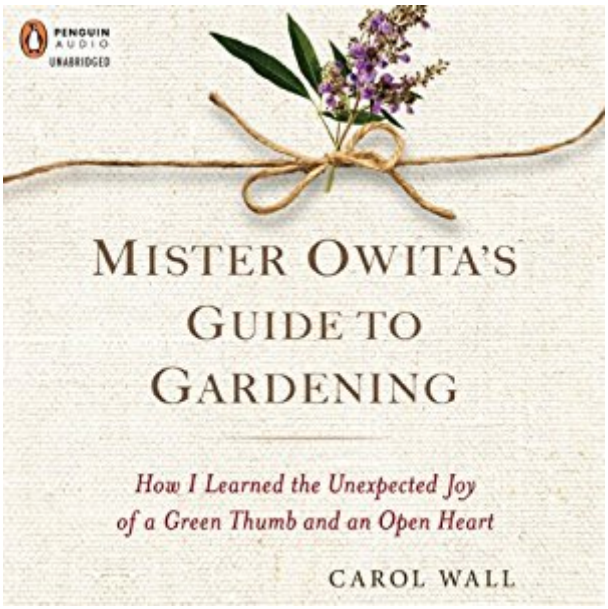
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Mister Owita's Guide To Gardening: How I Learned The Unexpected Joy Of A Green Thumb And An Open Heart



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Synopsis

A bestseller in the making, this is the true story of a unique friendship between two people who had nothing - and ultimately everything - in common. Carol Wall, a white woman living in a lily-white neighborhood in Middle America, was at a crossroads in her life. Her children were grown; she had successfully overcome illness; her beloved parents were getting older. One day she notices a dark-skinned African man tending her neighbor’s yard. His name is Giles Owita. He bags groceries at the supermarket. He comes from Kenya. And he’s very good at gardening. Before long Giles is transforming not only Carol’s yard, but her life. Though they are seemingly quite different, a caring bond grows between them. But they both hold long-buried secrets that, when revealed, will cement their friendship forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This was a book that I am glad that I read. I had mixed emotions to parts of it, but still found myself choosing to pick up the book in a quiet place to read and finishing it rather quickly. I love to garden and have developed some special friendships with unlikely people (also immigrants). I felt that I was going to connect so much with the author. I was surprised to discover that I didn’t feel I had as much in common with the author as I expected. Then I realized that was the key. Gardening and befriending people from all walks of life have always been who I am. They come naturally to me (plenty of other things don’t). They did not come naturally to Carol Wall and in the process of opening herself up to both those things, she learned so much. She was brutally honest about

herself - she had to look herself in the mirror, both literally as she dealt with fear of returning cancer, and figuratively as she faced truths about herself. Mr. Owita is a very special man and I am thankful to Carol Wall for sharing him with us. She was better for having known him and I feel I am better for having read about him.

This account of a most unlikely relationship reinforces that the best of life happens in ways we least expect. Carol Wall's writing is so honest and self-revelatory but rather than feel like she had exposed herself, I felt like she had exposed me. I think any reader will find more than one passage where they will have the distinct feeling that she knows them and is speaking from a place we all inhabit. The story, itself, is simple and about everyday life, but the lessons it teaches go far beyond. I read it in one day starting on an airplane and couldn't put it down until I was finished. And while the end isn't a typical "happy ending," I still felt so uplifted.

It is difficult to review this book without giving important details away. But Carol, a teacher and wife, is going through many issues in her own life and she meets Mr. Owita, a gardener from Kenya. Carol is not dealing especially well with things when she meets Giles Owita. The relationship that builds and the obvious effect it has on each of them, maybe especially Carol, is surreal. This book is so well written, that you feel as though you are part of the story when you are reading it. You feel as though her triumphs are your triumphs and when I finished the book I had a different outlook on life. Everyone can relate to this book and take a piece of it with you through your own travels through life. My husband also read this book and he too could not put it down. He told me he could not remember reading a more well written book ever!!!!

I enjoyed this story about the perfect friendship of two imperfect people. It provides a moral compass without being too preachy. This book made me think of the times I pre-judged people in the past. Because the author writes with humility, I don't feel that she looks down on me because I did so. I'm inspired to be a better friend and to treat people equally because outside appearances do not dictate character.

What an honor and a privilege to get to know Carol Wall ("Mrs. Wall") and Giles Owita through the medium of paper and ink. Just like Giles' expert hands at gardening turns many a backyard mess into a flourishing garden, Carol's expert command of language allows us readers to vicariously experience and relive their touching and sunny friendship. And what would life be without dear

friends to lighten the way? Carol and Giles do not just live in the pages of this moving book, but continue to reach out and touch those who had the pleasure of knowing them - members of their family, friends, garden owners and many, many students. Without sentimentality but with a keen sense of fully living in the moment, this lovely book will envelop you with its grace and beauty.

Wow! What a great book! My wife and I pre-ordered, and when the book arrived I grabbed it first. In the days that followed, time after time I, typically with teary eyes, told her about a chapter or a passage. The re-telling came from a sense of immense respect for the author's ability to capture complex emotions and from my desire to cement her narrative in my mind. It is a compelling story, and the writing is elegant. Carol Wall beautifully takes on the big issues of aging, illness, loneliness, loss, fear, and death that so pervade the lives of those of us in our 4th quarter. And, I think that especially for those who thought that we had a fair amount of control over our lives, the transition to those big issues is difficult. In this light, for me, the book met a need and is an inspirational source of courage. We already have sent copies to three of our favorite readers, and I anticipate we will send more. Thank you, Carol Wall, for writing this!

What a beautiful testament to a very special man. Carol Wall shows how friendships can grow and deepen in Spite of our flawed natures. Carol and Giles are polar opposites in the way they handle life's challenges and I must confess to really not liking very much the author's self focused personality yet she is someone who recognizes her flaws and tries to change. She has suffered many health blows and it is though God has placed this wonderful man in her life to help her deal with them. She is an excellent writer and Giles Owita is such a unique person that I continued to read where I might otherwise stopped because of the authors personality which, to her credit, she doesn't try to gloss over. I have been enriched by coming to know this wonderful man and that credit does indeed fall to Carol Wall.

When you begin a book you have a certain expectation of what the storyline is. My expectation kept changing throughout the book. Was this Barbara's story? Was the story about taking care of your parents in their reclining years? My emotional response to the story was all over the place. My mother lived twenty plus years with her breast cancer. My college friend lived less. Friendship is a special gift that enriches one's life, treasure.

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