



Das Leben ist ein listiger Kater

Marie-Sabine Roger, Claudia Kalscheuer (Translator)

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Zum Leben ist es nie zu spät Jean-Pierre wacht auf und kann sich an nichts erinnern. Er ist in die Seine gefallen, ein junger Mann hat ihm das Leben gerettet. Jetzt liegt er im Krankenhaus, ein Alptraum für den menschenscheuen Einzelgänger. Über zu viel Besuch kann sich der verwitwete Rentner "ohne Kinder oder Hund" eigentlich nicht beklagen. Aber alleine ist er trotzdem nie, ständig fällt ihm jemand auf die Nerven: Die vierzehnjährige Maëva hat es auf seinen Laptop abgesehen, um "schnell mal Facebook zu checken". Maxime, ein junger Polizist, versucht herauszufinden, wie Jean-Pierre in der Seine gelandet ist - und schon bald entdecken die beiden ihre gemeinsame Leidenschaft für Schwarzweißfilme. Der gutherzigen Krankenschwester Myriam wächst der alte Griesgram mit Galgenhumor so ans Herz, dass sie ihn zu ihrem Lieblingspatienten ernennt. Und dann ist da noch Camille, der Student, der Jean-Pierre aus der Seine gefischt hat. Allen zusammen gelingt es nach und nach, Jean-Pierre zurück ins Leben zu holen - und für einen Neuanfang ist es bekanntlich nie zu spät.

Das Leben ist ein listiger Kater Details

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From Reader Review Das Leben ist ein listiger Kater for online ebook

Lori says

I loved this book. My only complaint is that I wish the book was longer. The characters are great; I always like reading about curmudgeons and the other characters are quirky. I think the author did a great job portraying the atmosphere of a hospital and how patients feel about their treatment by the staff. It was interesting to see how a near-death experience and long hospitalization forced Jean-Pierre to evaluate his life and relationships. I highly recommend this book.

Evelina | AvalinahsBooks says

This was my introduction to Edelweiss as a platform - the only Read-Now book which you don't have to request. Needless to say, I got it in exchange for a review. And although I don't like labeling free books as worth less than ones you have to pay or ask for - alas, this one was but 2.5 stars.

Get Well Soon has been compared to A Man Called Ove or even The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared. And although I haven't actually read these two, I'm inclined to believe that *something happens in them* and *perhaps there's less cynicism and “French”* (*badum tss* French? Get it? Book was translated from French? No...?)

All I can say is that this book read fast and quite easily. But essentially, it's a book *about nothing*. Some endearing-seeming connections were attempted to be portrayed. Some conclusions drawn. The ending is okay, I guess. But I know that if I try to remember what it was about in about a half a year, I will not come up with anything. It's hard enough to write this review three days after finishing it. So thanks, publisher, for making it accessible, but... no.

Fran says

Childless widower Jean-Pierre Fabre, 67 years old, just awoke from a coma. He was informed that he had been fished out of the Seine by a young hustler named Camille. He was confused and agitated. How did he end up in the Seine at 5 AM? Did he attempt suicide? Was he drunk and fell in? Inspector Maxime conducts the investigation visiting Jean-Pierre in the hospital, and also the site of the incident. Jean-Pierre, in room #28, is swaddled in plaster and bandages.

Jean-Pierre is impatient and agitated during his lengthy hospital stay. His surgeon has the warmth of an iceberg. The surgeon, with his "flock" of medical students, refer to him as the pelvic fracture in room #28. The nurses ask him, "how are we today?" We? Jean-Pierre is not a "we"! Granted, he is an old codger, but many of his rambling assessments about his hospital stay are accurate, albeit presented humorously. An entity controlled by the hospital staff? Definitely!

Jean-Pierre wants peace, quiet and his hospital room door closed. No such luck. A pudgy, gum popping fourteen year old girl asks daily to use his computer. He is visited by police inspector Maxime regularly and

by Camille, a rent boy, who justifies the lifestyle he deems necessary to pay college costs and complete his math/physics degree. Over time, Jean-Pierre realizes that his new-found acquaintances have deeper thoughts and feelings than what they present to him. Each has made life choices and lives with the memories of his actions just like he does. He discovers the surprising events that led to his resultant accident.

"Get Well Soon by Marie-Sabine Roger was a humorous rendering of a lonely curmudgeon's hospital stay and road to recovery after a tragic accident. One has to chuckle at realistic hospitalisms including annoying or loud fellow patients, harried doctors and unlikable food. Author Roger allows Jean-Pierre to interact with several genuine, but flawed characters. These visitors to his hospital room slowly help Jean-Pierre reflect on his life more positively. An enjoyable read.

Thank you Steerforth Press, Pushkin Press and Net Galley for the opportunity to read and review "Get Well Soon".

Girl with her Head in a Book says

Review here: <http://girlwithherheadinabook.co.uk/2...>

Having absolutely loved Soft in the Head last year, I was delighted to receive a copy of Get Well Soon. As with the previous novel, the quality and wit of the translation was such that it barely felt one at all. Following in the footsteps of The Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out A Window And Disappeared and A Man Called Ove, this is another tale of someone growing old disgracefully. Jeanne-Pierre has no memory of how it happened, but somehow or other he fell (jumped? was pushed) into the Seine at around 5am in the morning. Now he's in the hospital, making a slow recovery and meeting the inevitable cast of colourful characters as he does so.

