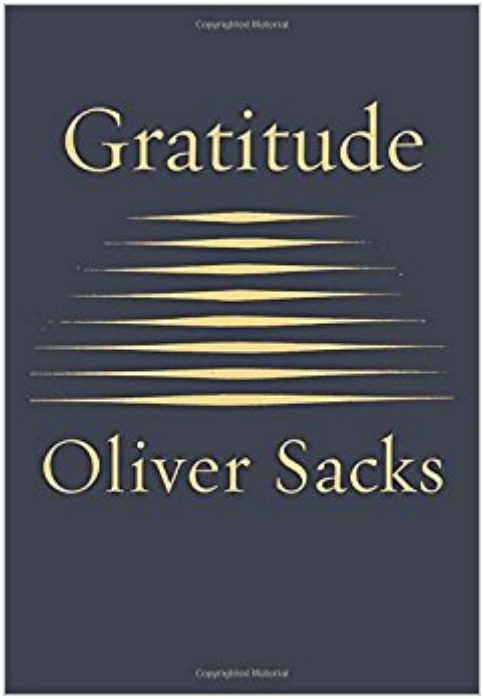
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Gratitude



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Synopsis

Ã¢â ¬Å“My predominant feeling is one of gratitude. I have loved and been loved. I have been given much and I have given something in return. Above all, I have been a sentient being, a thinking animal, on this beautiful planet, and that in itself has been an enormous privilege and adventure.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Oliver SacksNo writer has succeeded in capturing the medical and human drama of illnessÃ Â as honestly and as eloquently as Oliver Sacks.Ã Â During the last few months of his life, he wrote a set of essays in which he movingly explored his feelings about completing a life and coming to terms with his own death. Ã¢â ¬Å“It is the fate of every human being,Ã¢â ¬Â• Sacks writes, Ã¢â ¬Å“to be a unique individual, to find his own path, to live his own life, to die his own death.Ã¢â ¬Â•Together, these four essays form an ode to the uniqueness of each human being and to gratitude for the gift of life.Ã¢â ¬Å“Oliver Sacks was like no other clinician, or writer. He was drawn to the homes of the sick, the institutions of the most frail and disabled, the company of the unusual and the Ã¢â ¬Ëœabnormal.Ã¢â ¬â„¢ He wanted to see humanity in its many variants and to do so in his own, almost anachronistic wayÃ¢â ¬â •face to face, over time, away from our burgeoning apparatus of computers and algorithms. And, through his writing, he showed us what he saw.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Atul Gawande, author of Being Mortal

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“A series of heart-rending yet ultimately uplifting essaysÃ¢â ¬Â¦A lasting gift to readersÃ¢â ¬Â¦unlike other writers who have reported from the front lines of mortality, Sacks did

not focus on his illness, his medical ordeal or spirituality, but on Ã¢â ¬Å“what is meant by living a good and worthwhile lifeÃ¢â ¬â •achieving a sense of peace within oneself. Sacks not only achieved that peace but managed to convey it beautifully in these essays. He found positive ways to think about everything, including his growing frailty: Perhaps, he suggests in the bookÃ¢â ¬â„¢s final pages, he was in the Sabbath of his life, Ã¢â ¬Å“when one can feel that oneÃ¢â ¬â„¢s work is done, and one may, in good conscience, rest.Ã¢â ¬Â• His tender book leaves readers with a similar sense of tranquility and, indeed, gratitude.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Heller McAlpin, Washington Post Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“ElegantÃ¢â ¬Â¦.a lovely slim volume.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Melissa Dahl, New York MagazineÃ¢â ¬Å“PowerfulÃ¢â ¬Â¦.The book chronicles the famous authorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s thoughts, wishes, regrets, and, above all, feelings of love, happiness, and gratitude even as he faced the cancer that ended his life last year at 82Ã¢â ¬Â¦.the material offers incisive, poignant observationsÃ¢â ¬Â¦.A perfect gift for thoughtful readers, and a title that belongs in science and biography collections.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Library Journal, *starred review*Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“The neurologist and author died of cancer in August. Between 2013 and 2015, he wrote four moving essays, published in The New York Times, reflecting on his life and facing mortality. They are collected in this slim volume, a coda to SacksÃ¢â ¬â„¢ remarkable career.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Tom Beer, Newsday Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A book defined by celebration, not sadness.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Danny Heitman, The Advocate Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“This is a worthy little chapbook for the lovers of Oliver Sacks.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Edith Cody-Rice, Ã Â The Millstone Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“The volume is tinyÃ¢â ¬â •short enough to read easily in one sittingÃ¢â ¬â •but itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s huge in heart. Oliver SackÃ¢â ¬â„¢s just-published bookÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Gratitude,Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã Â consists of four essays the famous neurologist and chronicler ofÃ Â human quirks wrote in the months before his death of cancer this summer at 82. It is, in effect, a mini-memoir, a beautiful meditation on what it means to live a good life.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Sydney Trent, Washington Post Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“In these four graceful essays written in the two years before he died, Oliver Sacks looks at life, old age Ã¢â ¬â • and death, square in the eyeÃ¢â ¬Â¦.First published individually in the New York Times, together these pieces form a wise and profound quartet.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Laurie Hertzel, Minneapolis Star-Tribune Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“GratitudeÃ Â is a bittersweet and absolutely beautiful read in its entirety.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Maria Popova, Brainpickings.orgÃ¢â ¬Å“A humane look at his own life, and death, told with good humor, acceptance, and that charming gratitude that had such a strong hold on him. If you know his writings, this will bring them to a thoughtful and enlightened conclusion; if you do not,

the little book is a not just a farewell but will do for a grand introduction.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The Dispatch

