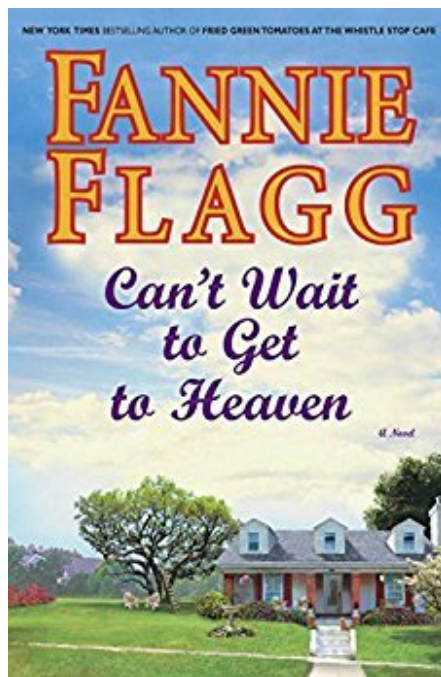




Can't Wait to Get to Heaven

Fannie Flagg

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Can't Wait to Get to Heaven Fannie Flagg

Combining southern warmth with unabashed emotion and side-splitting hilarity, Fannie Flagg takes readers back to Elmwood Springs, Missouri, where the most unlikely and surprising experiences of a high-spirited octogenarian inspire a town to ponder the age-old question: Why are we here?

Life is the strangest thing. One minute, Mrs. Elner Shimfissle is up in her tree, picking figs, and the next thing she knows, she is off on an adventure she never dreamed of, running into people she never in a million years expected to meet. Meanwhile, back home, Elner's nervous, high-strung niece Norma faints and winds up in bed with a cold rag on her head; Elner's neighbor Verbena rushes immediately to the Bible; her truck driver friend, Luther Griggs, runs his eighteen-wheeler into a ditch—and the entire town is thrown for a loop and left wondering, “What is life all about, anyway?” Except for Tot Whooten, who owns Tot's Tell It Like It Is Beauty Shop. Her main concern is that the end of the world might come before she can collect her social security.

In this comedy-mystery, those near and dear to Elner discover something wonderful: Heaven is actually right here, right now, with people you love, neighbors you help, friendships you keep. *Can't Wait to Get to Heaven* is proof once more that Fannie Flagg “was put on this earth to write” (*Southern Living*), spinning tales as sweet and refreshing as iced tea on a summer day, with a little extra kick thrown in.

Can't Wait to Get to Heaven Details

Date : Published November 28th 2006 by Random House (first published 2006)

ISBN :

Author : Fannie Flagg

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Fiction, Humor, American, Southern

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From Reader Review Can't Wait to Get to Heaven for online ebook

Book Concierge says

Audio book read by Cassandra Campbell

From the dust jacket: Life is the strangest thing. One minute, Mrs Elner Shimfissle is up in her tree, picking figs, and the next thing she knows she is off on an adventure she never dreamed of, running into people she never in a million years expected to meet. Meanwhile, back home, Elner's nervous, high-strung niece Norma faints and winds up in bed with a cold rag on her head; Elner's neighbor Verbena rushes immediately to the Bible; her truck driver friend, Luther Griggs, whom Elner has known since he was a boy, runs his eighteen-wheeler into a ditch – and the entire town is thrown for a loop and left wondering, “What is life all about anyway?” Except for Tot Whooten, who owns Tot's Tell it Like It IS beauty shop. Her main concern is that the end of the world might come before she can collect her social security.

My reactions:

This is a sweet, gentle tale of one woman's influence on her community, that reminds us all to consider the cycle of life and how we fit into it. Flagg populates Elmwood Springs with colorful characters who, for all their eccentricity, are completely recognizable. We have a matriarch who touches everyone with her genuine kindness, straightforward advice, and simple life lessons. There are the local busybodies with hearts of gold who rally around to help anyone mired in one of life's tragedies. And no community would be complete without the juvenile delinquent headed for a life of crime but for the kind person who sets him straight and gives him a reason to stay on the right path.

