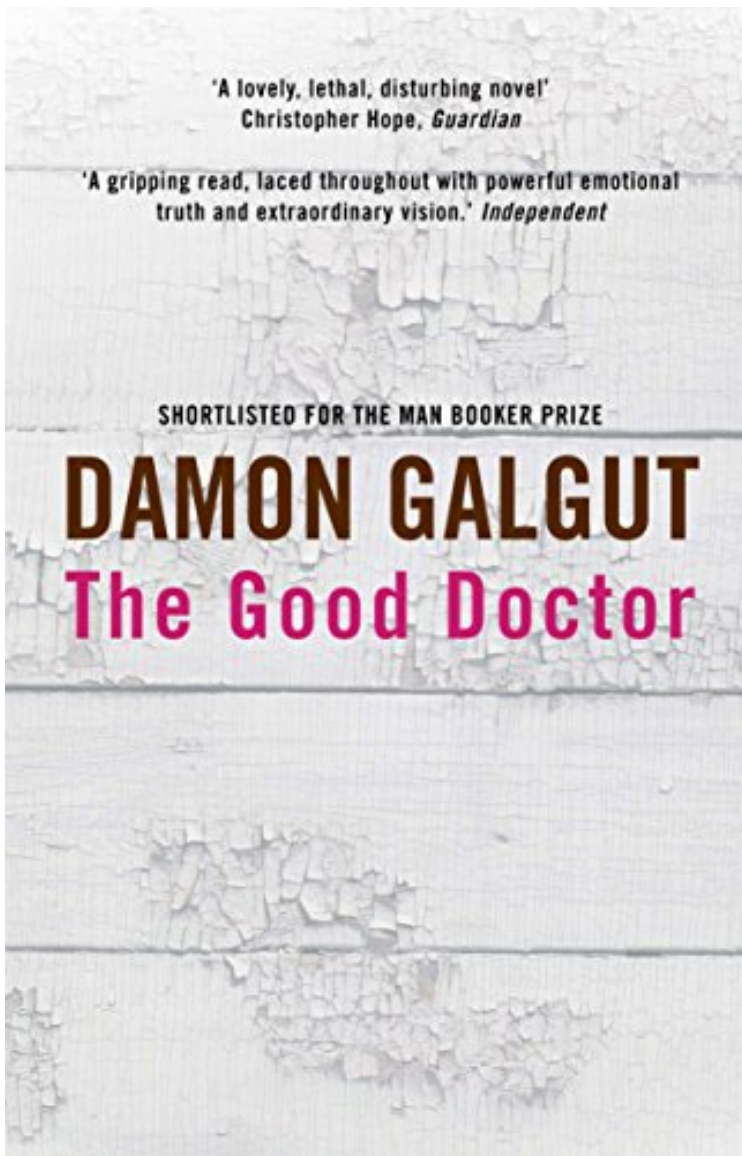


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The Good Doctor (English Edition)



Par Damon Galgut
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Par Damon Galgut : The Good Doctor (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Good Doctor (English Edition):

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Description : Description du produitA finalist for the Man Booker Prize and Winner of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for the region of Africa, *The Good Doctor* is a taut, intense tale of the dashed hopes of the post apartheid era and the small betrayals that doom a friendship. It has been greeted with enthusiastic interest around the world and assures Damon Galgut's place as a major international talent. When Laurence Waters arrives at his new post at a deserted rural hospital, staff physician Frank Eloff is instantly suspicious. Laurence is everything Frank is notyoung, optimistic, and full of big ideas. The whole town is beset with new arrivals and the return of old faces. Frank reestablishes a liaison with a woman, one that will have unexpected consequences. A self-made dictator from apartheid days is rumored to be active in cross-border smuggling, and a group of soldiers has moved in to track him, led by a man from Frank's own dark past. Laurence sees only possibilitiesbut in a world where the past is demanding restitution from the present, his

ill-starred idealism cannot last.

Présentation de l'auteur WINNER OF THE COMMONWEALTH WRITERS' PRIZE Shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize A powerful, taut and intense tale of a friendship overshadowed by betrayal, set against the tawdry hopes and disappointments of a post-apartheid South Africa. When Laurence Waters arrives at his new post at a deserted rural hospital, staff physician Frank Eloff is instantly suspicious. Laurence is everything Frank is not—young, optimistic, and full of big ideas. The whole town is beset with new arrivals and the return of old faces. Frank reestablishes a liaison with a woman, one that will have unexpected consequences. A self-made dictator from apartheid days is rumored to be active in cross-border smuggling, and a group of soldiers has moved in to track him, led by a man from Frank's own dark past. Laurence sees only possibilities—but in a world where the past is demanding restitution from the present, his ill-starred idealism cannot last.