OLIVER SACKS was born in 1933 in London and was educated at QueenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s College, Oxford. He completed his medical training at San FranciscoÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Mount Zion Hospital and at UCLA before moving to New York, where he soon encountered the patients whom he would write about in his book Awakenings. Dr. Sacks spent almost fifty years working as a neurologist and wrote many books, includingÃ Â The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat,Ã Â Musicophilia, andÃ Â Hallucinations,Ã Â about the strange neurological predicaments and conditions of his patients. The New York Times referred to him as "the poet laureate of medicine," and over the years he received many awards, including honors from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Royal College of Physicians. His memoir,Ã Â On the Move, was published shortly before his death in August 2015. For more information, please visitÃ Â www.oliversacks.com.

I became aware of Oliver Sacks only in the last year or two of his life, through interviews, articles about his essays and autobiography, and his contributions to WNYC’s Radiolab. Every time I heard him speak or read his words, I was struck by what a beautiful, gentle man he seemed to be. And when I heard he had been diagnosed with metastatic cancer and was about to die, I was deeply saddened. His story, which I had just come to know, was coming to an end.This book is a very short read... A collection of some of his final essays. Though I had read some of them before - or heard him tell some of these stories in interviews, reading them again reminds me about what I love about Oliver Sacks’ perspective and reminds me about what I’m grateful about in my own life.

A neurologist who gained his greatest renown for his ability to write about his profession in a thoroughly human way, Oliver Sacks passed away in August of 2015. His literary legacy consists of these four short, personal, profound essays written in the last two years of his life as he contemplated the facts of age and dying.The essays are presented in chronological order, beginning with ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Mercury," in which Sacks recounts his love of elements and atomic numbers, allowing him to state ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“at seventy-nine, I am gold.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• He enumerates some of the negative aspects of aging, such as slowing reactions, flagging energies, the tendency to forget names, and the looming fears of ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“dementia and stroke.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• But he can still declare that heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s looking forward to being

80. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“My Own LifeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• was composed after his diagnosis of a recurrence of fatal cancer. Here he cites philosopher David Hume, who wrote, at a similar juncture, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“I now reckon upon a speedy dissolution.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• He harks back to his attraction to the elements in ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“My Periodic Table.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• He notes that on his desk is a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“little lead casketÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• for his 82nd birthday, wonders if he will live to see bismuth (83), and feels almost sure he will miss the murderously radioactive 84th: polonium.In ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Sabbath,ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• the last of the four writings, Sacks recalls growing up in a close-knit orthodox Jewish home, and particularly the rituals of Shabbos: ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Kiddush accompanied by sweet red wine and honey cakesÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• But this idyllic cultural picture was fractured when Sacks admitted to his father that he had sexual feelings for other boys. His mother shrieked at him, making him hate religion. Leaving home, he struggled with addiction to amphetamines, but later found stability and solace in the work that inspired his book AWAKENINGS.Thus began a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“lonely but deeply satisfying, almost monkish existence.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Sacks devoted himself to the case histories of his and other patients, those whose unique maladies, always presented with respect, even reverence, provided material for popular books like THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A HAT and SEEING VOICES. Much later, Sacks was inspired by a cousin to visit Israel and then celebrate Sabbath with his orthodox relatives --- ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“a stopped world, a time outside time.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•In the certainty of approaching death, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“SabbathÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• concludes with the authorÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s hope that the ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“seventh day of oneÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s lifeÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• will bring longed-for peace and rest.Reviewed by Barbara Bamberger Scott

I read Gratitude as soon as I received it, and will read it again, over and over. It is especially comforting to someone moving through their later years. Oliver Sacks always had a special place in my heart.....a beautiful, brilliant, tender soul. He'll be missed.

I appreciate the perspective of gratitude an ,and the brevity is refreshing. Well done. Worth reading daily,May I have such a calm about me

I was completely surprised with this morning's appearance of GRATITUDE on my Kindle; it was the best way to start my day. Sacks has the gift of touching one's spirit with utmost ease and simplicity. He reveals emotions and exposes a naivety shared with all humanity. My own life and gratitude

unfolded with every page. Thank you Oliver Sacks.

All of these short essays have appeared elsewhere, but it is wonderful to read Oliver Sacks' thoughts written under the certain sentence of death from cancer. I hope that reading these short essays encourages others to go back to explore the rich delights found in his earlier books.

A wonderful, short meditation on facing death with grace, while cherishing life.

I can count on one hand the number of books I recall giving a five star rating. I just do do it lighly. however, in his calm and ever rational self, Oliver Sacks would be equally impressed that felt this rating approprste. this is a book to savor your life and to also prepare for the final passing. the opening quote tells all in the way only Dr. Oliver Sacks could do. it reads:I am now face to face with dying, Yet I'm not done with living. here, I can yes, I did enjoy an afternoon sitting on marble steps and eating Ice Cream with Dr. Sacks. I was reeling from a very poorly understood diagnoses on my youngest Child. Dr Sacks took his afternoon to explain it all in great detail. that stregenth end me. by the time the Ice cream was long gone and enjoyed, Dr. Sachs had equipped me with greater understanding than many of my sons Doctors had in those early years. I for one, will never forget this intelligent, very kind person. rest well Dr Oliver Sacks.

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