# 'The Fall of Lisa Bellow' has new take on teen trauma

Abduction tale is more of a character study

Steph Cha

Special for USA TODAY

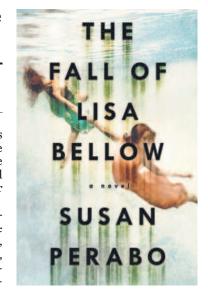
There are countless stories about tragic missing girls, the sweet high school beauties whose disappearances haunt fictional communities all over

the world.

BOOK REVIEW But The Fall of Lisa Bellow (Simon & Schuster, 352 pp.,  $\star\star\star$  out of four),

the new novel by Susan Perabo, is not about the abducted Lisa Bellow.

It's about Meredith Oliver, her less popular eighth-grade classmate, who is traumatized when a masked gunman holds the two girls hostage at a sandwich shop



and then kidnaps Lisa.

Like many 13-year-olds, Meredith is constantly riddled with social anxiety: "Often after school she felt as if she'd just spent seven



SHA'AN CHILSON

**Author Susan Perabo.** 

hours and fifteen minutes on stage, with two brief intermissions during which she sat on a stone-cold toilet in a tiny stall cursing herself for all the missed cues and blown lines."

She resents Lisa and her clique - she's sharply aware that she and Lisa haven't exchanged a word all year despite having adjacent lockers.

Her fortunes change after

Lisa's kidnapping. As the last person to see Lisa alive, Meredith gains a certain level of social cachet.

She starts ditching her best friends to hang out with Lisa's friends; she buys golden gladiator sandals, the trendy shoes she mocked as "stupid and phony" when she didn't dare to wear

But while her star rises, her inner life goes to pieces. She spends more and more time in an alternate reality in which she and Lisa are both abducted, locked in a dingy apartment, sitting with their legs intertwined in a cramped bathtub.

Her trauma divides her from her family, which already was struggling for equilibrium after her brother Logan, a promising baseball player, was half-blinded by a foul ball six months earlier. "How were you supposed to help the girl not taken? There was no

group for this. No best practices."

While their father, Mark, is a force of optimistic will, their mother, Claire, finds herself unanchored, unable to reach her children and unable to relate to her husband.

Half of the novel is told from Claire's point of view, and she's really the main attraction - a flawed but loving woman, not above using her position as a dentist to punish the occasional schoolyard bully.

Despite the central crime element, Lisa Bellow is more character study than suspense novel. Unfortunately, the prose isn't quite strong enough to make up for a languid plot.

Nonetheless, Perabo makes some interesting observations about character and family life, and her book should have some emotional resonance with anyone who's felt out of place or left behind.

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14 Broken mirror, to

- 16 Like Super Bowl numerals
- Not fooled by Suffix for the well-to-do
- 19 Make jubilant 20 Gridiron Hail Mary,
- 23 Like veggies served with dip
- Seemingly unemotional sorts
- Started a hand
- Can't do without **30** Mouse actions
- 33 Flow back 36 Many a newspaper
- 38 Alternative to a text 39 Like the Clampetts,
- at first Batch of Brownies?
- Folksy Guthrie 44 Twiddled one's
- thumbs 46 "Animal House"
- getups **48** Web address
- component 49 Sources of
- aromatic wood Repair-shop stock **53** Flannel pattern,
- often Don't set lofty goals
- Part of HRH, at times 61 Five on the
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- **26** Succotash bean
- 70 City near Lake

- 71 The planets, since
- Pluto's downgrade 72 Places to build **73** "As \_\_\_ on TV"
- **DOWN**
- 1 Places for urban gardens
- 2 Response to "Are too!"
- 3 D.C. rails 4 Strand, as a winter
- storm 5 What no
- production Corvette has
- Like diehard fans Cop's collar
- "Slammin' Sammy' of the links
- 9 Event for select customers
- "You've got mail" ISP 11 Many an ATM insert
- "Toodle-oo!" From the top
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- Gas in a layer Victors' shout
- Subway fare? **60** Biz bigwig 62 Jazz jam highlight

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\_, mon" (Šcoťs words) 65 Red, Yellow or

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- Wednesday's Answer
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 $By\,David\,L.\,Hoyt\,and\,Jeff\,Knurek$ 

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Two sports ending with Y Two U.S. coins What bees make Wednesday's answer: NEPTUNE SATURN VENUS MARS /

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DON'T QUOTE ME® Journalist Mianon McLaughlin talks about married life.

