

MONOLITH

By Brain Brunson

WHY WE LIKE IT: *Fiction as Reality TV. A roving camera dispassionately documents the lives of workers within a concrete hive. Patterns and personalities begin to emerge as the story progresses. Office politics, inter-departmental relationships, personal idiosyncrasies, food preferences, fantasies and individual mindsets are explored in ever increasing detail as the lens sharpens. What amazes is that by the end of the story it's like you're part of the experience. We feel we know the characters on an intimate level because we've all met or worked with people like them. 'Anna Mae doesn't work for the first half hour. Instead, she walks around saying hi to everyone, asking them how their weekend was, how their kids are.' What astounds is that none of the characters are clichés no matter how close their behaviour (Cdn. sp.) resembles a too common familiarity. The time is the immaculate present and the voice platinum melt—just the right degree of detachment. No trouble to imagine this spinning off into a HBO series along the lines of those deathless classics 'Friends' or 'Sex in the City'. To say we love this guy's writing with something like Platonic lust is saying we're just agape with agape. Quote: 'A young homeless man, oblivious to everyone, sits or stands, sometimes lies, on the side of the building, rotating around it to catch the shade throughout the day.' And, "Well, I was out at the creek prospecting for silver," Keith starts off saying when he supposed to be fixing a monitor. "Silver, not gold, the reason why is that silver has a much better future because all the gold is found. It's all found, none left. So, out on the creek, panning for silver is easier than panning for gold. The reason why is you can see it better. Gold isn't very shiny in nature. Silver is . . ." And lest we forget...*

'A sign shows up on the door of the unisex bathroom: Lock door when occupied.

This leads to speculation as to who walked in on whom.

The next day handwritten under the printed message is: Knock before entering.

The day after the sign is moved inside the bathroom.

The day after that it is gone.

No one ever knows who walked in on whom.

Best of the best. Five stars.

Monolith

Concrete, reminiscent of soviet architecture, rises up from the desert floor. Tucked away in a neglected corner of lower downtown, is a tall thin building with narrow slits in the beige façade for windows that don't break the monotony of the slabs built so tight together that it looks like one giant block that wasn't constructed, rather placed on the ground like a queen positioned on a

chess board for checkmate. The building resides on its site indifferent to its surroundings, resolute in its permanence.

The parking garage stretches for two blocks, like a beached aircraft carrier. Two entrances, east and west, funnel the morning traffic to work. The cars flow into the east from two directions, north and south. The northbound traffic backs up making a left hand turn into the garage. Through traffic gets up caught up in this congestion and cars squeeze through on the right. Sympathetic, yet misguided, drivers waiting to turn drift into the oncoming lane to give the traffic behind them room to pass on the right, which clogs up the southbound through traffic. The southbound traffic continuously uses both entrance lanes which causes the congestion in the northbound traffic. There are too many cautious drivers, those who don't zip into that first available lane. Some are too slow with their decision making and get caught right in the middle of the lane, which completely clogs up the southbound traffic. Pedestrians arrive to complete the gridlock.

The west traffic arrives only from the north. The queue is much smoother, though sometimes the cars line up in the left lane, the first available lane, leaving the far right inexplicably unused.

Like a string of pack mules, the commuters wind their way up the levels searching for a spot, hoping to not be on the top uncovered level.

The reserved spaces on the first level remain empty until late in the morning as the rest of the garage fills up. Spaces in prime locations, near the elevators on the second level, are taken well before the masses arrive. The carpool spaces on the first level are only ever half used.

They come in waves and clusters and bits to the entrances.

They, Peter and Sandy and Marty, travel even-file up the stairs to the main entrance and through the doors. They flash badges to pass security, scan badges to gain access to the back entrance, and punch codes to unlock solid metal doors to find their seats in the rows and rows of identical gray cubicles.

In no particular order, they, Phil, Teri, Chuck, get coffee, either from the office pot or the small kiosk on the first floor, they start computers, they gossip and goof around, they gather supplies, they check email, they check regular mail, they check voicemail, they work, they check the internet, they go to the bathroom, they search for food, hoping that someone brought donuts, they store lunches in the refrigerator and hope no one steals them.