Is this an unrealistic community? Maybe, but I still recognize the parable. Flagg reminds me that the things I most cherish have nothing to do with material goods, and much to do with relationships I've developed over the years. It's not great literature. It's not even Flagg's best work. But I did enjoy the time I spent with Elner and the residents of Elmwood Springs.

Cassandra Campbell does a good job on the audio; I particularly liked how she voiced some of the excitable characters like Norma and Tot.

Ange H says

This is part of a trilogy about the citizens of Elmwood Springs, Missouri. I've unabashedly adored all three of them, and I'm sad that I don't live there and know these people.

My love is not blind. Can't Wait to Get to Heaven was about as silly a book as you'll ever come across, but I don't care. Elner Shinfissle (a name that would enrage me in a book that I didn't like) is a sweet, elderly midwestern lady who has basically touched the lives of everyone she's ever met. She appreciates all the beauty and kindness in the world and makes others see it, too. With no children of her own, she is the beloved Aunt Elner to the whole of Elmwood Springs, for whom she is a friend, teacher, baker, advisor, volunteer, depending on what each person or group needs.

Aunt Elner steadfastly refuses to move from her farm closer to town, which worries everyone as she is really too old to be out there by herself. This same stubbornness explains why she falls out of a fig tree one day, is rushed to the hospital, and declared dead.

The reaction of the whole wonderful cast of characters to the news of Elner's untimely death is both touching and funny. Meanwhile, Elner is wandering around in heaven, marveling at the decor and making the acquaintance of all kinds of people she's always wanted to meet, including God and Thomas Edison (she is a huge fan of his invention, electricity.)

If you read this plot summary and roll your eyes and yawn, I get it. But if you are ever in the mood for a lovely, feel-good break from real life, I encourage you to give this (or one of the other two in the series) a chance.

Edited to add: I forgot to mention, if you can possibly get your hands on the audio book, and have Fannie Flagg read this to you with her lovely southern-belle drawl, it makes it that much better.

Phrynnne says

Not my first by this author so I knew what to expect but this one seemed to be a bit too whimsical at first and started to border on the silly (for my taste that is). But then just as I started muttering under my breath about having to give up soon if it kept on like that something wonderful and very funny happened. Then of course I was hooked and raced through to the end. So, not the best book she has written, but a pleasant way to pass a Sunday afternoon.

Gaetano says

Una lettura divertente e deliziosa, come la torta del titolo!

E naturalmente l'adorabile vecchietta protagonista, zia Elner, con le sue perle di saggezza mi ha conquistato e qualche volta commosso, affrontando la vita (terrena e non) con semplicità e ironia anche nei momenti più drammatici.

Insomma, zia Elner applicava d'istinto le tecniche del problem solving molto prima che cominciassero a insegnarle nelle scuole di economia.

Tante risate e qualche riflessione sulla vita, con ottimismo, delicatezza e tanto altruismo.

E' brava Fannie Flag nel farci sentire partecipi delle atmosfere di una provincia americana senza tempo, popolata da tanti personaggi pittoreschi, con le loro vite che, nella loro singolare unicità, convergono nell'affetto sincero per l'ultranovantenne Elner.

In appendice ho trovato con gradita sorpresa tutte le ricette dei manicaretti in cui ci si imbatte nel racconto: non vedo l'ora di provare almeno quelli più invitanti; per prima naturalmente la paradisiaca torta al caramello!

Sharon Huether says

The author takes the reader back to Elmwood Springs , Missouri; where local resident Elner. Shimfissle has unbelievable experiences. Elner an older lady climbs up into a fig tree to pick the fruit and has a little

accident.

The towns people assume the worst.

It's mystery and comedy at it's best with laugh out loud moments

Eva says

Laugh out loud funny, this book describes how any single person can greatly influence the lives of their neighbors. Elner Shimfissle is blessed with an inquiring mind and a large loving heart. In her eighties, or possibly nineties, she decides to make fig jam for her friends and falls out of the tree when attacked by wasps while picking figs. She doesn't know her age because she was born at home, the only record is in the family bible and her sister, Ida, buried that years ago so no one would know Ida's real age.