Like Soft in the Head's Germain, Jeanne-Pierre's voice is what steers the story and he is one of those rare narrators who you feel as though you can actually hear while reading. He is far more cynical than Germain, introducing himself with the words, 'I don't like to big myself up, but by the time I was, maybe, six or seven, I'd already had a crack at a bunch of things in terms of committing crimes and stuff that's illegal by law. Aggravated robbery, sexual assault and battery, blackmail and extortion ...'. Of course, the sexual assault relates to stealing a kiss as a child the blackmail was carried out on his younger brother but still there is the sense of a bleary-eyed world-weariness and not a great deal of liking for himself.

The bleak outlook continues as he explains that he grew up with his parents, younger brother, his pépé Jean and his dead mémé Ginou, who lived in an urn in the garage. Both his paternal grandparents had died in an accident when his father was a child as his grandmother had never really seen the point of stop signs. For young Jeanne-Pierre, he grew up with the persistent feeling that he would never quite feel his father's boots and now as an old man, his brother uses him as a warning to his own children, 'Don't grow up like your uncle, or you'll have me to deal with'. So as he comes out of his coma and the policeman asked him if he remembers what happened, if he knows why he is here, if he has any desire to end his life, we sense Jeanne-Pierre's ambivalence in his response.

Roger captures the inertia of recovery, the long periods slipping in and out of sleep and aware of events flitting by in the periphery, particularly the way you 'don't have a fracture or an illness, you have the fracture or the illness'. Jean-Pierre is 'pelvic fracture - Room 28'. The book has an episodic feel, with the tedium of the hospital broken up by his various visitors. There is the police officer Maxime, then Jeanne-Pierre's

brother, who is suffering from IBS as his wife makes his life shit while his wife struggles with migraines because he does her head in. Fretting over everything, Hervé does little to ease his brother's spirits. There's his nurse Myriam, capable and outspoken. Then there's the 'short, tubby' girl of around fourteen who repeatedly steals Jeanne-Pierre's laptop but also appears to have taken a liking to him far more than the curmudgeonly old man who would like. Then there's Camille, the young prostitute who fished Jeanne-Pierre out of the Seine in the first place. These are not the type of people who the old man would usually be meeting and his prejudices take a while to overcome.

In between all of this, Jeanne-Pierre is thinking back over the past. He exchanges emails and Instant Messages with his old friend Serge, considers his long marriage to Annie. Having long worked abroad, he is pestered by guilt for not being a better husband, only now able to admit to himself that he was relieved by the childlessness which broke Annie's heart. Jeanne-Pierre is too earth-bound for self-loathing, his life too empty of drama to have any incidents to inspire true shame but his reminiscences are full of dislike for the selfishness which has brought him to this point, sitting in a hospital bed without anybody who really cares. It is tempting to find it trite that he is able to find new people to love, but is it not better to embrace the idea that no matter what your age, you can still make new friends? That you can set down the fixed ideas, the self-consciousness which might have stopped you from reaching out? Throughout the book, Jeanne-Pierre acknowledges how his reactions and behaviours have changed as he has grown older - what have you got to lose by softening your heart?

Marie-Sabine Roger has created a waspish old man here and in the tradition of Charles Dickens' Scrooge, he is encouraged to open his heart. I may be slightly late to Get Well Soon to be able to call it a summer read, so I will instead say that its warmth is perfect to get one through the winter.

Carla says

Good book, just not great. I usually love a book with a crotchety old man and how he reflects on his life and the characters he comes into contact with. This story has the man (not so old though...) in a hospital after an "accidental" fall from a bridge. An OK read.

Jill says

Imagine waking up in the hospital in pain, not knowing how you got there or even what your name is. That is what happens to sixty-something Jean-Pierre Fabre (although it takes a week or so for anyone to figure out his name) after he gets fished out of the Seine. As weeks go by and he slowly gets better, he starts to remember who he is and where he came from.

Jean-Pierre is told that he was on the bridge when a car ran into him, forcing him over and into the river. There was a young man under the bridge who managed to grab a hook and drag Jean-Pierre to the side of the Seine, where the emergency services could take over. That was how he came to be in the hospital. But how he came to be a lonely curmudgeon will take more digging through his past. Going back through his life from his childhood on, he tries to write his own memoir, to remember his family, his wife, his friends, his joys, and his disappointments.

However, through the time in the hospital, and due in part to the kindness of the nurses and the spirit of the

younger visitors who make their way to his room, Jean-Pierre's grumpiness starts to fade. Although nothing will bring his wife back, and he has no children to depend on, he is learning that maybe he's not as anti-social as he used to think, and he starts to open himself back up to life.

Get Well Soon is a charming story of finding out who you are in your 60s and getting a second chance to become your best self. Written in French by Marie-Sabine Roger and translated into English by Frank Wynne, this heart-warming novel is a perfect reminder of how it's never too late to make friends.

