

## FICTION

An intelligent, challenging and entertaining page-turner

# The Straggler

YVES PETRY

Gram works on a robot which uses brain scans to load itself up with human intelligence, without the emotional ballast. The robot will ultimately far outstrip human intelligence, and will 'reduce mankind to a self-help group for stragglers'. On the plane to a colloquium in Texas, he's working on his speech about the future – unable to fully concentrate because his father has just died. To Gram's relief his father succumbed to a physical disease, syphilis, and not a mental one. Gram is a devotee of cool intelligence who likes to regard people as machines rather than as creatures with a unique personality and psychology. However, he cannot function as a machine himself. He is constantly preoccupied with his past and overcome by doubts and questions about his existence. Gram becomes a prey to the thing he had always repudiated: emotions.

**Petry is a very good, occasionally brilliant narrator with a good eye for meaningful detail.**

DE MORGEN

Petry's main character is a misanthrope who overestimates himself; someone who looks down disparagingly on what makes man human and on what he considers to be man's limited intelligence, as expressed in spirituality or psychology. 'The Straggler' is an intelligent, challenging and entertaining page-turner that addresses the reader in a very personal tone.

**Flair, intelligence, and humour are abundantly present in his book.**

HET PAROOL

YVES PETRY  
ROMAN DE  
ACHTERBLIJVER



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## AUTHOR

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**Yves Petry** (b. 1967) studied mathematics and philosophy. He was awarded the BNG Literature Prize for 'The Straggler' (De achterblijver, 2006), a novel about artificial intelligence and human emotions. His disconcerting novel 'The Virgin Marino' attracted a large readership and won the prestigious Libris Literature Prize. 'Love So to Speak' is a lucid book about a writer in a love triangle, about love and resentment. 'The Ghosts', his seventh novel, is a philosophical book that challenges the motivations of western aid workers in Africa.  
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