

What I liked:

1. Ambitious premise:

- (1) Interior life of a character at the very end of life not wishing to reach 100 years.
- (2) Male author writing a female character

2. Picaresque elements

- (1) A picaresque narrative is usually written in first person as an autobiographical account.
- (2) The main character is often of low character or social class. He or she gets by with wit and rarely deigns to hold a job.
- (3) There is no plot. The story is told in a series of loosely connected adventures or episodes.
- (4) There is little if any character development in the main character. Once a picaro, always a picaro. His or her circumstances may change but rarely result in a change of heart.
- (5) The picaro's story is told with a plainness of language or realism.
- (6) Satire is a prominent element.
- (7) The behavior of a picaresque hero or heroine stops just short of criminality. Carefree or immoral rascality positions the picaresque hero as a sympathetic outsider, untouched by the false rules of society.

A Lazarillo or picaro character is an alienated outsider, whose ability to expose and ridicule individuals compromised with society gives him a revolutionary stance. Lazarillo states that the motivation for his writing is to communicate his experiences of overcoming deception, hypocrisy and falsehood (desengaño).

3. Chapter titles based on character names

4. The detective story angle – did succeed in making the book a bit of a page turner at least for awhile —long enough to keep you going.

5. The irony of the con – Kate's behaviour in her final days is a con to uncover a mystery surrounding the death of her conman husband Graham.

What I disliked?

Kate

- a shallow vain character with almost no interior life and yet, ironically, wholly portrayed in terms of her interior life at the end.
- not convincingly female – her sexuality was too predatory, too male-like her first sexual experience didn't ring true
- don't know what to make of her beauty nor do I understand her own attitude towards her appearance
- not impressed by her wit and intelligence — more telling than showing
- actually a rather perfect picaro, which is perhaps why she seems less than fully 3-dimensional even though we are inside her head for most of the book

LEM Notes for Best Book Club reading: **Going Gently, David Nobbs**

Meeting: Sept. 2012 — 7:30 pm @ Cathy's

the Nitty Gritty stuff

- the repetitive hospital humour especially the farts – What was that all about?

the humourless repetitive humour

- the doublebarrelled names
- the play on words with the Welsh language

the bumpy story telling