single horned owl on the road horse. A little mayor and then a second horse an appaloosa an Indian Spirit Horse with shadows and long light the ponies stepping in tandem dancing almost as if set to music.

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And then I I see it. cross their Withers bundled balanced the body of a girl

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I seized and then I paint through it breathing in out. No ropes balanced held only by the complete attention of the horses by love that painting could bring her this close. I'll say hey. What's good pop? Like the clouds that look like birds. I know you're mad at me. I'm just trying to figure stuff out two boys are weird. You know, it's just that I wondered if I could have a phone, you know, so I can coordinate every fucking kidding me. This is the boy who gave you ecstasy. I like him Jeremiah. He's finding his way even using birth control. What about school? Are you studying Jesus fucking Christ? I'll say

0:52:07

She wouldn't look at me. I don't know how long she stood there waiting.

0:52:16

And then she was gone

0:52:20

two three four. five

0:52:30

I got to get away from here.

0:52:34

My way out of town. I stopped at Bob's to fill up. He's cold and spring melt not a word when he cleans the window. He won't meet my eye. He stopped upon at 40 0 0 no need for change takes my two bills and turns away stops takes a deep breath turns back and leans against the side of Jim's truck facing the pumps. Look Jim if anyone deserved an early demise it was that son of a bitch tell but Jim, you know, we we can't just go around killing each other. I can see his Adam's apple bobbing in the side mirror be good Jim. You've got to be good a reprieve and indictment. I don't know. I was 50 miles down the highway before I could breathe. Normally I was in no hurry to get to Santa Fe with a Smith & Wesson on the seat under my coat just before fishing oil on canvas 20 by 30 inches Private Collection a pop. Yeah. Don't get so excited about everything gets you in trouble or always leaping like a chicken your rooster, right? right pop Yes, awesome, and you should stop now just paint. Everything will

0:53:59

work out you will surely

0:54:04

fall over. I don't usually paint a plane. I like to imagine my setting but this was for housing. I said up at The River's Edge with a blank canvas on the easel and place the revolver amongst the handful of tubes and brushes. Take no chances, I think. I stand and breathe. my little girl left in a vacant lot didn't have a chance. You got to breathe Jim got to be good. I breathe. I've got to it's all I can do. Not a single car passes. I paint and Sun climbs over the ridge. I feel the vibration of a hate Rock blasting past me with a sweet grass smelling wind then air brakes hissing and the Double Down shifting to stop at the shoulder in front of my truck. His hand comes up in a wave when he still 20 yards off not like the city Folk when they're right on top of you the proverbial tin outline bulges in his shirt pocket morning. The Stranger twist open is qu dip now it took me five years to quit you a painter. I fish the fishermen painter now there's a lie. I like your fish and how you've got

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them jumping even though they ain't jumping. I'm Jason. Jim pleasure likewise you expecting company. Not really. You got a 41 magnum stuck in your easel. Maybe forbear a lot of lying in these Hills maybe for lying you like to fish the Sulphur River back in Delta County. Excuse me. I do I fished it the other day too. Not in the middle of the night though amazing. That's legal fishing hunting stalking at night. I was thinking of doing some fishing kill an hour or two sometimes in a bar fight just before it erupts you feel the way things are going to end. So you strike pre-emptive you deliver Hey to a hunting cap seven or eight guys. It was a guys. I would seven one of them is on a slab my hand goes to the Shelf inches away from the gun. Maybe the fishing isn't too good here. Now Dale is family. We don't choose them. So whoever fucks with them the law might not take care of it, but one of us always does. I think I will fish. How about you? Sure I say without thinking. We fish for over an hour

0:56:51

keeping each other in sight the whole time at the gun tucked into my waistband first. It wasn't fun. Jason might have a gun too. I was side casting after arise and I let myself get lost in thought when I looked up he was nowhere in sight. I circled quickly around the bank gone if he had wanted the advantage. He had a risk of branches. He was right there on the shallow edge of the pool less than 15 feet away from me with something in his hand. Hey, whoa there right hand dropped to the My belly pops slow down smile amazingly white for someone who choose I caught three on this here. Lure. Thought you'd like to try it. The prophet fishing fly looked like a big ant with half a dozen rubber legs. Ugly. If it look more like a Glock I might have plugged in. Now, I think I'm done fishing. We walked up the bank at Double Arms distant keeping our eyes on each other the whole time. Hold on. I have something for you. One of the ranchers gave it to me a week ago. He reached slowly and obviously to the

0:57:55

pocket of his coat. my mind Monte Cristo number two. Classic Cuban pretty good. I guess it is. You pulled out a lighter and lit my smoke. It took a drag on a very fine Monte Cristo cigar. We might as well enjoy ourselves. He let his own Monte Cristo. Sun bounces off the slow running creek one of us for sure is going down.

