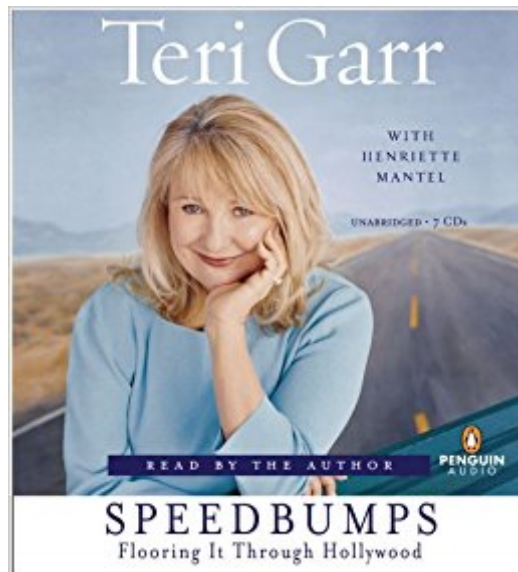




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Speedbumps: Flooring It Through Hollywood



Synopsis

At once laugh-out-loud funny and remarkably down-to-earth, the popular Oscar-nominated actress muses about movies, men, motherhood, and MS in a book that is both Hollywood hilarious and personally moving. Abridged CDs - 5 CDs, 6 hours

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Teri Garr's "Speedbumps: Flooring It Through Hollywood" is a breezy, self-deprecating, and extremely entertaining look at the life of an actress who has to overcome more than her share of obstacles. Her father, Eddie Garr, was an itinerant and alcoholic vaudevillian who liked to gamble, and Teri's mother was always moving the kids from one part of the country to another in an attempt to keep the family together. As a youngster, Garr took ballet lessons and had her heart set on becoming a prima ballerina. Although dance was her entrance into performing, she eventually progressed to acting in movies, television commercials, and sitcoms. Work didn't always come easily, but Garr inherited her mother's persistence and stubbornness. She aggressively lobbied for roles and, over the years, appeared in films directed by such luminaries as Steven Spielberg, Francis Ford Coppola, Sidney Pollack, Mel Brooks, and Martin Scorsese. "Speedbumps," which Garr wrote with Henriette Mantel, is a delightful look at a life filled with humor. Teri Garr does not take herself seriously, and when she name drops, she does so naturally and without arrogance. She tells a number of witty anecdotes about her friendships with Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper, Dustin Hoffman, and Francois Truffaut. I find it refreshing that she discusses her flops as well as her successes with equal charm and enthusiasm. Rather than becoming bitter about the "speedbumps"

she has encountered, Garr believes that facing adversity has been a source of personal growth. The most poignant aspect of this book is Garr's description of her long battle with multiple sclerosis. She had alarming symptoms for many years before her disease was diagnosed, and it took her a long time to find a doctor who could help her.

Picked up Teri Garr's semi-autobiography (written with Henriette Mantel - and, hey, let's give these co-writers and ghost-writers a hand as well, as they do a lot of work and rarely get the credit they deserve) last week and breezed through it quickly. That is not to say that it was a fast read, but rather as a demonstration of how much I enjoyed it. Although I became a big fan of Teri in the 1980s after seeing her several times on the old LATE NIGHT program, I found in reading her book that I had memories of her leading back years before that. From watching her every week on SONNY & CHER to seeing her in my first "adult" movie at the theaters in YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, that one episode of STAR TREK and onward, I always enjoyed seeing her light up the screen. Heck, I was even such a fan that I once tried to send her a photo to autograph (although I never got it back ... and hoping now that my teenage-years' gushy, fanboy note with the photo never got to her in the first place). One element that is sometimes a disappointment to fans reading a bio about their favorite performer is that the stars sometimes forget that an autobiography needs to have a personal almost interactive feel to it. Some believe they have to dismiss topics that the fans are curious to know about their background in life and in their profession, thriving for a superior tone to prove how important their life's work is or was. Ultimately, however an autobiography should engage a reader as if the writer was in the room with them and having a conversation. If the reader finds themselves identifying with the writer and wanting to converse back, then an autobiography is successful. If the reader feels bored or slighted by the content being dispensed, then everyone's time is wasted in the endeavor.

+++++This book, written by actress Teri Garr (known for her comedic talents), is an autobiography of her life. A speed bump is a raised ridge, as in a parking lot, to discourage fast driving by jolting a car driving over it. Despite the numerous speed bumps in Garr's life (the biggest one being multiple sclerosis or MS) she was still able to "floor it through Hollywood" and become a well-known actress. (Note that the book's co-author, Henriette "Hen" Mantel also has MS.) The first time I saw Teri Garr was as a kid (I was younger than her adopted daughter is now) in an episode of the original "Star Trek." It was during this episode and seeing her on the small screen that my male hormones started speeding up drastically. I thus credit her with teaching me the concept of "warp speed." I've got to

admit that the title and subtitle of this book are witty. Many books with a witty title seem to lose their wittiness when you read their contents. Not with this book! It is witty, wise, and charming throughout, even when Garr goes through tough times. I think Martin Mull said it best when he plugged this book: "Witty, honest, and intelligent. Everything that Hollywood isn't." Realize that this is not a book about MS exclusively. It's mainly about how MS has impinged on Garr's life as she was carving out her acting career. The last chapters discuss MS more because it took about two decades of going to see doctors before she got a definitive or "official" diagnosis. (In fact, there were a series of misdiagnoses along the way. Doctors seem to be good at giving misdiagnoses.) One thing you'll notice as you read this book is that Garr is a "workaholic" (she admits this).

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