The work is at a computer, with a keyboard and mouse, on the bits and bytes stored in mainframes and hard drives. Double clicking, single clicking, an occasional click and drag, typing, ten-keying, a lot of tabbing through fields, finding the blinking cursor, minimizing and maximizing windows, scrolling down, then scrolling back up, then back down, copy paste, print and select, save, repeat

They have various schedules. Flex schedules, Denise, John, Peter, to four-ten schedules, Keith and Sarah. Some have half-hour lunches, others a full hour. Some come in at 6:30 so leave at 3, others are standard 8 to 5.

Phil is notorious for coming in five minutes late, never more than five, almost never less, thus never on time. The 8:05 to 5:00 work schedule became the office joke. Phil has the 8:05 schedule.

The workers traverse a gauntlet of beggars stationed along the street leading up to the building, aggressive angry ones, sad and quiet ones, cheerful grateful ones.

It's truly inexplicable, but Roger sounds like he is vomiting when he greets everyone in the morning by quickly saying 'good morning'.

Karl spends five minutes every morning breaking up the ice in the break room.

Anna Mae doesn't work for the first half hour. Instead she walks around saying hi to everyone, asking them how their weekend was, how their kids are. Management found that it is futile to try to dissuade her from doing this. In fact, HR uses her as an example of how people just work differently and we all should be aware of that.

The single moms are always coming in late or leaving early to deal with their perpetually ill and needy and growing brood.

They, Betsy, Bob, Judy are an unhealthy bunch. Overweight. Sickly. Coughs and sneezes ring throughout the building throughout day. They limp around the office like Frankenstein's Monster. They wear braces on their wrists and orthopedic shoes on their feet. They have bad backs, bad joints, bad circulation.

They wouldn't know each other if not for this place. So many wouldn't even want to know each other. But the job has brought them together. They get invited to weddings. They go out for drinks after work. They date each other. They hang out on weekends and holidays. They go to their funerals. They get married to each other.

Others, Brad, Karl, Rosalie, make it a point not to befriend anyone. Co-workers remind them of work. They sever all ties to this place once they step outside. They need the outside world to remain so.

Dan is a downtrodden man. Nice as can be, but it's like working with Eyore.

The sounds of the office are pervasive: monotonous blaring work phones, the blips and bleeps of computers with the volume turned up, clapping after a quick unit meeting in the hallway to give out an award, the loud cutting edge printer/copier, the various tones and beeps of personal cell phones, the various laughs (cackling, obnoxious guffaws, shrill, snorting, a few pleasant and cute), music to ease the monotony, the power stapler, the time stamp, the voices of the couple loud workers carrying throughout the office, the not quite synchronized amber alerts blaring out

all over the office, the click of high heels on linoleum floors, the crash of somebody dropping phone, the thud of somebody dropping a ream of paper, and the always horribly sung happy birthday.

Bob is the personification of continental drift. Slow, Massive. He clogs up the foot traffic in the narrow aisles.

Maintenance works on the HVAC system.

“I survived an earthquake once,” Keith says, blocking the hallway. “Just missed the bridge collapse. If I hadn’t had that fishbowl in the car I would have been on it. Instead I was only just about to get on it. Had to help out a girl from her car. The thing about earthquakes is . . .”

It is imperative for Brad to find a secluded place to take breaks. Unused conference rooms. Some useless nook leftover from a remodeling. The far corner of the break room. Anything to get away from the work. And co-workers are work

The smokers congregate outside, as close to the doors as they are legally allowed. They are an unattractive gang. Old and wrinkled. Unhealthily thin.

Chuck isn’t always eating, he isn’t even overweight, but he does love office potlucks and birthday parties and is constantly on the prowl for free food. When somebody brings in donuts, Chuck knows before anyone else. Whenever there are leftovers from any lunch meeting Chuck leads the trail to them, inevitably followed by a line of overweight middle-aged women. Chuck will organize a potluck in celebration of any minor or major holiday, Fourth of July and Thanksgiving and Christmas and Cinco de Mayo, but also St. Patrick’s Day and Columbus Day and once, the summer equinox.

Doris forwards stupid ass, purportedly funny, emails to everyone.

Peter, the lonely old eccentric elder statesman, though not because he’s that old rather because he’s just been around for years and years, starts each morning by checking on Esmeralda, an attractive younger woman. He never asks her out. He just talks to her. Though it’s obvious that he is in love with her. He couldn’t ask for anything more. Peter is surely aware of this.

There is a faint squeak emanating from somewhere, a vent, perhaps an overworked computer processor, a dirty roller on a printer. It sounds like the guitar solo from Prince’s ‘Let’s Go Crazy’.

