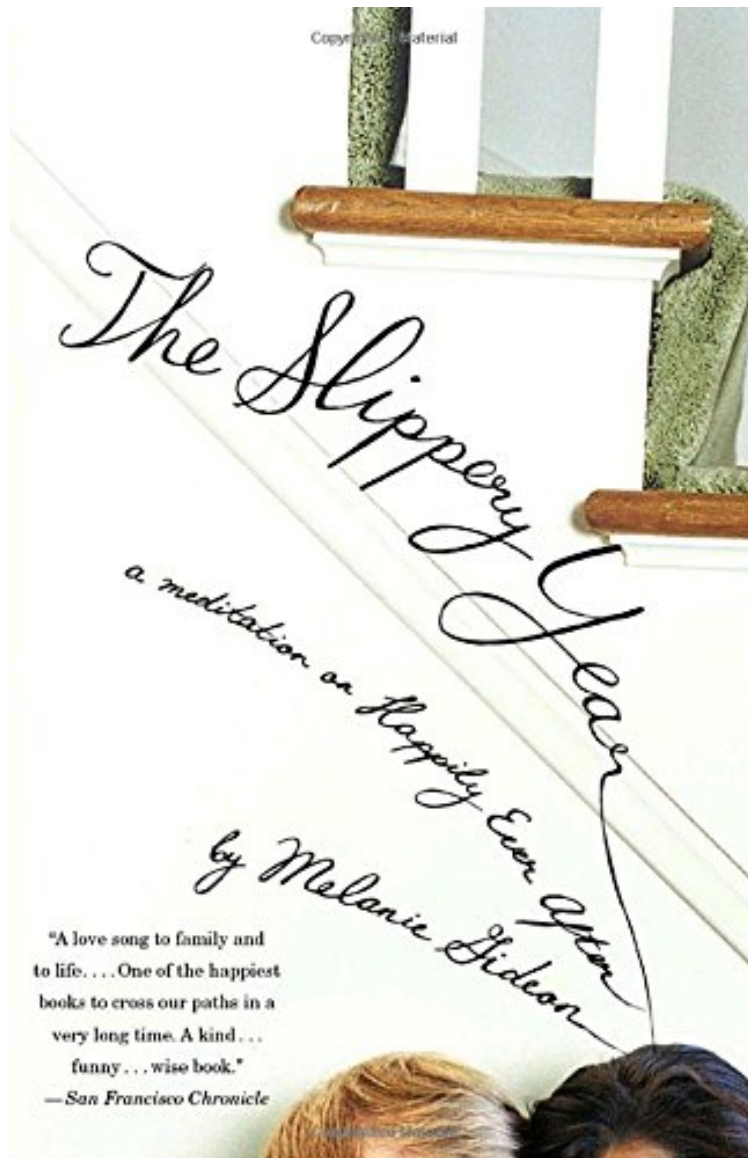


The Slippery Year: A Meditation on Happily Ever After

Melanie Gideon

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Melanie Gideon : The Slippery Year: A Meditation on Happily Ever After before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Slippery Year: A Meditation on Happily Ever After:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Light readingBy TCThis is very light reading and can easily be finished in a day or two--great for the beach or a long weekend. Or, if you, like me, take your children to many doctors appointments, it is great waiting room material, not to deep, and easy to get back to where you left off.The writing is

not superb, the story line isn't superb either. And the author's life isn't really a compelling one. It is just a light read that keeps you engaged and even laughing out loud at a few things. It is very lighthearted. I didn't feel that there was one great message that summed the book up nor did I feel there were any great life wisdoms given to the reader. Our book club is reading this and I really wonder what will we have to talk about because there isn't much here. I wouldn't suggest it for book clubs, just light reading for middle age or older people probably. I did like the book, which is why I gave it 3 stars. I just didn't love the book, I wouldn't read it again, I didn't get excited over the book, and I don't feel the message of the book changed how I look at the world--so I didn't give it a 4 or 5.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I recommend to husbands. Listen carefully to what Melanie is saying and relate that to your own wife. By String Tones I read this to help me understand what women go through. I appreciate how Melanie presented her perspective. She may realize now how wise she really was while she was living through her slippery year, but she obviously didn't know then. The reader benefits because she did not hold back anything; maybe thinking it would have relevance? Side benefit: Melanie has a brilliant sense of humor. I found her story to be funny, uplifting, positive, genuine, and typical. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. What a refreshing read! By Joyce EI loved *The Slippery Year*. I started it one morning at 3 a.m. when I couldn't sleep and read it straight through with a contented smile on my face. How well Gideon captured my inner thoughts on raising a son and staying in love with my husband while trying to deal with life's absurdities... Her memoir over the course of her year, so mirrored my own angst over life's happy, sad, and perplexing moments. I then told all my women friends to buy this book. Sometimes you just need a book that makes you smile and appreciate a good writing. I laughed, cried, and hugged my husband and son close to me after reading this refreshing book. Hooray, Melanie.

