



The Way Through Doors (Vintage Contemporaries)

By Jesse Ball

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With his debut novel, *Samedi the Deafness*, Jesse Ball emerged as one of our most extraordinary new writers. Now, Ball returns with this haunting tale of love and storytelling, hope and identity.

When Selah Morse sees a young woman get hit by a speeding taxicab, he rushes her to the hospital. The girl has lost her memory; she is delirious and has no identification, so Selah poses as her boyfriend. She is released into his care, but the doctor charges him to keep her awake, and to help her remember her past. Through the long night, he tells her stories, inventing and inventing, trying to get closer to what might be true, and hoping she will recognize herself in one of his tales. Offering up moments of pure insight and unexpected, exuberant humor, **The Way Through Doors** demonstrates Jesse Ball's great artistry and gift for and narrative.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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- Sales Rank: #306232 in eBooks
- Published on: 2009-02-06
- Released on: 2009-02-10
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. The search for a stranger's history leads down a narrative cul-de-sac in Plimpton Prize–winner Ball's accomplished and clever second novel (after *Samedi the Deafness*). When pamphleteer Selah Morse witnesses a taxi run down a young woman, he takes her to the hospital and, in telling the staff that he is her boyfriend and that her name is Mora Klein, is given custody of her. She is amnesiac, and his orders are to reconstruct her memories through story. The book then begins anew, and the narrative folds in upon itself again and again, launching in new directions and each time leaving the earlier story incomplete. Throughout, Morse searches out Mora Klein's identity, picking up other travelers along the way, among them a Coney Island mind reader; a doting husband who may or may not have made a deal with the devil; a love interest for Morse fascinated by the pamphleteer's opus; and a fiddle-playing dog. Though literal-minded readers may struggle to follow Morse's arc as the stories converge and he slips deeper into layers of story, Ball's skill with language and delight in comic absurdity make this an immensely enjoyable, brain-busting experience. (Feb.)

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From [The New Yorker](#)

In an inversion of the Scheherazade legend, the hero of this dizzyingly circuitous novel must tell stories all night to a beautiful amnesiac, to keep her awake and alive. He begins by explaining himself: he writes pamphlets (sample title: "An Inquiry into the Ultimate Utility of the Silly, as Prefigured in the Grave and Inhospitable") and works as a municipal inspector, in an office reachable only by ladder. His stories dissolve, unfinished, into other stories; characters—including a "guess artist" who reads minds with a thirty-three-percent accuracy rate, a girl who accepts only written communications (preferably typed), and a spurned Russian empress who forces her former lover to marry "the ugliest of women"—vanish and resurface; and reality is generally given the heave-ho. It's a thrilling ride through an alternative New York (think Steven Millhauser on acid), where the tallest building extends hundreds of feet below ground and cabbies are paid in gold doubloons.

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Critics described *The Way Through Doors* as experimental fiction at its very finest. Loath to pigeonhole the novel, some nonetheless compared aspects of it to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Paul Auster's New York trilogy, and novels by Franz Kafka and Kazuo Ishiguro. Certainly, the work is disorienting as it plays with time, geography, and character -- from a Russian empress to princes to bureaucrats to a "guest artist" who reads minds. At times, the novel is perhaps *too* whimsical for mainstream tastes. But that reviewers were not bothered that they couldn't summarize the plot (and that they did not criticize the author's self-conscious construct) testifies to this novel's power. "Ball is a talented new writer whom we ought to watch," concludes the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "There is no other explanation." Copyright 2009 Bookmarks Publishing LLC

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Steven Holt:

The book *The Way Through Doors* (Vintage Contemporaries) give you a sense of feeling enjoy for your spare time. You may use to make your capable more increase. Book can for being your best friend when you getting anxiety or having big problem together with your subject. If you can make examining a book *The Way Through Doors* (Vintage Contemporaries) to be your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your current capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You could know everything if you like start and read a publication *The Way Through Doors* (Vintage Contemporaries). Kinds of book are several. It means that, science publication or encyclopedia or other people. So , how do you think about this guide?

Janet Roldan:

It is possible to spend your free time to read this book this publication. This *The Way Through Doors* (Vintage Contemporaries) is simple bringing you can read it in the park, in the beach, train and also soon. If you did not have got much space to bring the actual printed book, you can buy typically the e-book. It is make you simpler to read it. You can save the actual book in your smart phone. And so there are a lot of benefits that you will get when one buys this book.

Curtis Monahan:

As a pupil exactly feel bored in order to reading. If their teacher expected them to go to the library or make summary for some reserve, they are complained. Just little students that has reading's heart or real their leisure activity. They just do what the trainer want, like asked to go to the library. They go to presently there but nothing reading significantly. Any students feel that reading is not important, boring in addition to can't see colorful pictures on there. Yeah, it is for being complicated. Book is very important to suit your needs. As we know that on this time, many ways to get whatever we wish. Likewise word says, many ways to reach Chinese's country. So , this *The Way Through Doors* (Vintage Contemporaries) can make you truly feel more interested to read.

Alma Rasmussen:

What is your hobby? Have you heard that question when you got college students? We believe that that concern was given by teacher with their students. Many kinds of hobby, Every individual has different hobby. Therefore you know that little person just like reading or as looking at become their hobby. You need to understand that reading is very important along with book as to be the thing. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your teacher or lecturer. You will find good news or update with regards to something by book. Many kinds of books that can you decide to try be your object. One of them is *The Way Through Doors* (Vintage Contemporaries).

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