Marty is loud. He talks loud, eats loud, walks loud, sneezes loud, clears his throat loud, and especially laughs loud.

They decorate their cubicles. The walls, the cabinets, the drawers, inside and outside are plastered with photos. The shelves are lined with knick-knacks and doo-dads. The work can hardly fit in. They bring home to work.

Bobbi and Jenny don't get along.

Their animosity is eighty percent misunderstanding that started from over sensitivity and just grew as their distrust and spite created a vicious circle of squabbling, an invidious vortex of incrimination.

The other twenty percent is comprised of their natural bitterness.

To her great annoyance whenever Sarah doesn't feel well and goes home for the day the other women in the office, mostly the soon to be middle-aged, gossip that she might be pregnant.

"There are two things that you can never satisfy everyone in the office with: room temperature and dress code." Mitch ends every meeting, always leaving someone disgruntled, with this caveat.

They have terrible written communication skills

Garrett will just get in these moods where he acts like a total jackass. Not a mean jackass, just a damn obnoxious goof off.

The REPLY ALL feature is used egregiously. Columns of emails stack up in the queue, a chain from what started as a pertinent message devolves into a back and forth mess of needless comments, stupid jokes, and other tomfoolery. A string of 'Thank you' and 'you're welcome' (usually misspelled 'your'). An 'LOL' throw in. Spinning off into some tangent only relevant to two people but shared with dozens other. The notification preview pops up in the lower right corner of the monitor then fades away. The notification icon on the menu bar comes and goes as one useless email is deleted and another one takes its place.

The public has little idea what they do. Just enough to create false expectations of them.

Glenn reverts to baby talk when he goofs around. His voice becomes high-pitched, his grammar regresses to pre-kindergarten levels.

John tells people, "You're not doing your job unless you're harassing your boss."

The fifth floor recommends a rearrangement of the second floor.

The seventh floor reorganizes the third floor departments.

The tenth floor replaces a fourth floor manager.

Bob wanders through the aisles just checking out who's there, who's new, who's doing what. Even through departments he barely knows. He rarely greets anyone, just the people he is already well familiar with. Just looking he is.

“I was a stage hand in a theater in Illinois years ago,” Keith says instead of working, “Got to work with Bill Shatner. Real nice guy . . .”

IT reminds everyone to delete old emails and files so as to conserve server space.

Dale is hounded by a woman who expects him to correct a trivial bit of information being published by an outside agency. He says he can't do anything about it because it wasn't their doing. She scoffs and says, “You're passing the buck.” He says, “Yes, it's not my job. We don't have the authority, and thus don't have the resources to do anything about it.”

Everyone takes a personality test, something like a Myers-Briggs. It identifies the supposedly four ways that people interact with their environment: the logical way (green), the relationship way (blue), the action way (orange), and the organization way (yellow). So now bumping into a high organization (yellow) low relationship (blue) person (identified by the small color coded badge all now wear) everyone knows not to act chummy with him or her and stick just to the letter of the law. Thus they all could get along swimmingly and no conflict would ever arise again.

Mitch, a high gold and orange, a smattering of green, and nearly no blue, informs them that they don't just need to be at work by their start time, they need to be ready to work at their start time, i.e. computer turned on, programs up by 8am. And that they should still be actually working until the end time, i.e. not closing down programs and turning off the computers and monitors until after it reaches 5pm.

Proverbs for cynics, courtesy of Hal:

For every action there is an equal and opposite criticism.

A young homeless man, oblivious to everyone, sits or stands, sometimes lies, on the side of the building, rotating around it to catch the shade throughout the day.

A dissatisfied, turning to disgruntled, man trying in vain to get away with something threatens to sue Dale and the agency for not giving him what he expects and demands and hopes for.

The seventh floor sends out a memo reiterating the Internet and email usage policy. There is a temporary slight drop in illicit usage of the Internet, though no change in the use of email for personal reasons.

They dare not bring cups into the bathroom, rank with germs and filth, instead they leave their cups and mugs and glasses on the drinking fountain just outside, or on a table in the break room.

Somebody, possibly Karl, yells out, “Good fucking damn it, this day is dragging.”

Denise, nearly all green and yellow, announces that she will become more engaged, more active, with her employees. Broadening her comfort levels as she says. No longer does she sound

aggrieved when making any strong point, which always exasperated the tensions that her poor communications skill helped create in the first place.