Melanie Gideon's hilarious memoir is a disarmingly honest take on marriage and motherhood by a woman who realized she was sleepwalking through life and decided she needed to do something about it. *The Slippery Year* chronicles her struggle to rediscover meaning and pleasure in life while navigating the comical ups and downs of cohabiting with a husband, a child, and a dog: mattress wars with her snoring mate, the psychological minefield of the school carpool line, and sending her son to sleep-away camp for the first time. Gideon manages to be laugh-out-loud funny while also reflecting beautifully and movingly on her quest to appreciate what she has.

.com Book Description "We are all so curious. Hungry for the truth. If only we could ask the questions we really want to ask of each other and get the real answers. Like how many times a month do you have sex? What prescription drugs are you on? Are you happy? Really happy? Happy enough?" For anybody who has ever wondered privately Is this all there is, Melanie Gideon's poignant, hilarious, exuberant meditation, *The Slippery Year*, chronicles a year in which she confronts both the fantasies of her receding youth and the realities of midlife with a husband, a child, and a dog (one of whom runs away). She reflects on the exigencies of domesticity--the need for a household catastrophe plan, the fainting spell occasioned by the departure of her nine-year-old son for camp, the mattress wars, and the carpool line. With tenderness, unsparring honesty, and uproarious wit, Gideon brings us back again and again to the sweetness of ordinary pleasures and to life's most enduring satisfactions. She captures perfectly that moment right before everything changes and the things we have loved forever begin to fall away for the first time. *The Slippery Year* is the story of a woman's quest to reignite passion, beauty, and mystery and discover if "happily ever after" is a possibility after all. A QA with Melanie Gideon Question: What is a "Slippery Year"? Melanie Gideon: Simply put, a Slippery Year is a year in which we are in the process of transformation. We've got one arm in the coat of our old life (a coat that no longer fits us--the sleeves are too short) and one arm in the coat of our new life (which doesn't fit us yet either--the sleeves are too long). A Slippery Year is a call to awaken. Change is coming for you, whether you like it or not. Question: Why did you decide to write about yours? Melanie Gideon: Change came for me in the form of the tricked-out, jacked up, four-by-four van with a diesel engine and a cattle guard on its front bumper that my husband bought over the Internet. He had all these dreams of our driving to Baja in it, of living an adventurous life. Well, I hated the thing on sight. It was so enormous it barely fit in our driveway. Obviously this was his midlife crisis vehicle. But there was one problem. He wasn't going through a midlife crisis--I was. In fact, he was sailing through midlife doing exactly what all the literature said you should do! Find new hobbies! Take up new sports. Ingest fish oil tablets. No, I was the one stuck, unwilling to push myself out of my comfort zone. Somehow, when I wasn't paying attention (which was most of the time), I had slipped outside of my life, and I knew if I didn't do something about it I might slip out of my life for good. Question: You write in your introduction: "I am one of the millions who is currently walking around in a daze, no longer recognizing herself, wondering 'Is this all there is?'" Do you think this is a uniquely feminine experience? Melanie Gideon: No, I do not think this is unique to women! Are you kidding me? Our puppy wonders if this is all there is every day. I see it on his face when he's done with his kibble, or when I give him one scratch behind the ear instead of two. "Is this all there is" is the human condition. Most of us are too smart to admit it, however, and for good reason, because people might want to throw eggs at you if you confess this. I felt guilty asking this question, especially because I had a lot. I had no right to complain. I had a wonderful partner and a healthy child and we had a house and we both had jobs. Even so, there was this flatness, this indifference. I had become an observer rather than a

