



To the Friend Who Did Not Save My Life (High Risk Books)

By Herve Guibert

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novel, tr L Coverdale, based on Foucault's death

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To the Friend Who Did Not Save My Life (High Risk Books) By Herve Guibert Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This witty and absorbing novel details the daily routines and medical condition of a writer diagnosed with AIDS.

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From Library Journal

Even fictionalized AIDS can rivet, and this novel does not disappoint. The narrator, a bisexual also named Herve Guibert, is friends with the gay intellectual Muzil, based on the French structuralist philosopher Michel Foucault. Guibert realizes that he has AIDS when his symptoms resemble those afflicting the ailing Muzil after his return from the San Francisco bathhouses. Guibert naturally jumps to conclusions when his friend Bill, manager of a pharmaceutical laboratory, expresses hope for a vaccine. When that hope fizzles, Guibert's response recalls the philosophical parallel he has drawn between the mind of the terminally ill and the celestial black holes that paradoxically survive by eating into themselves. Written in the form of a random journal, this work offers both convincing medical descriptions and probing personal analysis.

Recommended for a wide range of readers.

- *Kenneth Mintz, formerly with Bayonne P.L., N.J.*

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From Kirkus Reviews

An AIDS victim's impassioned refusal to go gently into that good night is the theme of this moving and often searing novel by French writer and journalist Guibert. In a series of diary-like chapters, reminiscent of Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year*, the narrator, a homosexual writer in his early 30s, records his own first response to AIDS, as well as the way the disease insidiously begins to affect a whole community. He notes how friendships, families, and affections are tested, and sometimes--though rarely--found wanting. And he recalls how he watched an old and close friend, Muzil, die--a character based apparently on the renowned French philosopher Foucault--but thought himself immune. Finally, suspecting that he is infected, he reluctantly goes along with an old friend, Jules, a bisexual and father of two young children, to be tested. But when ``this certainty became official, even though it remained anonymous, it became intolerable.'' For a brief moment, when his blood count improves, he believes he'll survive, but then he worsens and plans his suicide. Meanwhile, despite his urgent appeals for AZT from a friend, Bill, who works for a drug company, Bill delays until it's too late. Bill, unlike his other friends, is too frightened to be a hero: ``The hero is the one helping someone who is dying, the hero is you, and maybe me as well, the one who's dying.'' He ends close to death--``my arms and legs once again as slender as they were when I was a child.'' As much as it's a story of one man, this is a novel of historic record in which not just AIDS but death itself becomes the enemy to be fought, denied even, but never defeated--no matter how strong the will or spirit. A relentlessly honest, extraordinarily truthful book. -- *Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Joshua Rodrigue:

As people who live in the modest era should be upgrade about what going on or information even knowledge

to make all of them keep up with the era and that is always change and progress. Some of you maybe may update themselves by reading through books. It is a good choice in your case but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know what kind you should start with. This To the Friend Who Did Not Save My Life (High Risk Books) is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Jeffrey Dominguez:

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Robert Victor:

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