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Trick Is to Keep Breathing (Scottish Literature)

By Janice Galloway



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Trick Is to Keep Breathing (Scottish Literature) By Janice Galloway

This inventive first novel explores the widespread problem of female depression. A 27-year-old drama teacher named Joy Stone is losing her grip on the world. The problems of everyday living accumulate and begin to torture the narrator, who blames her problems not on her work or on the accidental death of her illicit lover, but on herself. She reads horoscopes, plucks hairs, holds conversations inside and outside herself. A terrible memory tries to unfold but is resisted. Family and friends take on monstrous or pitiful guises; food threatens to become a major character. Clutching at the wrong things, the trick is to find those that let life go on. As things seen, things bought, and things said become obsessions, so the author conjures up the homely or horrifying world of litter in which the reader, like the heroine, lives.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Drama teacher Joy Stone is losing her grip. In a captivating story of the onset and evolution of depression, her problems accumulate, denial activates, and food becomes a major player. Through the wit and irony that is gaining international applause, Galloway crafts the chicken-or-egg dilemma of life in our times and being depressed. Yet even through her growing obsessions and the metamorphoses of family and friends into suspicious characters, Galloway's main character and the reader find that the trick in living rests with the simplest things.

From Publishers Weekly

Meticulously observed, agonizing and funny, this unconventional account of clinical depression marks the novelistic debut of the author of the praised short-story collection *Blood*. Drama teacher Joy Stone has become severely depressed following the death of her married lover. Surrounded by his effects in the house they briefly shared, she can't summon the will to work or even to eat, nor can she benefit from the concern of her friends. Interspersed flashbacks to the day of her lover's death have a sensual, physical quality that contrasts vividly with Joy's present detachment. The nature of Joy's illness--and its accurate depiction, captured partly by an unusual spacing of the text in addition to journal entries, interviews and impressionistic passages--makes her a difficult choice for a narrator: readers may lose patience with her lassitude or be unwilling to put in the time needed to decipher the basic plot. However, the ironic, self-mocking tone that ultimately saves Joy also saves the narrative. Faced with an impersonal health care system, her sense of the ridiculous takes over, and with it self-reliance. Galloway delivers a thoughtful, witty chronicle of depression and potential renewal.

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From Library Journal

Imagine yourself walking across a tightrope that doesn't stay taut and perfectly still, so that keeping your balance is difficult. This is Joy Stone's task. A prolonged depression, the source of which is never identified, propels her to a psychiatric hospital for help. But help is what she gets precious little of, in spite of meeting with a bunch of generally nameless doctors--a simple yet brilliant way to depict the impersonal nature of the hospital and how doctors and patients interact. Joy narrates by means of journal entries interspersed with letters and snippets of songs or poems, and vivid descriptions stand out. Joy does not indulge in self-pity about her depression or guilt over the accidental death of the married man with whom she had an affair. The journal format makes the book seem choppy at times, but the choppiness reinforces the sense of being off balance. Joy leaves the hospital just as she entered it--voluntarily. This absorbing winner of a Scottish Arts Council Book Award and shortlisted entry for the Whitbread First Novel Award and the Scottish First Book of the Year is for most fiction collections.

Lisa Nussbaum, Euclid P.L., Ohio

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Victoria Williams:

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Angeline Stallings:

Trick Is to Keep Breathing (Scottish Literature) can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. Most of us recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in language, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to set every word into delight arrangement in writing *Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (Scottish Literature) yet doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource data that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information can certainly drawn you into completely new stage of crucial considering.

Juan Farley:

In this period of time globalization it is important to someone to receive information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The fitness of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of referrals to get information example: internet, magazine, book, and soon. You will see that now, a lot of publisher in which print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended for you is *Trick Is to Keep Breathing* (Scottish Literature) this reserve consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This specific book was represented so why is the world has grown up. The dialect styles that writer make usage of to explain it is easy to understand. The particular writer made some research when he makes this book. Here is why this book appropriate all of you.

Michael Espy:

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