Elner is pronounced dead and her family and neighbors swing into action getting ready for her funeral. Her friends feed her cat and clean her house. Her obituary is prepared at the local paper. Even her favorite radio station airs the news of her demise. The number of requests at the florist is huge. Each person has a recollection of Elner, many of them funny, most of them sweet. Many people have good reasons to be glad they knew her.

In the meantime, Elner gets to go to heaven and ask all the questions she's had. Her first one: Which came first, the chicken or the egg? I'm not telling the answer, but it's good to finally know.

Fannie Flagg has a large cast of characters in this book, but each one is so memorable it's easy to keep them all straight.

Angie says

Heartwarming and laugh-out-loud funny! A delightful look at how each person's influence can bigger than they'd ever dream and mean more to people than they'd ever know, just by being themselves. We also get a little glimpse at a version of Heaven you've probably never dreamed of, and southern charm that abounds throughout the novel. Let us all be an influence for good, like Elner Shimfissle... :)

Recommended by a co-worker, and so glad I followed up on it and actually read it!

Saskia Marijke Niehorster-Cook says

I have so far read two books from this writer and this is her third. The first was Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe, by far one of my favorite books to date. Although this new book takes place later on in time, the characters of this book are somewhat linked to the characters of the previous book "Welcome to the World, Baby Girl". It is a great book to read if life has hung you out to dry and the last thing you need is more drama. This book is a spoonful of honey when your life/throat is parched and itchy. It has a lot of love in it and a great message for all of us to strive to be better. I certainly would love to have a little more of Elner in me. At times I thoroughly enjoyed this book, though I had a bit of a problem digesting too sweet a story and suspending my disbelief. At one point the word fake sugar came into my mind out of nowhere, but it did compensate later on in the story, so I did not go into a diabetic comma, and the plot got to have more consistency and substance. I can't wait to die and go to heaven if it means sailing into the sunset and arriving

back in the times of Torrey Pines Beach and buggy boards...375 pgs

Rayni says

My mom got this from the State library Talking Books. I immediately checked out the reviews & thought this was something she would love. Imagine my surprise when she announced Monday she did not like this book at all & wanted to send it back. It was too hard to understand. Huh??? I slipped the cartridge into the digital reader &, of course, it was too hard to understand: the reader sounded like a chipmunk. I slowed it down to "normal," then went one notch lower. This book snagged me good.

EDITED TO ADD: This is the first time I have read a Fannie Flagg book. Yes, read. Because off I ran to the library & picked up a hardbound copy of it. After all, I missed the first part of the book. We should have rewound it, but didn't. I could follow the reader & loved hearing her read it.

It was a satisfying read. I loved the little mysteries embedded in the story & how they were answered. I read somewhere to "prepare to laugh out loud, cry & fall in love with the characters." I did.

Mom Shaw says

this is the story of an elderly lady who has a near death experience and the people in her life both those she has known for years and those she meets in the hospital setting whose life she touches, this is a funny book, lots of great characters, fanny flagg also wrote fried green tomatoes, i watched the movie and wasn't that impressed but maybe I would like the book better, some of the characters in this story are also in welcome to the world baby girl.

Marta says

Un personaggio che non si può non amare è la nostra protagonista Elner, una vecchietta tutto pepe che riesce a portare gioia in ogni dove ed a farsi amare e apprezzare da tutti nel paesino in cui vive. Anche la morte con lei sembra quasi una barzelletta. L'ho adorata follemente per il suo grande cuore, per l'amore per la natura e le sue creature, per la sua voglia di donare agli altri e per le tante risate che è riuscita a farmi fare.

Una lettura molto piacevole, leggera, frizzante scritta in modo magistrale e con dei personaggi peculiari e delineati alla perfezione e nonostante alcuni siano solo piccole comparse l'autrice ha saputo dare il giusto spazio e importanza a tutti.