participant. Everybody, no matter what they have, still has something they need and long for. I wanted to feel my life deeply again. Question: You have a caring, devoted husband and a precocious, loving son. You have a nice home and live within driving distance of a Trader Joe's. Are you worried about the reaction to a book where you question all that you have? Melanie Gideon: For those of you who will not be slipping away to Italy any time soon but instead are attempting to open your eyes to your ludicrous and yet often miraculous lives, Montepulciano is a fruity, dry wine with soft tannins. Yes--of course I'm worried about people's reactions. That's why I put off writing a memoir for so long. What right did I have to write a memoir? I hadn't suffered enough. I wasn't different enough. You, know, I actually made a list of things I could write a memoir about. Things that set me apart--that were worthy of a memoir. It was a pathetic list. There was one item on it: I was a twin. This used to be a big deal. At least when I was growing up in the sixties before IVF. Now, being a twin has lost most of its cachet. You have to be a quadruplet or a sextuplet to write a memoir about it. Instead I decided to write about all the ordinary things that mattered: children, dogs, sisters, love, loss, the passage of time, and all the reasons to go on living when the only thing we can be sure of it that one day it will all end. Question: You write: "Marriage changes passion. Suddenly you're in bed with a relative." What was your husband's reaction to this book? Melanie Gideon: Well, I wasn't stupid. I didn't let him read it until I was done. Then as I passed him the manuscript, I told him what he was holding in his hands was a love story--and he might not think that upon the first read, but give it a little time. My husband, being the wise, sweet, generous man that he is, agreed. A few months later, that is. Question: How have you changed your life since you finished writing *The Slippery Year*, and what do you hope readers will take away from it? Melanie Gideon: *The Slippery Year* began with a van. The van was really a metaphor for the adventure that was missing in my life. I like to think of this book as my van: writing it was my adventure. I only wish I could have ordered the book over the Internet--like my husband did with the van--and spared myself all that work. I hope readers will laugh and be comforted and perhaps see some of themselves in these pages. I wrote this book so I wouldn't feel alone--alone in the carpool line, alone in my questions about marriage and motherhood, and alone in my attempts to make sense of my life. I definitely feel less alone these days. Especially since our puppy has peed on every carpet in the house, so wherever I walk I get a little reminder of how not alone I really am in the form of yellow stains that will not come out no matter what carpet cleaner I use. (Photo © Jonathan Sprague) Best Books of the Year: NPR and San Francisco Chronicle "Gideon has written a love song to family and to life. What a lovely song it is.... One of the happiest books to cross our paths in a very long time. Kind ... loving ... funny ... wise." —San Francisco Chronicle "Hilarious.... A sinuous journey—complete with skids and scraped knees—toward greater engagement with life . . . treated with humor and heart." —Christian Science Monitor "After a few chapters of one gorgeous and self-ridiculing sentence after another, you realize that Gideon doesn't need to detonate her life to shake things up. There's a perfect storm raging inside her head, and its hilarity is drama enough for anyone." —San Francisco Magazine "A self-deprecating, wickedly funny and mildly philosophical reflection on marriage, mothering, middle age and the march toward life's meaning." —Bookpage "An honest, funny tribute to the way love can survive waves of doubt, miscommunications and highly dubious purchases." —Redbook "Gideon explores her pain, doubt, regret, and confusion as a wife and mother at midlife with great poise and insight and, ultimately, a gentle aura of hope." —Elle "By the end of the book I felt like I had just spent several hours knocking back drinks with an especially funny friend. Which is some of my highest praise." —Book Bench (newyorker.com) "With self-effacing humor, Ms. Gideon chronicles the mundanity and small epiphanies of everyday life." —New York Times "Gideon's a deceptively smooth writer; her memoir's packed with insights that sneak up on you." —San Diego Tribune "There is nothing contrived, trite, or holier-than-thou in this crisply hilarious, candid, and affecting contemplation. Instead, Gideon's self deprecating and wry insights into the mysteries of marriage, parenthood and the evolution of the self are astute, pragmatic, and generous, providing the perfect antidote to the everyday blues." —Booklist "A hilariously probing account of personal growth and stasis. Epiphanies abound in Gideon's account . . . refreshing and sassy, with more than a dash of tenderness thrown in." —Kirkus "In this marvelous memoir Ms. Gideon appears to be channeling everything I've ever felt, thought, feared, hoped about motherhood." —Ayelet Waldman, author of *Bad Mother* "Like all the best books, *The Slippery Year* reminds us that we are not alone—not alone in our fears about our kids, not alone in our struggle to make meaning of our lives, and most definitely not alone in our volcanic rages about the car pool line. Melanie Gideon is a wonderful companion—smart, rueful and painfully funny. Truly the one thing wrong with this book is that it had to end." —Allison Pearson, author of *I Don't Know How She Does It* "Within hours of finishing *The Slippery Year*, I was raving to friends about its perfect balance of gorgeous writing, quirky wit, and lovable impertinences. I laughed and cried and saw myself in Melanie Gideon's chronicle of maternal neuroses and wifely doubts. What a pleasure to find such a dear and funny book." —Elinor Lipman, author of *The Family Man* and *Then She Found Me* "Gideon has an utterly charming way of turning the constant compromises of married life into riotous poetic insight." —Po Bronson, author of *NurtureShock* About the Author Melanie Gideon was born and raised in Rhode Island. She now lives in the Bay Area with her husband and son.