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Jose Saramago

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Jose Saramago : Death at Intervals before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Death at Intervals:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy Helli MericaNot his best but nonetheless very good.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An unusual and surreal readBy Nina JonDeath at Intervals is an unusual and surreal read. To me it got off to a rather slow start, however it was worthwhile sticking at it.It's set in a fictional city where people suddenly stop dying, but continue to grow old and thus the country slowly goes bankrupt - an allegory of the modern world, perhaps? Naturally the Mafia are soon making money from this.Without warning the storyline suddenly shifts. Death begins harvesting again but, on a whimsy, pens her intended victims a personal note informing them in advance of her intention to call. Her intentions, she reminds them, are unchallengeable. Without warning, a letter comes back undelivered. Impossible. She posts it again. Again, it comes back.For the second time, the story shifts into something quite different; but I can't say any more without giving the tale away. The reviews seem to be split. Linear and credible it isn't, but then it isn't meant to be.Jane Hetherington's Adventures in Detection Omnibus (Books 1-3)The Magpie Murders - Omnibus Edition2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good Ideas But Poorly ToldBy James N SimpsonPreviously published as Death with Interruptions, Death at Intervals has an interesting story to tell, the problem is Jose Saramago doesn't really know how to tell it in a way that keeps you wanting to keep turning the pages. The story of seven months where nobody can die, then upon Death's return those who about to die are given a warning letter of one week's notice, is all told through a narrator, who to say severely likes to waffle on would be an understatement. It's quite an effort to stick with this story, want to keep reading on to

get discover the interesting questions. The tale would have been more interesting if told through the eyes of a couple of characters in first person style. The novel was originally written in Portuguese and translated by Margaret Costa into English. How much Costa plays in the end difficult flow result of the novel, compared to its original language text is unknown. There are some good topics for further discussion in book groups or dinner parties and the like that you'll find if you're prepared to plough through the slow paced narration but to be honest, I don't think a lot of readers will as it is for the most part, unfortunately pretty boring. Here's an example from opening at a random page (which ended up being 194), "Man and Dog left the park early, the sandwiches were bought to eat at home, there were no naps in the sun. The afternoon and evening were long and sad, the musician picked up a book, read half a page, then threw it down. He sat by the piano to play a little..." Basically if you think you can put up with that kind of writing for an entire novel then this is a good read for you. If not, maybe try something else.