

of Ricardo Montalban's Khan. For the most part the film looks great. There only really notable exception is the Klingon blood in zero-gravity — an early CGI effect, it now looks odd and dated. But overall this film is really a joy. We actually watched it twice. It opens with a bang, literally ends with the cast "signing off," and in between it's a fast-paced and exciting adventure movie stuffed with your favorite Star Trek characters, a few new ones, and a psychopathic villain who quotes Shakespeare. What more could a *Star Trek* fan ask for?

The Magicians, the Syfy TV Series, Continued

Let's see... what's next? After the somewhat weak episode of *The Magicians* entitled "The Mayakovsky Circumstance," the next few episodes have been better. In particular, *The Writing Room* is very creepy, re-imagining the character Christopher Plover and putting us into the events in the Plover household as he wrote the famed Fillory books. It was very well-done, and creepy as hell, while remaining true to the textual cues in the book. The next episode, "Homecoming," has Penny trapped in the Neitherlands. This place was portrayed quite nicely on screen with a modest budget, and it is a good example of how such a budget can force the producers to be creative with practical sets and props. So, I am encouraged. There are three more episodes in season one, at least according to Wikipedia, and I am eager to see how they wind up the season.

***My Struggle: Book 2* by Karl Ove Knausgaard**

I've been reading Karl Ove Knausgaard's *My Struggle: Book 2*. In this book Knausgaard writes extensively about the birth of his daughter and the struggles of domesticity. These are strange books. On the one hand, they are about the commonplace and everyday, rendered only marginally more exotic by their location and culture. But the text is like a river — there are shallow spots, and rapids. At just about any point I can start reading, and while I might be hung up a bit in a shallow spot, the story will go around a bend and I will find myself fully engaged, living Knausgaard's life, vicariously, until I look up and realize I've read fifty, or seventy, pages. I can't convince my wife Grace to read fiction — she generally just doesn't enjoy it like I do — but I did read her a section of the book, about the birth of his daughter Vanja. It's a great birth story, both like and unlike our own experiences.

One thing that makes Knausgaard a bit distant from my experience, and seems conspicuous by its absence, is this: he and his wife never seem to be desperate to know where their next meal is coming from. They worry about finding and keeping a great place to live, but they never seem to worry about becoming homeless. For a text that is so detailed and direct about every detail of life, it seems that talking about money: how much the family has, how much they earn, how much they spend, etc., is taboo. He does mention spending too much on books and too much on gourmet food. I often look at the lives of musicians and writers and wonder "how are they earning a living?" Is the family living

on government assistance while he works to develop his writing career? Is there other income? Is he living on inherited money, or savings? We aren't told, and I remain curious, and as an American who has repeatedly wiped out my savings and risked losing my home during periods of unwanted unemployment, perhaps more than a little jealous.

Anyway, I will soon finish *My Struggle: Book 2*, and *The Magicians* will be done for the year. There will be no new *Doctor Who* until the end of 2016. And my work project edges closer to release. So I expect to get some more reading done in April. Onward!

Saginaw and/or Ann Arbor, Michigan
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