© WIGGLES 3D GAMES Rearrange the words to complete the quote ALWAYS FALLING LOVE MANY PERSON SAME SUCCESSFUL REQUIRES \_ TIMES, \_ WITH THE

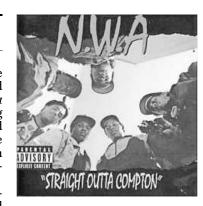
# Library of Congress to preserve works by N.W.A, Bowie, Streisand

The Associated Press

**WASHINGTON** First it became the basis for an Oscar-nominated movie. Now, Straight Outta *Compton* — the groundbreaking album from rap group N.W.A and a one-time flashpoint in the nation's culture wars — has been selected for the prestigious National Recording Registry.

The album was one of 25 additions to the registry announced Wednesday by the Library of Congress, and it wasn't the only one with a Los Angeles connec-

Baseball play-by-play from Vin Scully, who retired last year after calling Dodgers games for 67 years, also will join the national library's trove of recordings, which are selected for their historical, artistic or cultural significance.



N.W.A's Straight Outta Compton was released in 1988.

The library chose Scully's call of the final meeting between the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants at Manhattan's Polo Grounds in 1957. Both teams would depart for California after that season.

"It's a rather imposing call to realize that something that you have done would technically live forever in the Library of Congress," Scully, 89, told the Associated Press from his home in Hidden Hills, Calif. "It was a particularly meaningful game for me anyway, so to have it picked up and put for posterity is rather humbling and, at the same time, overwhelming."

Plenty of standards are joining the registry, too, including Judy Garland's version of Over the Rainbow, the Eagles' 1976 greatest-hits collection and Don Mac-Lean's elliptical 1971 folk song American Pie.

Released in 1988, Straight Outta Compton influenced a generation of rappers with its raw lyrics about gang violence and the drug trade in south central Los Angeles. It achieved platinum sales without radio airplay and captured the attention of white America. The incendiary track *F--- tha Police* was denounced

by right-wing politicians and prompted a warning letter from the FBI to the group's record label.

The album also was one of the first to receive a parental advisory label for explicit content. But the controversy has long since faded and critics consistently rank it as one of the best hip-hop albums ever made.

While N.W.A brought the L.A. sound to the world of rap, Scully is an L.A. transplant who moved west with the Dodgers. He was 29 years old when he called his last game at the Polo Grounds, which was about 20 blocks from his grammar school, and he captured the melancholy of the moment.

"I wanted that game to take forever, which is a little different. Today, everyone talks about, and maybe not the fans, but certainly those of us broadcasting and writing, we're always talking about how long the game is. Baseball is now trying to see if they can't speed things up," Scully said. "But as a kid way back, and even as a broadcaster, I remember saying, 'Take it easy fellas, be slow, let's squeeze all of the juice out of this game before we finally close the curtain on it.'

Recordings picked for the registry are preserved at the library's vast audio-visual vault in Culpeper, Va. If they already have been preserved elsewhere, the library collaborates with those studios or archives to ensure they will be available to future generations.

Other additions to the registry include Barbra Streisand's 1964 recording of the song People, from the musical Funny Girl; the late David Bowie's 1972 concept album The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars; the original-cast recording of the musical The Wiz (1975); and Sister Sledge's inclusive anthem We Are Family (1979).

