



AI BOOK MAKER

Summer of the Broken Compass

Find the Town Before It Finds You

by

Nathan Pierce

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Summer of the Broken Compass: Find the Town Before It Finds You

Written by Nathan Pierce

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CHAPTER ONE

The Thing Left Unsaid



Jules Park arrived in Cedar Hollow just before dawn, carrying less luggage than a person should carry when they intend to stay. The air had the particular smell of a place that remembers you even when you have practiced forgetting it. Nathan Pierce would later write that the story began not with a crime or a confession, but with a small wrongness: a compass that points to people, not north waiting where it had no honest reason to wait.

the abandoned observatory held the kind of quiet that is not peace. A kettle clicked. A floorboard answered a footstep one second too late. Jules Park set a compass that points to people, not north on the table and refused to look away from it, as if attention itself could keep the truth from slipping. Samira Ali spoke first, voice low, the way people speak when they have decided not to be overheard.

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Outside, Cedar Hollow performed its daily competence: buses, shutters, the ordinary bravery of people going to work. Inside the story, a different economy was running. Coach Rylan had already begun to apply pressure in polite forms: a delayed permit, a missing file, a warning dressed as concern. Jules Park recognized the technique. Power rarely shouts at the beginning. It rearranges the furniture until you trip.

They walked the long way to the abandoned observatory, not because it was safer, but because the direct route felt observed. Jules Park catalogued details the way a careful person does when memory may later be disputed: the stain on the brick, the clock that was three minutes fast, the woman who looked at a compass that points to people, not north and then looked through it. The city was full of people practicing not-seeing. That, too, was a kind of skill.

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At the abandoned observatory, the confrontation did not arrive as a speech. It arrived as a choice. A drawer that should have been locked was open. A name had been written, then written over. Jules Park understood, with a clarity that hurt, that the town hides a scholarship scam behind a summer contest. Knowing it did not make

the next action simple. Knowing it only removed the comfort of ignorance.

Samira Ali waited by the window. "We can still leave it," Samira Ali said. "Plenty of people do."

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There was a moment, almost comic, when a compass that points to people, not north looked ordinary. That is how dangerous things survive. They borrow the appearance of paperwork, of family, of routine. Jules Park had to keep looking until the ordinary surface thinned.

Coach Rylan entered the scene without needing to hurry. That was the tell. People who are innocent of a system still show surprise. Coach Rylan showed management. "You are making this larger than it is," Coach Rylan said, as if scale could be negotiated. "There is a responsible way to handle delicate matters."

"There is a responsible way to hide them," Jules Park answered. "I have seen both. They use the same vocabulary."

The writing stays close to the body: the heat in the palms, the taste of metal in the mouth, the way a room changes temperature when a secret is spoken. Dialogue is allowed to be incomplete. People in Cedar Hollow rarely finish the dangerous sentence. They let the listener assemble it, which is how a community shares guilt without ever signing it.

Rain found the streets and made them honest. Reflections doubled every light. Jules Park walked through Cedar Hollow as if the city were an argument that could still be won by paying attention. the abandoned observatory waited at the end of that argument, neither sanctuary nor trap until someone chose. The chapter uses this pause the way a good novel does: not as filler, but as the place where Jules Park decides what kind of person to be when the next door opens. There are 8 movements in this book, and this is the one that cannot be skipped.

The chapter closed on motion, not arrival. Jules Park left the abandoned observatory with a compass that points to people, not north and a clearer map of the danger. Coach Rylan would not forget this hour. Neither would Cedar Hollow. Tomorrow would ask for a more expensive kind of courage, and Summer of the Broken Compass would have to earn its next page the hard way: one decision that could not be taken back.

By the end of "The Thing Left Unsaid", the plot has moved. arrival and the first wrong detail is no longer a rumor. It is a fact with consequences. Jules Park understands more than at the start of the chapter and is therefore less safe. That is the contract of this book: every gain in knowledge extracts a price, and the reader is asked to stay with Jules Park while the bill comes due.

CHAPTER TWO

A Door That Should Stay Closed



By chapter 2 of *Summer of the Broken Compass*, Cedar Hollow had stopped pretending to be ordinary. Jules Park woke late morning with the beat of the day already in motion: the object reveals a second meaning. The previous hours had left a residue. a compass that points to people, not north was no longer a curiosity. It was evidence that the official version of events had been edited.

