

A QUIET PLACE TO READ

For the last week I have been reading a book called 'The Ghoulish Ghost of Houlihan Hamster'. The book is a real page-turner - one of those books that you just keep reading because you can't wait to find out what happens next. I have been staying up late reading the book every night since I started it, but I still haven't reached the end. Firstly, it is a long book. Secondly, I am a working hamster, and I have to get some sleep if I am to successfully keep up with writing my blog.

Yesterday afternoon I thought I might have the chance to finally read the last five chapters of the book. My blog was completely and utterly up to date, so I did not need to write a blog post. My refrigerator was completely and utterly full of delicious food, so I did not need to go shopping. No one had called me and invited me out, so I had no reason not to stay at home. It seemed to me that I might just be able to spend a few hours at home reading the last few chapters of the book without any interruptions. The thought of finding out how the haunting tale of Houlihan Hamster ended was very exciting, so I picked my book up off my nightstand and headed to the living room to choose a quiet place to read.



I plumped up my cushions and settled down on the sofa. No sooner had I opened my book to Chapter 27 than I heard a very loud drilling sound coming from the road outside my home. The sound was so loud that it pounded in my head and seemed to be making my little box shake. I did not want to let a noise (even a really loud noise) stop me from reading the end of Houlihan Hamster's story, so I put my hands over my ears. Well, because I was not holding my book open any more, I lost my page! I was very annoyed, but I did not want to let anything stop me from enjoying the end of my book, so I quickly flipped through the book and found my page again. I tried to hold my book open with one hand and block out the drilling noise in my ears using my other hand and one of my cushions.



It did not work. The noise was so loud that I could still hear it. On top of that, my little box still seemed to be shaking, and I was in a very uncomfortable position. It was just impossible for me to relax and enjoy the story. My home was just not a quiet place to read.