Sandy makes a lot of mistakes that she never knows how she made. Bizarre mistakes, that Brad must fix and also can't fathom how she created.

Roger writes pornography when he is bored.

Snacks, newspapers, magazines, books, hats, empty cans, cartoons, boxes of tissues, supposedly amusing jokes, novelties, schmaltzy crap, clothing, greeting cards from holidays and birthdays long past, medicine and drugs and lotions and disinfectant, coffee cups, stuffed animals, magnets, coupons, advertisements, menus, purses, loose change, scattered bills, and jewelry clutter their workspaces.

There is no end to the work. There is no product. There is no goal beyond many discrete tasks that take mere moments: analyzing a constant inflow of information, breaking it into clusters, repackaging those to send out to the next level.

The department on the fourth floor is in veritable revolution over the new Fabric that runs and dictates everything they do with the Database.

The fifth floor loves the new Fabric. They don't actually have to use it. It just makes them look progressive and cutting edge.

The seventh floor has only a vague understanding of the Database and less of the Fabric. And they like it that way.

The tenth floor isn't even aware of the Database, yet alone the Fabric.

They barge into a cubicle and interrupt others on the phone. Their sheepish apologies as they slink out of the cubicle, the person on the phone just smiling and shrugging, unable to respond beyond motioning to the receiver at the side of their head, is hilariously awkward.

Maintenance works on the HVAC system.

The fifth floor sends out a memo reiterating the dress code and policy. There appears to be no discernable effect.

Peter shakes his head on his way back to his desk, muttering to himself that they need not bother him with these problems.

A man refuses to fill out mandatory forms on religious grounds, though Dale suspects he is just trying to get away with something

They are forced to have a turn at cleaning the refrigerator. Even those who never use it. At the end of every week, everything not labeled is thrown out. Entire jars of food are discarded. Three-

fourths full cartons of juice, trashed. The alternative is public health hazard levels of filth piling up in the fridge, forgotten, ignored.

The tenth floor institutes a new policy that no longer will the employee's word be taken to get the discount on their health insurance contribution if they don't smoke. Now they have to get swabbed by a nurse to prove it. There is general discontent amongst the smokers, claiming it's a violation of their privacy. The non-smokers find it just and fair.

Proverbs for cynics, courtesy of Hal:

Confidence is only what you feel before you understand the question.

They all find that customer service is much better through email than the phone.

John has several pet projects that Mitch tries to dissuade him from continuing. John ignores him. It's the only thing that make the job tolerable, both the pet projects and the ignoring Mitch.

The Christmas decorations for the second floor take up 53 cubic feet when in storage.

There is a trail of coffee stains on the parquet floor leading from the breakroom.

Cold and flu season comes around and office reacts as if attacked by biological weapons. They wear masks. They spray disinfectant. They wash their hands repeatedly with hand sanitizer.

They still get sick.

The days around major holidays are the most productive, despite many hours being spent on non-work related activities, some of them even management sanctioned.

There is a baby shower for a new grandmother. The third such shower in two years to go along with the five regular baby showers.

Chuck tapes a note on the vending machine in protest to the price hikes, stating that he will no longer use the machine because of these outrageous prices and urging the rest of his co-workers to do the same.

They either slack off by surfing the web, chatting with their cubicle neighbor, going to the bathroom over and over again, doodling in a notebook, or if they can't get away with that, zone out, staring blankly at the computer screen. They need their goof off time. Not to ease the tension, but to refresh. Working non-stop leads to a steady decrease in efficiency as more effort is spent trying to maintain focus amidst the increasing boredom.

Though those who don't need this will never understand.

Proverbs for cynics, courtesy of Hal:

A clear conscience is usually a sign of a bad memory.

“Well, I was out at the creek prospecting for silver,” Keith starts off saying when he supposed to be fixing a monitor. “Silver, not gold, the reason why is that silver has a much better future because all the gold is found. It’s all found, none left. So, out on the creek, panning for silver is easier than panning for gold. The reason why is you can see it better. Gold isn’t very shiny in nature. Silver is . . .”

Rosalie has been at the same position for seven years, doing the exact same thing every day, an unending string of data processing, which she performs tremendously, her production 30 to 50 percent more than the other data processors and nearly error free. All the other data processors get worse the longer they last, as the boredom in the face of such repetition drains their effectiveness.