Extrait The first time I saw him I thought, he won't last. I was sitting in the office in the late afternoon and he appeared suddenly in the doorway, carrying a suitcase in one hand and wearing plain clothes—jeans and a brown shirt with his white coat on top. He looked young and lost and a bit bewildered, but that wasn't why I thought what I did. It was because of something else, something I could see in his face. He said, Hello? Is this the hospital? His voice was unexpectedly deep for somebody so tall and thin. Come in, I said. Put down your bag. He came in, but he didn't put down the bag. He held it close while he looked around at the pink walls, the empty chairs, the dusty desk in the corner, the frail plants wilting in their pots. I could see that he thought there'd been some kind of mistake. I felt sorry for him. I'm Frank Eloff, I said. I'm Laurence Waters. I know. You know...? He seemed amazed that we should be expecting him, though he'd been sending faxes for days already, announcing his arrival. We're sharing a room, I told him. Let me take you over. The room was in a separate wing. We had to cross an open space of ground, close to the parking lot. When he came in he must have walked this way, but now he looked at the path through the long grass, the ragged trees overhead dropping their burden of leaves, as if he'd never seen them before. We went down the long passage to the room. I'd lived and slept alone in here until today. Two beds, a cupboard, a small carpet, a print on one wall, a mirror, a green sofa, a low coffee table made of synthetic wood, a lamp. It was all basic standard issue. The few occupied rooms all looked the same, as in some featureless bleak hotel. The only trace of individuality was in the configuration of the furniture, but I'd never bothered to shift mine around till two days ago, when an extra bed had been brought in. I also hadn't added anything. There was no personality in the ugly, austere furniture; against this neutral backdrop, even a piece of cloth would have been revealing. You can take that bed, I said. There's space in the cupboard. The bathrooms through that door. Oh. Yes. Okay. But he still didn't put down his bag. I'd only heard two weeks before that I would have to share a room. Dr Ngema had called me in. I wasn't happy, but I didn't refuse. And in the days that followed I came around, in spite of myself, to the idea of sharing. It might not be so bad. We might get on well, it might be good to have company, my life here could be pleasantly different. So in a way I started looking forward with curiosity to this change. And before he arrived I did a few things to make him welcome. I put the new bed under the window and made it up with fresh linen. I cleared a few shelves in the cupboard. I swept and cleaned, which is something I don't do very often. But the room was ugly and bare. And Laurence Waters didn't look to me like the person I'd pictured in my head. I now that he was standing here I could see, through his eyes, how invisible that effort was. The don't know what I'd imagined, but it wasn't this bland, biscuit-coloured young man, almost a boy still, who was at last putting his suitcase down. He took his glasses off and rubbed them on his sleeve. He put them on again and said wearily, I don't understand. What? This whole place. The hospital? Not just the hospital. I mean... He waved a hand to indicate the world out there. He meant the town outside the hospital walls. You asked to come here. But I didn't know that it would be like this. Why? he said with sudden intensity. I don't understand. We can talk about it later. But I'm on duty now, I have to go back to the office. I must see Dr Ngema, he said abruptly. She's expecting me. Don't worry about that now. You can do it in the morning. No hurry. What should I do now? Whatever you like. Unpack, settle in. Or come and sit with me. I'll be finished in a couple of hours. I left him alone and went back. He was shocked and depressed. I understood that; I'd felt it myself when I first arrived. You came expecting one thing and were met by something else completely. You came expecting a busy modern hospital—rural maybe, and small, but full of activity in a town where things were happening. This was the capital of what used to be one of the homelands, so whatever the morality of the politics that gave rise to it, you expected a place full of administration and movement, people coming and going. And when you'd turned off the main route to the border and were coming in on the one minor road that led here, it might still look when you saw the place

from a distance like what you'd expected. There was the main street, leading to the centre where the fountain and the statue stood, the shop-fronts and pavements and streetlights, and all the buildings beyond. It looked neat and calibrated and exact. Not a bad place to be. And then you arrived and you saw. Maybe the first clue was a disturbing detail; a crack that ran through an otherwise pristine wall, or a set of broken windows in an office you passed. Or the fact that the fountain was dry and full of old sand at the bottom. And you slowed down, looking around you with vague anxiety, and suddenly it all came into clear focus. The weeds in the joints of the pavements and bricks, the grass growing at places in the street, the fused lamps and the empty shops behind their blank glass fronts and the mildew and damp and blistered paint and the marks of rain on every surface and the slow tumbling down of solid structures, sometimes grain by grain, sometimes in pieces. And you were not sure any more of where you were. And there were no people. That was the last thing you noticed, though you realized then that it was the first thing to give you that uneasy hollow feeling: the place was deserted. There was, yes, a car cruising slowly down a back road, an official uniform or two ambling along a pavement, and maybe a figure slouching on a footpath through an overgrown plot of land, but mostly the space was empty. Uninhabited. No human chaos, no movement. A ghost town. It's like something terrible happened here, Laurence said. That's how it feels. Ja, but the opposite is true. Nothing has ever happened here. Nothing ever will. That's the problem.

From the Hardcover edition. From Publishers Weekly. Shortlisted for the 2003 Man Booker prize, Galgut's fifth novel, his first to be published in the U.S., explores post-apartheid South Africa's ambiguous present, where deep-rooted social and political tensions threaten any shared dream for the future. Resigned to self-exile at an inadequate hospital in a desolate former "homeland," the disillusioned Dr. Frank Eloff befriends a new volunteer: fresh-faced Dr. Laurence Waters. Determined to revivify the rural hospital and more broadly, South Africa which has slipped into humdrum dysfunction, Laurence tests Frank's stifled sensibilities and challenges hospital director Dr. Ngema, who frequently quips that she is all for "change and innovation," even though she cannot abide confrontation with her own modest authority. The young doctor's idealism eventually collides with the old power structure, the "ex-tinpot dictator of the ex-homeland" called the Brigadier and his lawless band. Neither Laurence nor Frank wholly grasps the culture and poverty of the place in which they live and are supposed to serve; they remain strangers in their own country, "traveling in a different landscape" than the black South Africans. Frank grapples with his former passivity in the face of racism and torture in the military, while Laurence pulls recklessly toward a fantastic dream of utopia, and the two doctors are "twined together in a tension that unites." But "a rope doesn't know what its own purpose is," and South Africa seems ever capable of sliding back into the mistrust and political strife of the past. Like Graham Greene's work, this quiet, affecting novel will attract those haunted by the shadow of colonialism.

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