



A Farewell to Walmart

Carly J. Hallman

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Reflecting on her transformation from Podunk pariah to well-traveled millennial writer, Carly J. Hallman knows that life in small-town America isn't all bake sales and friendly smiles—sometimes it just plain sucks.

A delightful tongue-in-cheek collection of essays on topics such as lobsters and puberty, *A Farewell to Walmart* follows eight-year-old Hallman past the superstore's automatic doors on opening day in 1995 through her sophomore year of college—a time defined by baby fat, ridicule, and, above all, the constant presence of Walmart. Along the way, she learns to navigate middle-school drama, deals with the death of a peer, and ultimately figures out what it takes to move on from everything that's held her back.

Supported by a lively cast of characters, including a flatulent grandfather, a sadistic gym coach, and Chewbacca—yes, the real one—Hallman perfectly encapsulates how a big-box store can be the cultural epicenter of small-town life and the launching pad to a wider world.

A Farewell to Walmart Details

Date : Published November 22nd 2016 by Little A

ISBN :

Author : Carly J. Hallman

Format : ebook 62 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Humor

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From Reader Review A Farewell to Walmart for online ebook

George says

Good book. I forgot I had it on my Kindle. I had to give it 5 stars as I worked with both of her parents before she was born. ?

Carly Hallman says

Obligatory review of one's own book.

Tammy Drake says

Brings me back to childhood days. Easy reading ?

Lyn says

Not terribly long, and not terribly in-depth on anything, but it's decently interesting. It might have been more interesting had it had some more details in particular stories, but I think it was worth the less-than-an-hour it took me to read. It's written in a nice, friendly style, and is pretty humorous in a few spots. I would recommend it.

Note: I received this book for free through Goodreads Giveaways.

Becky says

Light, comical read.

Cassandra says

Captured my middle class life...

I didn't have a Walmart growing up - but I did share the same desire to leave. The author captures the tension inherent to that mindset perfectly.

MsChris says

This book was creepy, it was like someone was writing about my own adolescences...right down to the

veggie Subway sandwiches. The writing was fun and interesting I just wish there was more of it. Each chapter is a small little vignettes that are just enough to make me want to know about this author but then it's over. I hope to read more by this talented author.

I received this book for free from the publisher through a Goodreads Giveaway in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Bethany says

Fluffy and About What I Expected - Kind Of

With the title being somewhat comical, I expected a book that was a little light-hearted and funny, but the author attempts the wax philosophical about the effect of a Wal-Mart being built in her small town. While I can appreciate that there will be some changes, she attributes growth in her maturity and friendships to her relationship with a Super Wal-Mart, but she really can't expound on why this is the case. Disappointing.

Gary Pulver says

I won this book at Bookreads and it sat in my kindle until last evening. My computer would not connect to the internet so I thought I would just go to my kindle and try something there and this was the first book I saw. How surprised I was to read that the author moved from San Diego to Granbury, Texas when she was eight years old in 1995. Granbury is where I currently live!!!

Carly, I loved your book, it paints Granbury exactly as it is. We chose to move to Granbury to retire because of the affordability of having a house on the lake. Walmart is not our favorite place but sometimes you have to go there if you want a certain item as it is the only place in town that sells it. I could see every place in Walmart that Carly described, the pharmacy, the dairy cases, etc. But, I am not sure the lobster tank is still there but I will look next time I venture into the store.

This coming of age story is very good. I would recommend it to any adolescent who feels awkward about themselves as they will surely identify with much of what Carly experienced growing up. I spent 44 years as a jr. high student, teacher and counselor and can readily assure any awkward adolescent that they share this with almost every other similar aged person.

I have a recommendation for the author. I recommend that you target your books to this audience with some novels. I'm sure your real life will give you much material.

Jenn Estepp says

There are very brittle bones of something interesting here, but instead of exploring that, Hallman writes a super generic, somewhat disjointed bit of memoir that's pretty unremarkable.

Dustin says

A Farewell to Walmart follows the author through her formative experiences in small-town Texas, from her days staring up at the lobster tank and glossy magazines at Walmart to her glamorous life as a globe trotting writer. Each of the stories in this memoir rang true to me, a fellow exhale of the small town South. The collection is a study on contrast: Granbury and China, hanging in the Walmart parking lot vs "cruising with rolled-down windows around Dallas's gay neighborhood." The journey is aided by Hallman's sense of humor and close attention to detail.

For some, small town life in Texas is about getting your own plot of land, raising a family and teaching them how to hunt. For Hallman, it's about escape. Most of the characters outside Hallman's family play out as antagonists, assaulting Hallman with baseballs or their provincialism. Reuniting with an old flame, Hallman realizes that "the whole point of fantasizing about a future with this guy before was that we'd leave Granbury together later." I found myself wanting more moments of human connection, more characters like best friend Houston who Hallman rewards with deeper motivation and richer characterization.

The stories build slowly, but by the end I was immersed in this world and I wanted to know more. Did Hallman find what she was looking for when she left Granbury? Are we always leaving smaller places for bigger ideas?

Keith Blodgett says

Life is like a whole cake waiting to be divided up and eaten. 'A Farewell to Wal-Mart' is like getting the thinnest slice that could still be called 'cake' thd author even mentions other places and adventures she had after she wrote this Kindle Short which skips aimlessly from her early teen years to early twenties. No real depth. No serious drama. What I don't think she understands is EVERY town to a teenager is somewhere they want to escape. There was nothing eventful in this story. It was brief moms of a mundane life and nothing special. The writing showed that she has some talent but it doesn't shine here. To be honest all I can say is I'm glad it was short and I'm glad it's over. I really didn't enjoy it. As a coming of age story it lacks any angst or real drama.

Paul Harding says

Read it in one sitting! The mixture of humorous anecdotes and poignant moments should appeal to all. We are taken on a whistle-stop tour of different points in the author's life, including the moment Walmart came to the small town, various adolescent struggles that often (but not always) involve the Walmart store, and finally to escape and returning back to small town Texas.

Hallman's stories and those poignant moments will resonate, I am sure, with many readers' own lives: guilty embarrassment, insecurities, a sense of not fitting in, and the dreams of escape with the hopes for something more. I am sure that many will also have memories of Walmart or other big chains coming into their small towns and quickly becoming a focal point for life there.

Rachel Renbarger says

This is my hometown and exactly my sense of humor. Loved it, felt it, although I know it's not for everyone.

Tammy says

I won this kindle book through Goodreads giveaway. I'd give this 2.5 stars. I found it very well written but it was all on the surface, not much depth to any of the essays. I'd definitely read this author again, though!