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ACROSS

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- Rancher's leggings 10 Fellers' tools
- animals Norse god with
- One end of a bed
- "Fortune Hunting,"
- Without a
- 20 Determined bug in
- 'High Hopes"
- Many a campaian
- Night on the town,
- say 29 BYOB part
- peel
- Deserving an R rating, perhaps **36** Word that can precede the first
- and 32-Down Wild guess Craft said to be
- made of gopher wood
- 40 Comes up short
- 42 Sport involving drivina
- 43 Peace treaty, e.g.
- manners 52 Prefix with classical
- or natal
- Transports by semi
- 56 It's under the cornea
- **55** Half a fortnight

- 57 Fort Knox bar **58** Zoning area
- Evidence of hail damage
- **60** Social equals **61** "The\_ the limit!"

### **DOWN** 1 Achieve greatness

- In perfect 43-Across Timer at a
- basketball game Reassuring touch
- 5 Stampede participants
- List in a will Sparkling wine,
- familiarly President between
- Tyler and Taylor With haste
- "Catch you later!"
- 11 Deck out
- 12 React to an injection, maybe Villainous expression
- 21 Entree accompaniment 44 Slopping the

- **24** Like soft mud Stands toe-to-toe
- **28** Teen's interjection
- **29** Maidenform offering
- 30 Sculler's blade 31 Scrap heap stuff 32 Consequence of an awkward sleep
- position 33 One to hang with
- 34 They're below the pecs 36 Term of respect E in the U.K.
- Red tag event **39** Housing near a quad **40** Alternative to
- saran wrap Smokey's habitat
- 42 Visitors to Scrooge 43 Pungent-

hogs, e.g.

- 45 Cruise ship quarters46 1951 introduction to
- TV programming Having one's
- doubts **48** Harnesses for plow teams
- 50 Chaplin prop **51** Of major proportions "Fuzzy Wuzzy
- Wednesday's Answer

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- fundraiser Prospector's find
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- parts of 21- and 49-Across and 3-
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2 could be A, B or C., and 5678 could Yesterday's solution Find and Circle: Five months LUVESSUYUDC Five parts of the eye Four words rhyming with "cost" Four-letter stringed instrument Wednesday's answer: APEX FLAX FLEX COAX JINX LYNX / DIAMONDS HEARTS SPADES CLUBS / CENTRAL NORTH SOUTH / QUICKCROSS By John Wilmes Public garden Europe's neighbor \_ of football Fix, in a way

**Animal feet PDQ** Singer Ora  $A \|O\|N\|E$ PRIX Singer Perry BANA QUICKCROSS SLAM

PUFTOSSEDVLB <sup>4</sup> A L E N S K B D I R I S **UP & DOWN WORDS** By David L. Hoyt and Russell L. Hoyt 1. LOOK SALMON Clues: Wednesday's Answer 1. Glance toward NAME NAME 2. To any degree; in any way COFFEE 3. Clumsy OF COFFEE TABLE 5. Iceland, to Bermuda **TABLE TENNIS** ELBOW 6. Ireland's locale **TENNIS** 7. Popular food fish **ELBOW ROOM** PLAY ONLINE ON YOUR PHONE PUZZLES.USATODAY.COM © Andrews McMeel mobilegames.usgtoday.com

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1 4

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5 1 5 3 1 5 4 1 3 6 4 DIFFICULTY RATING 食食食食公

Wednesday's Answers 2 5 1 4 6 3 3 6 4 1 5 2 6 1 2 5 3 4 4 3 5 6 2 1

5 4 3 2 1 6

1 2 6 3 4 5

© WIGGLES 3D GAMES DON'T QUOTE ME® **Actress Mindy** Rearrange the words to complete the quote ANYONE CARE DESIRES MARRIAGE MYSELF NEED NOW independence. I DON'T NEED \_. I DON'T TO TAKE CARE OF ALL MY NEEDS AND \_\_\_ OF THEM \_\_ Wednesday's Answer: "The net is a waste of time, and that's exactly what's right about it." - William Gibson

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