0:58:28

Like threats are threats and violence is violence two, don't go together more than half the time. I watched him turn in a reading of Grey smoke and walked back to his cab. Put my rod in the bed of the truck and his side view mirror. I could see him talking to someone on his cell look back and talk some more. finally the grind of the low gear and the loud rev is he pulled out laying two short blasts on the horn. I held the cigar up in the early evening light.

0:59:06

Might as well enjoy ourselves. I said out loud. One of us is going down.

0:59:31

Okay, first I want to ask the actors to introduce themselves.

0:59:40

I'm Tom Dewey. My name is Alex Matthews. I'm Keith Dahlgren.

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And Brian Burch who did the adaptation honey, you come down

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to who directed the performance you just saw and has just

1:00:02

has rushed down here from the Seattle Children's Theater where he was performing in Robin Hood tonight.

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Okay now it is my great pleasure to welcome Peter Heller to this the main event of 2015 Seattle reads. We have had a pretty amazing three days meeting rooms full standing room. Only close readers questions deep conversation. And every time there's been one that has I'd say taken Peter a back.

1:00:48

So Peter Heller made his living with his Adventure writing for many years. The whole time wanting to write fiction since he was 11 and a librarian put Hemingway in his hands and so he's done it and what he has said is writing fiction at last was like coming home. So I first met Peter Heller three years ago at a pre-publication dinner for The Dog Stars. And you know, whoa, just taken with Higgs voice and with Peters writing.

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And last year, I read an advance copy of the painter, you know was just knocked out again. So I wrote Peter and I said golly you don't you've done it again created this complicated character with

this, you know a certain kind of exterior, but to me anyway, really clearly sensitive inside. And then Peter answered me. He said from pay Anya Jim's cabin where last night on the Gunnison. He caught the biggest trout. He had ever caught and was feeling really close to gym, which I thought was just wonderful that one. Could the writer could feel so close to his character. So you should know that Peter and his place the place he built in Pay Anya was featured in The New York Times last June. I opened my paper on a Thursday morning when the home section existed and I thought whoa, that's Peter Heller. And so there's a big feature and photos. And so if you go on the New York Times website, you can see the place that Peter saw as he was writing this this story. so following well, obviously you're invited

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to ask the adapter that director the actors and Peter any questions that you have so wonderful writer and my friend Peter Heller

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Wow,

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I just want to thank you guys that was really moving from me. And I've never seen a performance of anything I've written. So

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I was afraid that I didn't realize that my characters curse so much. I'm sad that didn't offend anybody and I didn't realize it was such a western. - guns and rough talk and fights and stuff. I gotta thought I was when I finished it. I thought I'd written a story about our so go figure. Anyway, it was really really cool watching you guys think. Yeah. Thanks for that. Really an adaptation. Oh, okay. Here's a question.

1:04:15

Okay, so I don't know if you could hear her but she said there was a lot in the book of the about the interplay the interplay of the the artist and the art world and she thought there was a lot of humor in it, but that it was kind of dead on and how did you come by that knowledge? So, you know my my I had a lot of artists in my family. My mom is a sculptor and she was a trained painter my dad painted and his wife is a serious oil painter and they live in Santa Fe. And so I've been to a lot of gallery openings and I've been up and down Canyon Road just like Jim did you know at all hours of the day and night and I've seen those galleries when they were open. I've seen them. I've looked through the windows when they were closed and you know, I've met Gallery owners that were really pompous and I thought that we're that had fake English accent slynooly grew up in North Philadelphia. And you know War bow ties and stuff I mean and but then I met Gallery owners who really really loved their painters

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in their art and I just thought how what a crazy world that is and it's based. You know, I mean, the Wellspring of it is that is the creativity and you know that the fork the force the life force that creativity

to artist brings all this whole infrastructure about and some of its really authentic and some of it And so it's something that I'll always entertain me.