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People Who Remember Differently



By chapter 3 of *Summer of the Broken Compass*, Cedar Hollow had stopped pretending to be ordinary. Jules Park woke a rain-heavy afternoon with the beat of the day already in motion: an ally confirms the crack in the official story. The previous hours had left a residue, a compass that points to people, not north was no longer a curiosity. It was evidence that the official version of events had been edited.

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By the end of "People Who Remember Differently", the plot has moved. an ally confirms the crack in the official story is no longer a rumor. It is a fact with consequences. Jules Park understands more than at the start of the chapter and is therefore less safe. That is the contract of this book: every gain in knowledge extracts a price, and the reader is asked to stay with Jules Park while the bill comes due.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Price of Looking Closer



By chapter 4 of *Summer of the Broken Compass*, Cedar Hollow had stopped pretending to be ordinary. Jules Park woke the blue hour after sunset with the beat of the day already in motion: the antagonist notices the investigation. The previous hours had left a residue. a compass that points to people, not north was no longer a curiosity. It was evidence that the official version of events had been edited.

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Coach Rylan entered the scene without needing to hurry. That was the tell. People who are innocent of a system still show surprise. Coach Rylan showed management. "You are making this larger than it is," Coach Rylan said, as if scale could be negotiated. "There is a responsible way to handle delicate matters."

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By the end of "The Price of Looking Closer", the plot has moved. the antagonist notices the investigation is no longer a rumor. It is a fact with consequences. Jules Park understands more than at the start of the chapter and is therefore less safe. That is the contract of this book: every gain in knowledge extracts a price, and the reader is asked to stay with Jules Park while the bill comes due.

A Map With One False Line



By chapter 5 of *Summer of the Broken Compass*, Cedar Hollow had stopped pretending to be ordinary. Jules Park woke well after midnight with the beat of the day already in motion: the lead chooses a risk that cannot be undone. The previous hours had left a residue, a compass that points to people, not north was no longer a curiosity. It was evidence that the official version of events had been edited.

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A stranger in a doorway asked for the time, and Jules Park almost answered with the whole story. That is the temptation of isolation: to dump the truth on the first unguarded face. Instead Jules Park said the hour and kept walking, protecting the investigation and the stranger both.

At the abandoned observatory, the confrontation did not arrive as a speech. It arrived as a choice. A drawer that should have been locked was open. A name had been written, then written over. Jules Park understood, with a clarity that hurt, that the town hides a scholarship scam behind a summer contest. Knowing it did not make the next action simple. Knowing it only removed the comfort of ignorance.

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By the end of "A Map With One False Line", the plot has moved. the lead chooses a risk that cannot be undone is no longer a rumor. It is a fact with consequences. Jules Park understands more than at the start of the chapter and is therefore less safe. That is the contract of this book: every gain in knowledge extracts a price, and the reader is asked to stay with Jules Park while the bill comes due.

What the Records Will Not Hold



By chapter 6 of *Summer of the Broken Compass*, Cedar Hollow had stopped pretending to be ordinary. Jules Park woke just before dawn with the beat of the day already in motion: evidence is altered or stolen. The previous hours had left a residue. a compass that points to people, not north was no longer a curiosity. It was evidence that the official version of events had been edited.

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The Hour Nobody Claims



By chapter 7 of *Summer of the Broken Compass*, Cedar Hollow had stopped pretending to be ordinary. Jules Park woke late morning with the beat of the day already in motion: a confrontation in the abandoned observatory. The previous hours had left a residue. a compass that points to people, not north was no longer a curiosity. It was evidence that the official version of events had been edited.

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The chapter closed on motion, not arrival. Jules Park left the abandoned observatory with a compass that points to people, not north and a clearer map of the danger. Coach Rylan would not forget this hour. Neither would Cedar Hollow. Tomorrow would ask for a more expensive kind of courage, and Summer of the Broken Compass would have to earn its next page the hard way: one decision that could not be taken back.

By the end of "The Hour Nobody Claims", the plot has moved. a confrontation in the abandoned observatory is no longer a rumor. It is a fact with consequences. Jules Park understands more than at the start of the chapter and is therefore less safe. That is the contract of this book: every gain in knowledge extracts a price, and the reader is asked to stay with Jules Park while the bill comes due.