I was about to decide to give up on my reading when the drilling sound suddenly

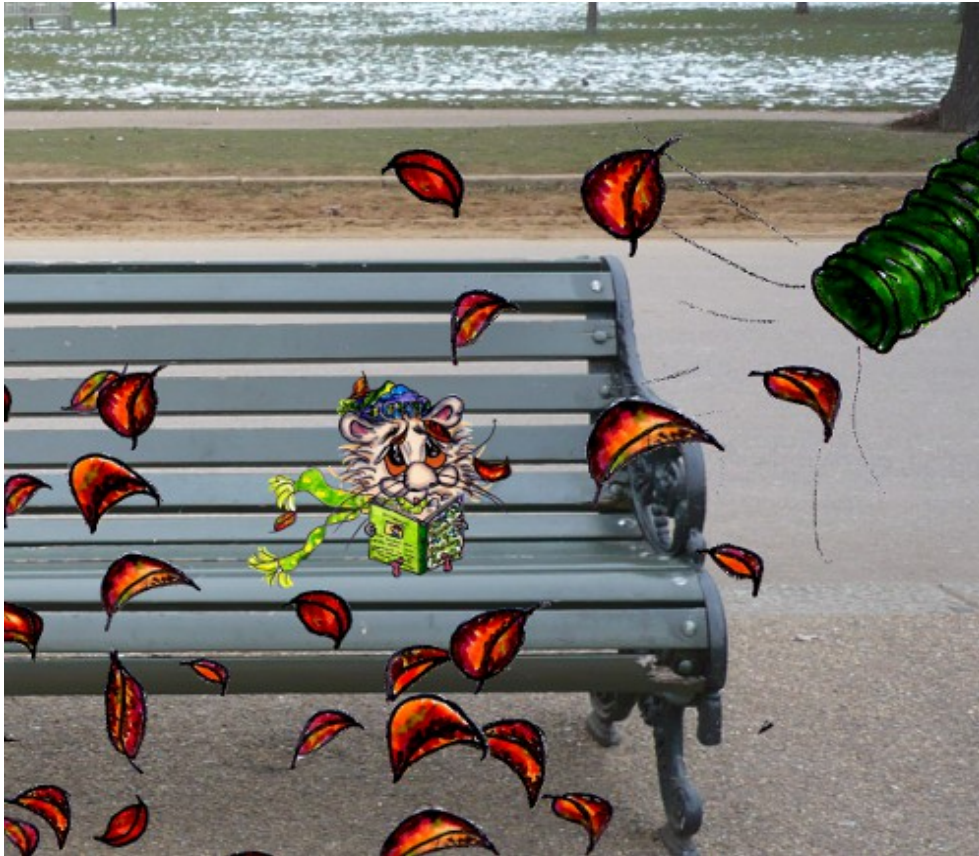


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stopped. I thought that perhaps I had been wrong. Perhaps my home *was* a quiet place to read. I smiled a satisfied smile to myself and curled up on the sofa in a comfortable position, holding my book open with both hands. Just as I was reading about poor Hamish Horrigan hearing a howling coming from the vast moorland outside his castle window, I heard a sound coming from outside my own window. Instead of being transported to the Yorkshire Moors, where poor Hamish was braving the biting wind over the freezing moorland in search of Houlihan's ghoulish ghost, my mind was brought back with a thud (or, to be more accurate, a loud drilling sound) to my little box. My home had turned into the opposite of a quiet place to read. I decided that if Hamish Horrigan, a hamster who sounded quite similar to me, could set off across the Yorkshire Moors to look for Houlihan's ghoulish ghost, I could most definitely go out to look for a quiet place to read.

I put on my hat and scarf and set off with my book. As my loyal readers will know, one of my favourite places in the world is the park, so that was where I decided to go. There are lots of benches in the park, and it is usually lovely and quiet. I thought that in the park I would surely be able to find a quiet place to read.

I settled down on a bench under a tree and opened my book. It was a little cold outside, but I was no more going to let the crisp winter air stop me from enjoying my book than Hamish Horrigan was going to let the biting wind over the Yorkshire Moors stop him from tracking down that ghoulish ghost. I started to get absorbed in the story. I was so absorbed that I thought I could actually hear the howling of the biting wind across the Yorkshire Moors. In fact, the whooshing noise seemed to get louder and louder. It got so loud that it began to annoy me. I realised that the noise was not coming from my imagination at all. It was coming from right next to me. I turned my head, and there was a gardener gathering all the fallen leaves into one big pile using a leaf blower.



It was a very loud leaf blower. It was so loud that it was simply impossible for me to concentrate on my book and pretend that the noise from the leaf blower was the howling wind being braved by Hamish Horrigan. The park was just not a quiet place to read.

Just like Hamish Horrigan, I am not the sort of hamster who gives up easily, so I decided that I would not give up on finding a quiet place to read. I knew that there was a very luxurious hotel just next door to the park. I thought that perhaps the hotel lounge would be a quiet place to read. When I stepped into the hotel lounge, I was pleased to see a lovely sofa, upholstered in a soft velvety fabric. Soft music played in the background. I thought that I had found my quiet place to read. I sat down comfortably on the sofa and opened my book. Hamish Horrigan shrieked as a dark shadow was cast over the Yorkshire Moors. Could it be the ghoulish ghost of

Houlihan Hamster? I thought I could actually hear his shrieks. In fact, the shrieks seemed to be getting louder and louder. They got so loud that they began to annoy me. I realised that the shrieks were not coming from my imagination at all. They were coming from right behind me. I turned my head, and there were two children shrieking with delight as they rollerbladed through the hotel lobby. I could not pretend that those shrieks were the shrieks of the terrified but brave Hamish Horrigan now. The hotel lobby was just not a quiet place to read.

I stepped out of the hotel. I had spent the whole afternoon looking for a quiet place to read but not finding one. I thought that I had been rather stupid. Why hadn't I just gone to the library? Well, it was too late now. The library would be closed. With my shoulders slumped and my face downcast, I set off home, hoping to get there before it fell dark.

When I arrived home, I noticed that it was lovely and quiet. There was no loud drilling sound coming from the road outside my box. It seemed like my home might be a quiet place to read after all. I was still a bit cold from sitting out in the park, so I decided to snuggle in my sock. I opened my book and started to read.





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When I woke up this morning, I found my book face down on my chest. No sooner had I started reading yesterday evening than I must have fallen asleep. All that looking for a quiet place to read must have made me so tired that not even Houlihan's ghost could scare me awake.

The moral of this blog post is that if you want to get to the end of a book, you should not spend a long time looking for a quiet place to read. The search might make you so tired that you won't be able to stay awake to read even the most exciting book. If you must search for a quiet place to read, I suggest you start your search at the library. You might just find exactly what you are looking for on your first try.

Now, if you will excuse me, dear readers, I have a book to finish.

Bye for now!

Harrison Hamster I
13th February 2012