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It's a great question. Thank you. Here's one year. Yes. Oh Jim. So so just to let you know I'm Jim Stegner the character in the book is based on a real guy named Jim Wagner and he's just a really wonderful wonderful person and I spent he was my fishing buddy for nine years. He had finished the when I started writing the book. I wrote few weeks into it. I was like, yeah this really seems like Jim Wagner this Jim Stegner guy and you might have heard me say this before but I thought I have to call him up and I said Jim you know, I'm writing about a Taos expressionist painter. He's like I'll go all is yeah. He shot a guy in a bar just like you did for make a comment about his kid. He's like there's this silence, you know, and he you know, I said he kind of looks like you and he loves to fish just like you and you know, they call them Hemingway The River just like you and his paintings are a lot like yours, you know, it was like I went on and on and and he did lose his his kid and you know his

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life fell apart and he did come up. Ooh, this Valley and we became friends and he just loved to fish and he loved to paint those were the things that soothe them. And so

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now God and I lost track of the question of so so moved by oh, so I watched him pain a lot and and what always struck me about Jim. Was he often the way I started the novel was with the first line. I didn't want to know it was going to happen because I've written a lot of now. Fiction, I always knew the ending and I will tell you what's going to happen next and so I just start with the first line and follow the music of the language and that's a voice and that's a character. That was Jim what I loved about watching. Jim paint was it when he approached the canvas he most of the time unless he had a commission which he got sometimes but most of the time he didn't know what he was going to paint and he would just set a pallet to his mood and then he would just start in and then, you know, I'd watch it and you know, they're be clouds and there be Hills and there might be a Coltrane and often there was a chicken because he just love chickens. He couldn't resist them and it was fascinating and

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he painted out I'll times of day and night. I mean he would interrupt go fishing. He'd make me a meal because I was always hung I was a starving poet and and then he would watch a cop show. We love those shows were, you know, the cam from the cop car where they're chasing and watch that and then even go paint some more and it was really integrated and wonderful to see that. So yeah, yeah.

1:08:32

Why did I choose the name Stegner? So I wanted a name that rhymes with Wagner because I want I really wanted to honor him and I wanted people to sort of know that that was him. I didn't realize till I finish the book I could just dedicate the book to them.

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You learn stuff as a writer, you know as you go, but so anyway, I pick Stegner and I thought that's neat because you know while stickers one of my favorite short story writer. I think his short stories are masterpieces and you know, it's a nice tip of the hat to the dean of Western literature. So Yeah.

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You know, there's something in the law like called V, but I think

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I might invoke that I listen. I think I think that we all experience, you know at moments. I think we experienced blind red racer. I mean, I don't know

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I'm looking for backup. Absolutely. Once the clay, you know a person who is well adjusted and doesn't spend time in jail. Sort of lets it go takes a deep breath and tries to put stuff in perspective, but some of us don't do so well.

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Yep. Yeah, did you guys hear that? He he he said that there was you when when Jim was violent and reacted there was a, you know, a provocation except in one case during that radio show where he crushes the guy's hand for saying something condescending or a bunch of stuff that's Congress to condescending and any and the reader thought that there was quite a disparity between those kinds of violence, you know. And I just have to tell you something interesting about that scene. Can I got to do something really fun? Because I got to take a picture.

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Okay, how many people have read the book? Oh my god.

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Wow, that's like so cool. Usually you're trying to sell the but you know, I do readings at bookstores 700 entice people to read it. This is awesome. I don't have to do anything. I'll see you guys later.

1:11:11

So when I've been on tour, I read three or four scenes from the book. I try not to read too much. I like QA but one of the scenes I read is that scene at on the Embarcadero in the ferry building during the radio show where he crushes the guy's hand and it is so interesting seeing how people respond around different parts of the country to that scene when I read that scene in the south in Mississippi and Oxford and Jackson, Mississippi in Nashville and Atlanta people love it there on the here on the edge of their seats. Now, they're like whooping and they're laughing when we crushes the guy's hand everybody's laughing and like and what I realized is that you know in the south they have a real sense of you know, what it's like to be Dishonored and dismissed and they have a finely honed sense of honor and and revenge and when I read it in Boulder Colorado is like everyone looks like they want to crawl under their chair. It's like Namaste.

