



[Submission](#) by [Michel Houellebecq](#) is a political satire. It imagines a situation in which a Muslim party upholding traditionalist and patriarchal values is able to win the 2022 presidential election in France, with the support of France's Socialist Party, led by Marine Le Pen.

Houellebecq novels are always controversial, but this novel received a lot of attention, because it was published on the day of the Charlie Hebdo shooting in Paris. Its protagonist is Francois, a middle-aged Sorbonne lecturer who specializes in [Joris Karl Huysmans](#), a French novelist of the late 19th century and associated with the Decadent Movement and Nihilism.

Huysmans' work conveyed his deep pessimism and it is not by chance that Francois chose Huysmans for the subject of his thesis. Due to his laziness, Francois continued to milk that cow in his lecturing career, as he says in the novel.

Francois has no friends and his girlfriends are mostly young students. These relationships are only sexual. When the Muslim Brotherhood comes into power, he has to resign from his job, because he doesn't want to become a Muslim. He retires and becomes more bored than he was, so he initiates a peregrination to the places where Huysmans lived and the monastery where he retired to be an oblate after converting to Catholicism. He toys with the idea of doing the same, but decides against it due to the ban on smoking.

When he's offered a job at the Sorbonne if he converts, Francois slowly realizes that it wouldn't be so bad to have his job back, with better pay and 2 or 3 wives, one for cooking and the others for sex.

This satire impresses, because it speculates on a situation that is not out the question. His writing is brilliant as usual, and like it or not, his books always surprise and entertain. Most of the members enjoyed this novel, which certainly contributed to a lively discussion. To read a good review, click [here](#).

Ratings: Alexa 3.5, Claudia 3.5, Di 3, Janet 3.5, Kim 3, Margie 3.5, Nic 3.5 and Penny 4.

Check our [blog posts](#) for a list of our favourite books of 2016.



We had our Christmas dinner and thoroughly enjoyed it, the food was superb. Here we are on the night.

Next month we get together on the 9/01/17 at 6:30pm at [Preece House, 50 Nerang St Bischof Pioneer Park, Nerang \(next to 54 Nerang St. shops\)](#) to discuss [New Finnish Grammar](#) by Italian writer [Diego Marani](#) and this

book marks the start of our year of [European novels](#).

Hope to see you there and Happy Reading!

Other Books We Read

December 2016

Our book of the month was [Submission](#) by [Michel Houellebecq](#), but we also read other books.

Maximum rating is 5.

The rules of Backyard Cricket Jock Serong 3.5.

Jeff in Venice, Death in Varanasi by Geoff Dyer 2.5.

Flanuese by Lauren Elkin 2.5.

The Tzar of love and techno by Anthony Marr 3.5.

The course of love by Alain de Botton 3.

The ministry of pain by Dubravka Ugresic 4.

Where the trees were by Inga Simpson 3, 4.

Wild cat falling by Colin Johnson 3.5.

The life of houses by Lisa Gorton 4.

The Turner house by Angela Flournoy 3.5.

Agnes by Peter Stamm 2.5.

The Dry by Jane Harper 2.5.

Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari 3.

Our Favourite Books of 2016

Here are some of our favourite reads of 2016. My name is Lucy Barton had 4 votes!

Alexa

1. My Name is Lucy Barton by Elizabeth Strout.
2. My Struggle Book 2: A Man in Love by Karl Ove Knausgaard.
3. Alone in Berlin by Hans Fallada.

Claudia

1. My Name is Lucy Barton by Elizabeth Strout.
2. My Struggle Book 5: Some Rain Must Fall by Karl Ove Knausgaard.
3. The Vegetarian by Han Kang.

Dianne

1. American Housewife by Helen Ellis.
2. This House of Grief by Helen Garner.
3. Bonkers by Jennifer Saunders.

Janet

1. Barkskins by Annie Proulx.
2. Where the trees were by Inga Simpson.
3. My name is Lucy Barton by Elizabeth Strout.

Kim

1. The Heart is a Lonely Hunter by Carson McCullers.
2. That Eye, the Sky by Tim Winton.
3. Three Letters from the Andes by Patrick Leigh Fermor.

Margie

1. The Notebook Trilogy by Agota Kristof.
2. Dumb Luck by Vu Trong Phung.
3. The Lover by Marguerite Duras.

Nicola

1. My name is Lucy Barton by Elizabeth Strout.
2. Black Rock White City by A S Patric.
3. Music and Freedom by Zoe Morrison.

Penny

1. Great Meadow: an evocation by Dirk Bogarde.
2. The Moor's Account by Laila Lalami.
3. Last hundred years trilogy Book 1: Some Luck by Jane Smiley.

Viv

The Hare With Amber Eyes: A Hidden Inheritance by Edmund de Waal.