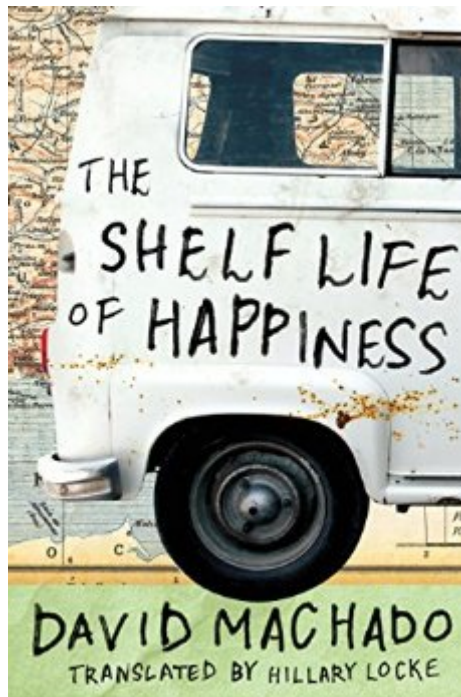


The book was found

The Shelf Life Of Happiness



Synopsis

Ripped apart by Portugal's financial crisis, Daniel's family is struggling to adjust to circumstances beyond their control. His wife and children move out to live with family hours away, but Daniel believes against all odds that he will find a job and everything will return to normal. Even as he loses his home, suffers severe damage to his car, and finds himself living in his old, abandoned office building, Daniel fights the realization that things have changed. He's unable to see what remains among the rubble—friendship, his family's love, and people's deep desire to connect. If Daniel can let go of the past and find his true self, he just might save not only himself but also everyone that really matters to him.

Book Information

File Size: 3490 KB

Print Length: 234 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 1503938050

Publisher: Crossing (September 1, 2016)

Publication Date: September 1, 2016

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01BVD40DC

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #2,802 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #22 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > Humor & Satire > Literary Humor #53 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > Humor & Satire > General Humor #68 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Humor & Satire > Humorous

Customer Reviews

Our lives are characterise by defining moments which have the power to shape the future either for good or bad. No one is immune. Some events are devastating with far reaching consequences while there are some which impacted us to a lesser degree. In this new book by David Machado, the author follows a thirty-seven years old Daniel who is living in Lisbon, Portugal, with his family.

When a devastating economic crisis brought the country to its knees, many people found themselves without work and a means to earn their livelihood. Daniel happened to be one of those unfortunate people yet never loses hope and faces his life with a positive attitude and an unshakable faith that things will turn around one fine day. When things spiralled out of control, leaving him out of work and unable to pay the instalment on his house, Daniel's wife Marta moved with her two children to her parents' home far away from the city. Daniel's two friends Xavier and Almodovar are two other characters who play an important part in the story. They dreamed up of creating a website to connect people in need of help and those who are willing to help. They thought it would work and Almodovar exhausted all his savings in the project, but it went bust, leaving his wife Clara and fifteen-year-old Vasco to fend for themselves. In desperation, Xavier locked himself up while Almodovar is incarcerated for trying to rob a gas station. How the three friends and their near and dear ones react to their situation is true to life, and many readers will be able to relate with them. When I started reading *The Shelf Life of Happiness* by David Machado, I didn't know what to expect. Though a translated work, both author and translator have done a fantastic job in telling the story without any hiccup.

The writing as well as translation of *The Shelf Life of Happiness* are excellent. Often a translated book can mean issues for the reader, awkward lines, whether prose or dialogue, etc. These are not the case at all with this title. If you are less inclined to read a translated work, I can allay your fears about that point, as it is immensely readable. Despite this, the language was truly rough. Due to the harsh circumstances of the novel, it makes sense that some swearing was inevitable for reasons of credibility. There is far too much here for me to enjoy it. Much of the cursing was a result of angry outbursts and name-calling, which are things I do not enjoy, either. There is darkness; a feeling that things are just not right. Reading through *The Shelf Life of Happiness* felt like plodding through molasses. I felt weighed down with the sort of malaise exhibited by many in the novel. It was downright depressing. It took a while to shake off this feeling, even after finally having set it down. The main character and narrator in David Machado's work, Daniel, could not catch a break-- in such ways that strained all credibility. Reading became like waiting for the other shoe to drop, and it always did. If that is what I was looking for that would have been one thing, but the description sounded uplifting. However, the stilted characters were numb, and there seemed little connection anywhere among them. Of course, after what has gone on in the country, happy festivals and parades would not ring true. Damaged to such a degree, though, it had to have started long before the financial collapse for these people.

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