Galley for Get Well Soon were provided by Pushkin Press through Edelweiss, with many thanks.

Cheryl says

At my library, they had a shelf of books, all covered in brown paper, with a tag on it to give you a hint about what the book was about. Then you read it and filled out a review and got entered into a contest for a prize. Didn't win the prize but ended up reading a book I would never have written and I enjoyed it so much, will be reading the author's other book, called Soft in the Head. My hint said...story of a cranky bed bound patient looking back at his life seeks reader to share pleasant surprises. There were lots of surprises and although he is a very cranky man, in the end, of course, the different people he meets along the way help to soften him. Very interesting story especially for me reading it as a nurse.

Nicole says

A pleasant enough translation, it's short so some book clubs might like to try it to discuss Monsieur Fabre's look back over his life when stuck in a hospital bed.
He is a very grumpy old man but as he looks back there is no reason for him to have been. He meets different characters in the hospital, although he can't remember why he was on the bridge so early in the evening. A podgy girl tries to use his laptop. His young saviour visits but Fabre judges him as he does everyone in his righteous way. Does he leave the hospital a better man? It's a bit quirky, an interesting look at older generations judging the young, but I did not gel with the cantankerous old git.

Simone says

Hörbuch. Fantastisch gesprochen von Armin Hauser. Ich bin immer noch ganz hin und weg.

Michelle Keill says

A wry and engaging story that will resonate with anyone who has ever spent an extended period of time in hospital. You get no rest! People keep coming in and disturbing you! This book explored what happens when you become a patient, how you lose your autonomy, your privacy, and your dignity. But it also explores what happens when you have time to reflect on your life - the things you've done, not done, and the things

that have happened to you - and when you come close to death. There are some wonderful quotes, and here's what was possibly favourite:

"We live knowing we are heading towards death. We pretend it's not there. But all it takes is a road accident, a relative passing away, a phone ringing in the middle of the night, a doctor pulling a face as he reads your notes and death, that sleazy old whore, is standing beside you. She lays a hand on your shoulder and sends shudders down your spine."

Amy-GallivantingPages says

Good potential but falls short. A man finds himself in a hospital bed for weeks after an accident. What ensues is him reflecting on his life however his life has been pretty uneventful. I felt that what follows is the character continuing to complain about everyone around him and the hospital food. The story never develops and then the book ends.

special thanks to netgalley for allowing me to review this book with an advance copy

Debbie says

I loved the character of Jean-Pierre Fabre. A 67 year old somewhat curmudgeon type of man, at least he tries to be, who has just woke from a coma in the hospital. He has no idea how he got there and why he was recovered from the Seine.

You would think that a story that takes place in one hospital room over a period of several months would be a kind of boring story. However, the author has added several quirky characters each with a different exchange with Jean-Pierre.

I loved John-Pierre, his crustiness and his big heart.

Thanks to Pushkin Press and Net Galley for providing me with a free e-galley in exchange for an honest, unbiased review.

DebsD says

4* leaning towards 4.5.

I'm not quite sure what I expected with this one, but I got something different. I think I expected it to be more serious, heavier somehow - maybe it was the word "misanthrope" in the blurb, maybe it was the mention of the Seine (it's Paris, it's bound to be arty-farty, right?) It turns out to be one of those lovely books which have a great deal of depth without ever feeling cumbersome. It drops in perceptive observations and beautifully-worded bits of philosophy while keeping the characters real and appealing even as you recognise their failings. And it includes numerous musings which made me laugh out loud because they were so honest and cheeky. A great read, highly recommended.

Kristine says

Get Well Soon by Marie-Sabine Roger is a free NetGalley ebook that I read in late May.

Translated from its original French by Frank Wynne in 2012, Jean-Pierre is a proud, life-long criminal who finds himself in a brief coma after accidentally drowning in the Seine. He frets over the ennui of the passing days, flirts with the nursing staff, takes to the use of social media, occasionally gets lost in nostalgia, and accepts visits from select extended family members - all with a snappy use of analogy, wit, and slang.

Heather Nixon says

I read *Soft In The Head* by Marie-Sabine Rogers last year and I loved it for being so unique, endearing and oddly familiar. So I was excited to read her latest book! It follows Jean-Pierre, middle aged man after an accident that has left him in hospital where he has time to muse on his situation and his life which hasn't gone quite as he'd hoped. It has a little mystery to the story, as you want to find out what happened on the night he was severely injured.

It has the same feel, writing style and familiarity as *Soft In The Head* which I really liked for being a real and unedited story of people who aren't perfect and who have flaws but you can't help but like them. It is so quick and easy to read but it has a lasting impression as the characters feel so real - she makes realistic and flawed characters, likeable. As far as I can remember from the first, this one mentions more 'taboo' or less talked about topics such as teenage pregnancy, prostitution, the inability to have children and problematic marriages/relationships. It was an interesting, enjoyable look into his life, what he's going through while in hospital and the people he meets along the way who open his eyes to new ways of life and new opinions.