Glen: “I love it here. This is family.”

A sign shows up on the door of the unisex bathroom: Lock door when occupied.

This leads to speculation as to who walked in on whom.

The next day handwritten under the printed message is: Knock before entering.

The day after the sign is moved inside the bathroom.

The day after that it is gone.

No one ever knows who walked in on whom.

Dan slowly moves his workspace from his cubicle that has limited counter space to one of the seldom-used meeting rooms. It becomes his de facto office. He grows a beard and is rarely seen, except when they walk pass his ‘office’ and peek inside to see him hunched over the conference table, the only surface big enough to contain the files spread out all over it.

Jenny finds out that Roger doesn’t believe in God and sets out to convert him. Roger humors her because she has big tits.

Ursulla has her phone confiscated because her deadbeat relatives constantly bother her. Calling her up and trying to convince her to not work and just live on public assistance like them.

Human Resources sends out an email requesting leave donations for Phyllis, who has used up her vacation time, her sick time, and her long term leave time on her prior illnesses and conditions and now she needs her co-workers to donate their vacation time to her so she doesn’t go broke for the two more weeks she needs off to recover from whatever it is that she needs recover from.

Two men get fired for surfing for porn on the Internet several hours a day. Those sites are supposed to be blocked, yet they track them down anyway or just stumble upon them and then couldn't resist going back.

Proverbs for cynics, courtesy of Hal:

Depression is just anger that hasn't found an outlet.

The IT department insists that everyone delete their old, especially non-work related emails and pictures and files and such.

Monica puts a sign up on her cubicle: Do Not Disturb

Underneath somebody writes 'Don't Feed the Monkeys'.

Monica is black.

Two days later it is determined that Margaret is the culprit. Margaret's termination is not officially announced or commented upon. Her empty cubicle will explain the what, and the diversity workshop and office protocol presentation will explain the why.

Nobody really thinks that Margaret is racist.

Karl unexpectedly dies over a weekend.

The spoons to stir sugar and creamer into coffee keep getting stolen. Eventually just a split wooden stick, perhaps an old chopstick, is all that is used.

John picks apart every suggestion by Mitch in the staff meeting. Everyone else finds it insufferable, but they endure it.

Dick is fired for sexual harassment. It's never officially commented upon.

Mercifully, they are not forced into another workshop.

There is a pernicious lack of consistency. Everyone answers the same question differently. And then each of those persons will answer it differently another day. It is the nature of the business, when the nuances are colored by whatever mood one is in leading to shifting sands of policies and standards.

Teri asks Peter a question about a file he worked on. Peter knows that Teri knows the answer. It isn't anything she isn't familiar with, but she knows that there are things she doesn't know, so she questions herself to the point where the routine becomes complex.

Dan is recognized for 30 years of service and is genuinely pleased about it.

Mitch explains the Manager's Dilemma to those rare employees who complain to him: encourage the employees to share information and knowledge and helping one another, which can lead to a diffusion of the message, like several games of telephone all at once or have things grind to a bureaucratic halt when all activity has to be led straight from the top.

The third floor is reconfigured. For a month they must traverse a labyrinth to a vacant space in an annex under the parking garage. When they return to the third floor everyone has a new improved cubicle.

The rubber bands, the paper clips fall to the floor and remain there on the thin blandly patterned carpet.

The greeting cards go around the office. Nearly a constant stream of them, like chain letters. Birthday cards, get well soon cards, sorry for your loss cards, happy retirement, etc.

Judy has no great skill set beyond a her work ethic, which had served her well for fourteen years at a position that required nothing but effort.

But then she accepts a new position running a department that is a junction of the entire organization. With connections to all departments came the expectations to know a little about everything and thus is inundated with requests and demands from everyone. It requires extreme attention to detail, great organization, advanced multi-tasking skills, and the ability to endure harassment by impatient and often angry people. It is high stress.

Judy cannot handle it. She gets the job done, barely. The stress wears on her.

And she didn't really seek out the job. They didn't exactly force it upon her. They offered the job in a very encouraging way. She didn't resist. She was bored with what she had been doing all those many years.

It kills her.

Chuck becomes visibly upset when the department stops the birthday celebrations with cake.

John insists that his needless points of contention are just being thorough and conscientious. But really he's just a malcontent.

