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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Ron Koertge: "The Streetsweeper" & "Grand Avenue"

Ron Koertge · Thursday, February 16th, 2012

*Ron Koertge has received many honors, including a fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts and a California Arts council grant.*

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### The Streetsweeper

goes by at 1:00 a.m. two nights of the week. I can hear the feather whoosh of his machine and see one red light.

I believe that the streetsweeper lives alone, sleeping through the cold days, waking clear-eyed and deft as the sun goes down.

I believe that he works steadily without a portable radio or a reading light or a nap. When he pauses it is to stare placidly into the potent night.

For reasons too numerous to mention, I think about the streetsweeper often and about the singular, provident cadence of his life.

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### Grand Avenue

When the Lexus hit that pigeon, he lay there beating his one good wing against the curb like he was trying to put out a fire.

My wife asked me to do something, so I turned his head clockwise until I heard a click. Then darkness poured out of the small safe of his body.

That is when I realized I used to merely love my wife.

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Now I would kill for her.

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