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I read it in a little town in Minnesota just a couple months ago and I like a blinding. Desert and all these Hardy minnesotans came out in this like thick snow to hear the reading and it was like fly fishing country and I read that scene and they all just can't look puzzle. Like well, that wasn't very nice. You know, we get why he was mad and I'd be mad too, but I wasn't nice so it's really interesting and I read I just want to tell you I read it. I read it here on demand at a library and I thought everybody reacted really well.

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I'm not going to tell you how.

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Right there. Yeah.

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Are they neurotic?

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Well, there's certain things about I mean the thing about yeah. Oh, I'm sorry. What did all this life of adventure doing, you know Adventure journalism and stuff did that was that helpful in writing fiction and was I as neurotic as all the other writers, maybe that's did I have the same fears that I have the same. So I so there's one thing about, you know, doing some of those Adventures. I mean like, you know, I remember taking us First assignment that I got from outside magazine. I realized that God I called up out of the blue, you know the 800 number and I said and I picked I picked the name off a Masthead the Mazda that sounded nice a senior editor, you know Laura on Old I was like Laura are no please and they patch me through and that's a great thing about being young and dumb. You don't know what you can't do and she picked up and I started talking really fast and I said, you know, like I a class five and I've been published in Harper's which was sort of true. Ooh, and it was a just

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in the reading section of front a little reprint of a journal are but it was in there and and I said I think you should send me the Tibetan Plateau to do this first descent kayak this thing and she did and I and I realized later is because I was Expendable. They didn't have a writer that they didn't care about and a guy died on the first day and he died in my arms in a logjam and The stock and I was trying to get him off and we had already pulled one guy off me and this other kayaker and their the Chinese God he was still alive and we went back for the other guy. We couldn't we put a z drag on him and tried and we held his head as the River Rose over his head and he was on his honeymoon. And you know, I came back and I was traumatized and grief-stricken and you know, I told her I can't write and she asked, you know. Anyway, I ended up writing a The article and it was their submission for the national magazine award that year and I knew that if I didn't write another if I didn't get back

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on the river right away and kayak something hard. I probably never would again. So I took an assignment to go with a Russian kiwi expedition to the Everest of rivers in the Soviet Union had never been successfully run. It was in the high premiers and the last team that had tried at lost five of their 11 guys and I was supposed to kayak it with a kiwi out of front of the Russian pilote raft and the other rafts and and it was the perfect antidote to that that first trip because Russians and Kiwis. I mean, they're like oil and water. They're like, I mean you get to a tough rapid and it can't big water in a canyon the Russian Squad they get all grim and they start chain-smoking and it's like the weight of history and it's like Tolstoy, you know, and and the key was are hopping around the back and they're going oh, she'll be right no worries, you know and see a line and the guy that had to navigate between them the translator for honey had learned his English from Frank Zappa records. He could

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sing Quinn the Eskimo and all that and he told me when I was like beat I am guiding Expedition same area last year and geology Expedition. And on other side of region other drainage is international team of scientists looking for Yeti. So, It by french guy. So I get R aft deck, you know, fly what I take my little Swiss Army, so I cut out foot and I put handle and then you know, Rock Creek and snow and I make like back beat next day. They discovered the tracks made International headlines and you guys probably remember was like 1989 they found Yeti independent and he said but only one problem Pete was all left feet. So that was the antidote to that trip. Nobody died. We know I made it and you know that launched his career and adventure and I have to tell you coming. I always want to write fiction since I was little and coming home, you know on that expedition every time I put the spray screwed over my cockpit in the morning. I sometimes I thought this might be the last time I ever do that

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and when you're I mean when you're doing that, you know, you come to write fiction you maybe you're a little less neurotic because you realized you know, you're just making up a story. What's to be scared of I mean, so I really I mean I just try and be humble to the craft. It's a job, you know, it's a craft I go to work every day. I write a thousand words a day. And you know, I just realized I'm probably going to have to throw out half of it. That's fine. You know, it's just go to work. Yep. So I wrote a novel a couple months ago. I finished it to a Castaway novel in the coast of Maine and then I'm third of the way through the next one which is a detective story with a the lead characters a woman. I'm going to try that and and try and you know,

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listen, I get a lot of comments, you know from you guys about women characters. I'm going to do my best now. Keep you quiet.