Sebbene la trama non sia niente di particolare e in alcuni momenti sembra quasi surreale la Flagg riesce comunque a farti apprezzare ogni singola pagina coinvolgendoti nella storia e nella vita dei protagonisti.

Un ambientazione che sembra avere il sapore di quei piccoli paesini di una volta, semplici, dove tutti sanno tutto di tutti e sono pronti a farsi in quattro per tutti e per le strade il profumo dei dolci fatti in casa. Proprio quando Elner va nell'aldilà capiamo quanto sia amata da tutti e nel suo piccolo come è riuscita a cambiare la vita ad ogni persona che è venuta in contatto con lei.

Adorabile anche il fatto che a fine libro troviamo le ricette dei dolci di cui sentiamo tanto parlare nella storia.

Terri says

I bought this book on impulse at Borders, before it closed (boo hoo), because it was very cheap. I loved "Fried Green Tomatoes" and Candid Camera so I was ready to enjoy this novel by Fannie Flagg. I made a couple false starts as I began to read. I was somewhat distracted by a busy life and the featured small town quirkiness just didn't grab my attention at first. Then, my dear friend, Lillian, passed away at age 90. For years, I spent most Saturday lunches with Lillian. Suddenly, that privilege was gone. I picked up this novel, seeking to occupy my restless brain for a bit. I had no idea that Aunt Elnor Shimfissle would capture my heart and help me through the initial stages of grief with her zest for life and humorous outlook. The only similarities between Aunt Elnor and my friend, Lillian, may have been the number of people they touched and their habit of taking people at face value. Aunt Elnor saw the best in everyone she encountered and didn't fuss over the petty details that drag us down too often. She had questions about everything but didn't worry about whether the answers fit with her own view of reality. She helped people without thought of personal gain or gratitude. She accepted everyone, warts and all.

Fannie Flagg has written a book of comfort for those of us who wonder and worry about the meaning of it all. Her characters are common folk, who share my own dismay at the state of the world and its occupants. She addresses the horror and confusion of a country that suddenly realizes that its own self-perception may not be shared by the rest of the world. Aunt Elnor's quiet, simple life, or more significantly, her passing, is an engaging illustration of the butterfly effect....and the quickening winds sweep the lucky reader up on a delightful journey.

Robin says

Oh okay read. It was for book group or I wouldn't have read it. I have such a list of books I'm working on. If you have tons of time and would enjoy a few laughs it does have them. There is mild language and God/Harvey doesn't judge his children. No final judgement and heaven is how we want it to look. They just want us to be happy. Flagg wrote this book to remind us that there are still so many good people in the world and the best is yet to come, so on that aspect I would not disagree. One thing I do like about all of Fannie Flagg's book is that she has a recipe section in the back of the foods talked about in the book. It's fun to see and try. I'm planning on making the Heavenly Carmel Cake

Mahoghani 23 says

Elenor is the townsfolk matriarch. She's been there for everyone in one form or fashion. She's pleasant to be around and never passes judgment on anyone. She's a woman many instantly fall in love with.

No one knows her actual age, especially Elenor. She's imagined to be between 70-80 years of age. She seems eccentric but is a well rounded, fun loving woman. Her niece, Norma, worries so much about her but Elenor can take care of herself but at the same time, she's hardheaded. Norma told her not to climb her ladder to get any figs off her tree but what does she do? Climb the tree, disturb a wasp nest and falls from the ladder.

Elenor thinks she's awake and everyone is ignoring or can't hear her but she died and went to heaven. Unfortunately when she gets there, she finds out that heaven is not ready for her arrival.

A funny book to read. Hearing all the good things she did for others without ever understanding how many

lives she touched with her kindness. The book addresses today's society compared to how the elders in the town was brought up. A book to read on a rainy or very cold day. Will make you smile and glad you read it.

Susan Bradley says

A funny and engaging story of the old South where neighbors really knew each other and really cared. And with quite a bit of spiritual insight as well. Good feelings come from reading it.
