

Some Extremely Boring Drives

Marguerite Pigeon

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Vancouver, Canada-based Marguerite Pigeon, a former journalist and traveler turned fiction writer and poet, has created a conundrum with the title of this, her newest book—there is nothing boring about this collection of short stories. Pigeon's characters are all involuntary explorers of outer or inner worlds, who are compelled by their vulnerability to keep moving through places both exotic and mundane. Each, in his or her own way, discovers at least one thing that's true about adventures: imagined, they can seem glorious; in the middle of them, however, what we call "adventure" is often uncomfortable, smelly, and sometimes downright dangerous.

A competitive athlete in an endurance race in snow-covered Alaska realizes she's pushed too hard, is losing her mental game, but will not— cannot—quit. A woman, her hair stolen by cancer drugs, realizes she's not the woman she thought she was. A man catches feral cats for an animal hospital knowing their organs will be used for transplanting into its clients' ailing pets. A woman encounters her exact double—another "her," but living a different life. And a woman compelled to move without ceasing is brought to stillness by her father's death. Driven to extremes, each of Pigeon's characters is stripped of the coping mechanism that has kept them moving forward; when they're jolted out of the trance of the ordinary, we don't know which way they'll go, or even if they will survive. But one thing is certain—they will never be the same.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Winter 2015)

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