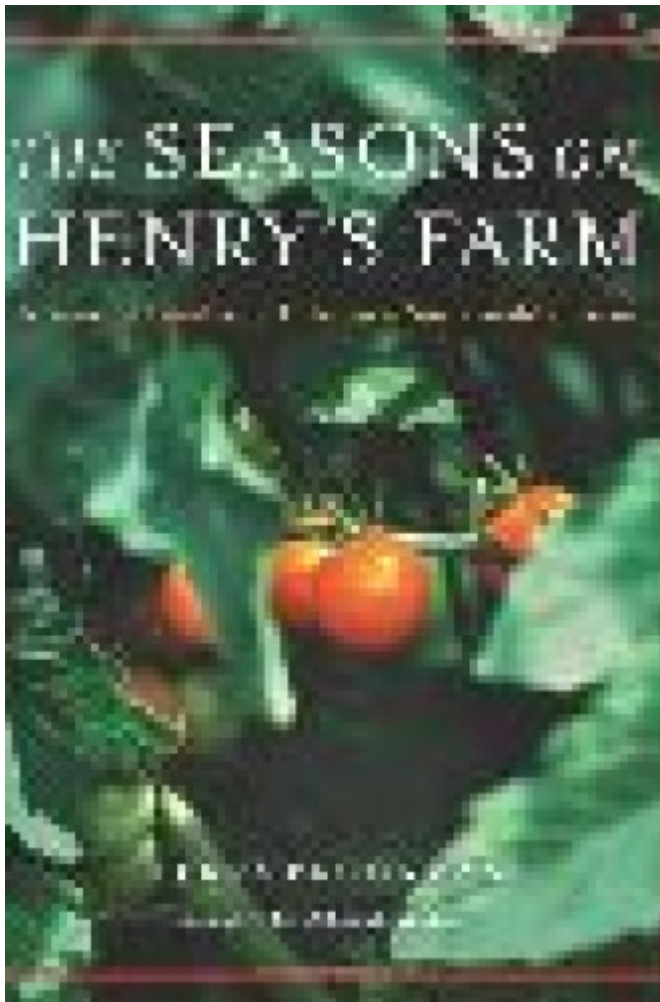


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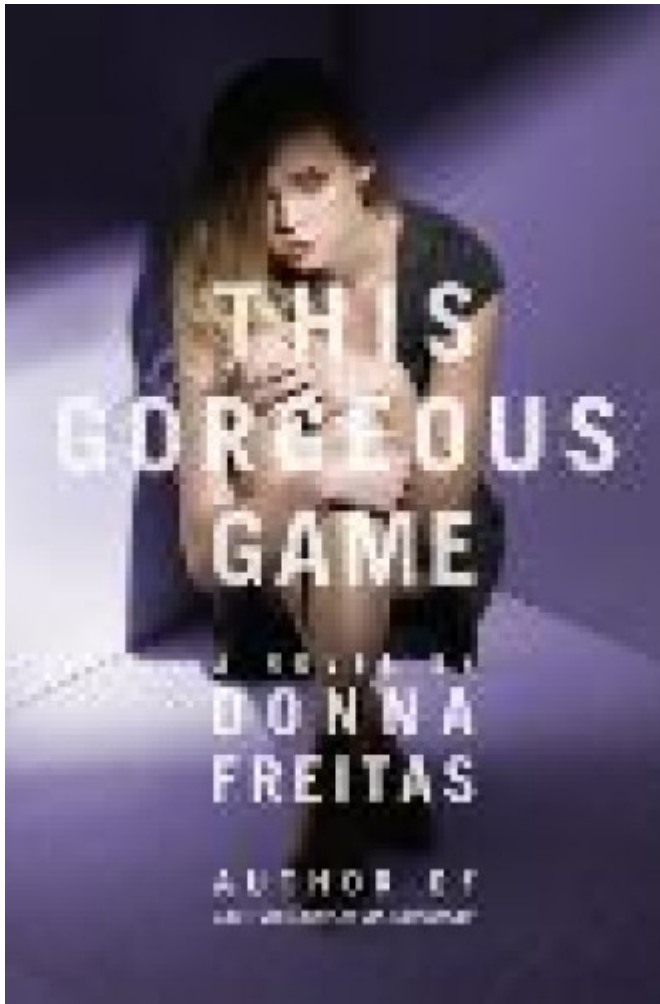
Books in the [July 13, 2010](#) issue

In Review



The Seasons on Henry's Farm: A Year of Food and Life on a Sustainable Farm

Terra Brockman
Agate Surrey



This Gorgeous Game: A Novel

Donna Freitas

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Located in central Illinois, the Brockman farm is a CSA (community-supported agriculture): 186 people in the area pay for and receive a regular delivery of produce. The book's main character is the author's brother Henry, who works endlessly. The author includes many scenes of three generations enjoying work, play and feasting together. Brockman provides information in a lyrical, compelling narrative. A reader comes as close as one can to living on a farm for a year without actually getting dirt under one's fingernails. The organic family vegetable farm remains a rare and fragile thing; few people have the strength or tenacity to risk depending this much on the land for annual income, or to put in day after day of hands-in-earth work. The Brockmans have made the commitment.

This Gorgeous Game, a novel for young adults, is the story of a young woman who is being stalked by a Catholic priest, a fictionalized version of an experience that Freitas herself had as a young woman. Seventeen-year-old Olivia is finishing her junior year of high school and wins a prestigious writing award offered by a local Catholic university. When she meets the judge of the prize, a famous Catholic priest and writer (modeled after Thomas Merton), he takes an unusual and eventually frightening interest in her. What makes this novel remarkable is the way that Freitas stays in Olivia's head, allowing us to experience the overtures of Father Mark as a young girl does, one who lives in a context in which priests are revered. At the same time, the reader knows and sees more than Olivia can. The tension between these two perspectives propels the book forward.