Brad is recognized for 5 years of service with a pin, and is dismayed that he has lasted this long.

Mosquitoes. Somehow mosquitoes have gotten inside.

Hal's proverbs grow trite:

Why are wise men and wise guy opposites?

Bobbi and Jenny get into a comically ridiculous argument over yogurt that isn't either of theirs and that neither ate anyway. The office finds it quite entertaining.

IT strenuously insists that they delete old emails, etc. It is sapping precious server space.

Peter is slowly being lost under the fire hazard of paper, files, and boxes piling up in his cubicle.

There is a sound, a squeak, like a baby pterodactyl. No one questions it.

The fifth floor is reconfigured.

Each and every meeting devolves into a sea of complaints over the usual, long discussed and known concerns repeated slightly reworded by the same few employees who just cannot get over it.

The seventh floor is meeting with the second floor. The second floor has a meeting just to figure out the agenda for the meeting with the seventh floor.

The departments are reorganized. Units are folded into other units. Merged into another division. Split in half. Dispersed throughout the monolith. Or disbanded completely.

Oscar, a hunchbacked, slightly dim, older man, nothing more than an extraneous file clerk from pre-computer days, is forced into retirement.

A belligerent elderly woman yells at Dale, not giving any credence to his opinion on her issue. "I'm not going to argue about it," she tells him. "But . . ." he tries to tell her. "You're out! You're out!" she yells to end the call.

People, mostly the managers, bring donuts on Friday donuts. For various reasons there are no donuts for a couple weeks. Then several people bring donuts leading to massive donut overload. They still manage to eat them all.

Brad is forced to endure Denise's, his supervisor's, interest in his career development. She wonders how to make it more appealing, how to allow him to succeed. All he can think about is how futile it is to find a way to make non-fulfilling work, bearable. And he dreams about what changes he would make if he were in charge. How great it would be he thinks, then he remembers that he has no desire to be in charge.

They are fearful of being fired, laid off, let go. The men are angry about it. The women are a nervous wreck.

John: "I hate working here. I like to think I do good work. But I can't do it here. It's embarrassing."

Anna Mae, after years of declining functionality, retires.

“The reason why,” Keith says, before proceeding to go off on some farfetched tangent of bullshit.

There is occasion to recall the past workers. Sometimes not even recalling them, rather just at the moment becoming aware of them. Unearthing their mistakes that have carried over to the present. Perhaps a handful still remembers them, workers from long ago, years before most of the current workers came on. Some not remembered by any because they were only briefly here, only a Human Resources record, long filed in the recesses, or as bytes no one will ever search for, attest to their employment.

Brad becomes constipated because Denise accuses him of staying too long in the bathroom to text his friends.

Glen gets up from his chair at lunch and tells Mitch he is out of here. He never comes back.

The words on the screen blur, coalescing into dark blots, highlighting the white between, which emerges into forms, first irregular shapes then into patterns: continents, structures, even bigger hidden words in a foreign yet to be deciphered language within the original text.

The barely remembered remnants of old processes and policies linger, now no more understood than the origins of obscure words and phrases, but, like ‘cold as a witch’s tit’ or the habit of knocking on wood, still used, even defended as the way it must be.

Hal hangs one last sign on his cubicle:

For Rent. Inquire within.

He then resigns after 30 years of service and is given a big party as a send off.

There is turmoil on the seventh floor. The tenth floor is barely aware of it. The fourth floor feels it. The fifth floor is forced to replace the manager on the third floor. The employees barely know what is going on.

John resigns suddenly, several years before he would like because he can no longer handle Mitch’s interference and quibbling with how he does the job.

Maintenance works on the HVAC system.

The time is not theirs, no matter how much they might try to make it so.

The second floor is reconfigured.

The End

AUTHOR’S NOTE: *This story was inspired by my many years working in an office much like Monolith depicts. I wanted to show the unique personalities and experiences that inhabit and*

ultimately make up such a regimented and impersonal world that is the modern office workplace. I'm never sure what influences me, probably many things, but I suspect in this case it was the work of David Markson that shows through in the short often one-sentence paragraphs bouncing from perspective to perspective.

BIO: *I am a writer living in Phoenix, Arizona. I studied history and philosophy at the University of Oregon. My short stories have been published in The Doctor T. J. Eckleburg Review, Otis Nebula, Belletrist, and X-R-A-Y Literary Magazine among others.*