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You were wonderful, by the way.

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Someone had oh, yeah. Yeah, the none of it for me was when Jim has that realization that you did so beautifully like fishing and this other voice is going you know, what have you left? What's in your wake or you know and Jim says to himself. I feel like a gentle man. I feel like you know, he feels like a good man, but it sometimes he doesn't act good and to me that was sort of the none of it. I mean, how do you be a good person and sometimes maybe a good person doesn't act well and sometimes people that you think are bad actually have Grace and actually can offer the deepest Redemption because I think I think Jason at the end offers a real gift and has a real Grace at the end. So that's really surprised me. You know that that's what it was about and about art and about loss and grief. But yeah, I did I sort of like I sort of like as the novel progresses. I began I became more and more. sort of

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I became more and more fascinated with it and surprise. So, yeah, thanks. Oh, sorry.

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No, oh when I started the story that I know how it's going to end. No, I ended the story when I first wrote the book. I ended at the party scene where he lie, you know, he makes that little speech to the party leaves. He said, you know, I went, you know, we went fishing where you know, I fish with Alice and I caught a few fish die fish Till Dawn and I ended I thought that was a pretty good ending and I sent it to my editor and we got on a conference call with my agent and my editor and she said, you know, this is a really really good book. It's going to be great. But we're 80% of the way there and I bet you know, she said you need a prologue and you need an epilogue and you need a scene 80 percent of the way through this is the way top editors apparently in New York talk. You need to see 80 percent of the way through that acts as the control tower seat in the dogstars worked which was a very violent sort of awful cathartic white-knuckle scene. So I said well What would the prologue look

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like a my agent said? I think it's the way she shoots the guy in the bar because that's part of the back story. And I thought that was just resonate. I thought that was perfect. I was like, okay, what does the epilogue look like? Jenny Jackson. My editor said it should be you know, Jason should come back and I thought wow he's going to come to the creek. He's got to come back to the creek. And she said yeah, he's got to be Jim has to be in his power because there has to be some justice. She didn't want him just to skate, you know at the end of the party and I thought that's right. Jason is going to come back. He's going to have a gun and I said, okay see you guys

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and I wrote those scenes, you know, really fast and and the scene 80% through is the flash flood scene. And and what was so wonderful about that was in the flash flood seen the end of it. There's a cathartic moment with Jim for gives himself. He's standing in the pouring rain. He's just survived a flash flood. He's just save Jason. If I tell him to get out of the way, and he said he's crying his tears are mixing with the rainy and he thinks I loved her I loved her as well as I could I loved and I you know, I think that is so neat when you have people helping you that the get it and it's like having three mines instead of one. It was really wonderful. So yes

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did writing the book change being somewhere. You know, it always does I think because I carry those characters around as if they were real. I mean like in the dogstars Jasper the dog he lives in my heart like a dog that I've had that I've had isn't that crazy. I mean, I actually think of Jasper like my dog and I think of Jim and Jason and those guys is real people that are out there living their lives. It's it's I don't know. I mean in the old days, I'd probably be in an insane. Asylum. I got to tell you guys a story told us at the library earlier, but you know how the mores change about what's insane and you know a guy who goes the coffee shop and hears voices and write some down, you know, a hundred fifty years ago really might be locked up right and I get to come and speak to you guys and my uncle was an architect in Vermont. He's one of my favorite people and his his great friend was an architect in Norway who had been given the command Mission to change the name of the insane asylum

1:23:50

in Oslo because over the little carved in Granite and block letters. It said insane asylum and they want to update it make it more PC and you know, like you know as low is due for the metal, you know, whatever so George's friend figured the cheapest way to do would be to pull a block out flip it around and recarved the back so they pulled the Blake big block of stone out and they flipped it around and it's on the back. It said lunatic asylum.

1:24:28

I don't know. I almost think we ought to end it there.

1:24:35

Okay, so first thank you, you know Bravo all of you.

1:24:45

And thank you again to Elliott Bay book company and Karen and Jon for just being our great Partners to this program. So thanks very much for joining us for Seattle leads.

1:25:05

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