Names That Do Not Stay Buried



By chapter 8 of *Summer of the Broken Compass*, Cedar Hollow had stopped pretending to be ordinary. Jules Park woke a rain-heavy afternoon with the beat of the day already in motion: the secret is spoken out loud. The previous hours had left a residue. a compass that points to people, not north was no longer a curiosity. It was evidence that the official version of events had been edited.

the abandoned observatory held the kind of quiet that is not peace. A kettle clicked. A floorboard answered a footstep one second too late. Jules Park set a compass that points to people, not north on the table and refused to look away from it, as if attention itself could keep the truth from slipping. Samira Ali spoke first, voice low, the way people speak when they have decided not to be overheard.

"If you keep asking," Samira Ali said, "someone will answer. They will not answer kindly."

"I am not asking for kindness," Jules Park said. "I am asking for the version that does not require me to lie to myself."

Outside, Cedar Hollow performed its daily competence: buses, shutters, the ordinary bravery of people going to work. Inside the story, a different economy was running. Coach Rylan had

already begun to apply pressure in polite forms: a delayed permit, a missing file, a warning dressed as concern. Jules Park recognized the technique. Power rarely shouts at the beginning. It rearranges the furniture until you trip.

They walked the long way to the abandoned observatory, not because it was safer, but because the direct route felt observed. Jules Park catalogued details the way a careful person does when memory may later be disputed: the stain on the brick, the clock that was three minutes fast, the woman who looked at a compass that points to people, not north and then looked through it. The city was full of people practicing not-seeing. That, too, was a kind of skill.

Rain found the streets and made them honest. Reflections doubled every light. Jules Park walked through Cedar Hollow as if the city were an argument that could still be won by paying attention. the abandoned observatory waited at the end of that argument, neither sanctuary nor trap until someone chose.

At the abandoned observatory, the confrontation did not arrive as a speech. It arrived as a choice. A drawer that should have been locked was open. A name had been written, then written over. Jules Park understood, with a clarity that hurt, that the town hides a scholarship scam behind a summer contest. Knowing it did not make the next action simple. Knowing it only removed the comfort of ignorance.

Samira Ali waited by the window. "We can still leave it," Samira Ali said. "Plenty of people do."

"And then what?" Jules Park asked. "We become one more quiet room in Cedar Hollow?"

Sleep, when it came, did not repair anything. It only paused the inventory. Jules Park dreamed of names written in water and woke with the conviction that forgetting is never neutral. Someone always benefits from the blank space.

Coach Rylan entered the scene without needing to hurry. That was the tell. People who are innocent of a system still show surprise. Coach Rylan showed management. "You are making this larger than it is," Coach Rylan said, as if scale could be negotiated. "There is a responsible way to handle delicate matters."

"There is a responsible way to hide them," Jules Park answered. "I have seen both. They use the same vocabulary."

The writing stays close to the body: the heat in the palms, the taste of metal in the mouth, the way a room changes temperature when a secret is spoken. Dialogue is allowed to be incomplete. People in Cedar Hollow rarely finish the dangerous sentence. They let the listener assemble it, which is how a community shares guilt without ever signing it.

A stranger in a doorway asked for the time, and Jules Park almost answered with the whole story. That is the temptation of isolation: to dump the truth on the first unguarded face. Instead Jules

Park said the hour and kept walking, protecting the investigation and the stranger both. The chapter uses this pause the way a good novel does: not as filler, but as the place where Jules Park decides what kind of person to be when the next door opens. There are 8 movements in this book, and this is the one that cannot be skipped.

The last movement of the chapter did not erase the cost. Jules Park kept the truth and lost the easier life that had depended on not naming it. Cedar Hollow did not become gentle. the abandoned observatory did not become holy. What changed was narrower and more durable: Jules Park would no longer help the lie travel. Samira Ali stayed. That, in this book, counts as a kind of ending that can be lived in.

By the end of "Names That Do Not Stay Buried", the plot has moved. the secret is spoken out loud is no longer a rumor. It is a fact with consequences. Jules Park understands more than at the start of the chapter and is therefore less safe. That is the contract of this book: every gain in knowledge extracts a price, and the reader is asked to stay with Jules Park while the bill comes due.

FINISH

The End



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Nathan Pierce

Nathan Pierce builds YA adventures where contests, scholarships, and small-town power games hide sharper truths. His work centers teens who outthink systems designed to shrink them.

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