



Mr. and Mrs. Doctor

Julie Iromuanya

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Ifi and Job, a Nigerian couple in an arranged marriage, begin their lives together in Nebraska with a single, outrageous lie: that Job is a doctor, not a college dropout. Unwittingly, Ifi becomes his co-conspirator—that is until his first wife, Cheryl, whom he married for a green card years ago, reenters the picture and upsets Job's tenuous balancing act.

Julie Iromuanya has short stories and novel excerpts appearing or forthcoming in the *Kenyon Review*, *Passages North*, the *Cream City Review*, and the *Tampa Review*, among other journals. She is a finalist for the PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize for Debut Fiction. *Mr. and Mrs. Doctor* is her first novel.

Mr. and Mrs. Doctor Details

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From Reader Review Mr. and Mrs. Doctor for online ebook

Juletta Gilge says

This was a well written book with a wonderful perspective. I liked the characters and the story, it just wasn't my cup of tea.

David says

This is an impressive first novel. The characters are wonderfully rich, and their richness is skillfully woven up into the complexity of the plot. The story has quite a pull as well, and definitely interests early and throughout. I'm betting I'll be hearing quite a bit about this book in the near future.

Catherine at The Gilmore Guide to Books says

Job's father sends him from their homeland in Nigeria to America to study to become a doctor. Instead of doing so, Job flunks out of college but continues to tell everyone he is still studying. At twenty-four he uses some of the tuition money on a green card marriage thus ensuring he never has to move home and acknowledge his lies. This is the beginning of the quicksand foundation laid out in Julie Iromuanya's debut novel, Mr. and Mrs. Doctor. Almost two decades after his supposed graduation and into his fictional medical career in Nebraska it is time for Job to marry properly (having long divorced his fake American wife) and rather than pulling the curtain back on his lies, he forges forward with them by going back to Nigeria to marry the bride he has chosen. His new wife Ifi knows only that she finally has a chance to escape her aunt's home and to marry a doctor and live in America so if she is somewhat older than the pictures her groom has seen of her it is a minor lie. The collision between Ifi and Job, as they negotiate a life based on lies is the heart of Mr. and Mrs. Doctor.

The rest of this review can be read at The Gilmore Guide to Books: <http://wp.me/p2B7gG-12u>

Carla says

This plodded along somewhat. The characters were very well developed, but the story line just got old and didn't move like it should. In essence, it's the story of a Nigerian immigrant, and what starts is his marriage to an American to obtain his Green Card, and then how this comes back later to haunt him. A story of definitely poverty, how everything looks so different from the outside in. It does tell however that no matter where you come from, whatever century you come from, that immigrants still want the same thing. How the American dream is perpetuated outside of our country is so skewed, that the reality is heartbreaking for many. There is nothing to suggest however, that immigrants aren't very hard working people, in trying to achieve that dream, nor do they give up that dream. This author has written short stories, which I'd be interested in perusing.

Vicki Myatt says

The points made about how difficult it is to be an immigrant are well taken and the only positive thing I can say about the book, but the plot is so disjointed and there are so many story lines that are started but never expanded that it becomes a jumble of ideas. The characters are not likable. So, I have no empathy for them or their problems. Job is the worst. He is a hard worker and wants the best for his family, but he lies about everything to everyone. He sleeps with other women. There is not one happy thing that happens in the whole book. My book club read it, and none of us liked it nor could we say anything good about it. The ending is the absolute worst. It just drops you with no explanation or hope that he has learned anything from his life.

Mary Wherry says

Did not like enough to keep reading.

Trudy says

After I realized two stars meant the book was "ok", I had to change it to one star. This book was NOT OK for me. It was annoying, exasperating, maddening, and boring!

Margaret says

It is very easy to deduce that the author is a child of immigrants. Her Igbo words and pronunciations are off, but not enough to distract from the substance of the book.

The beginning of it called Adichie's "The Arrangers of Marriage" back to memory- disillusionment, lies, shattered perceptions of a foreign land-even Ifi's family seemed to spring from Adichie's story. However, by the second chapter, Iromuanya had taken the story and made it her own.

Dreams do not always come true, and not everyone is equipped to handle the shift from "what should have been" to "what is". Job reminds me of Uncle Happiness from Ike Oguine's "The Squatter's Tale"- from his head-in-the-sand attitude to his hopeless optimism about his situation. Deep down, he hates the image of himself seen through white eyes enough to hate other black people filtered through the same lenses. A deeply flawed man, yet he manages to be just a man who wants to do the right thing but doesn't stop lying to himself enough to follow through.

Emeka...the less is said of that cretin, the better.

Ifi turns out to be the best-rounded character in "Mr. & Mrs. Doctor. I like that her character went from a girl with no prospects apart from scrubbing and cleaning noses to a woman who knew when to walk away from her life.

I give this book 4 stars, because it was a deeply riveting read.

Ellen says

I liked this, for the most part, but I think Iromuanya didn't really get as far into her characters' heads as I hoped for. Some of their actions kind of came out of nowhere--anything Job and Cheryl did together, especially. The time-jump between parts 2 and 3 also didn't serve the story (especially Victor) well at all. Certain things, such as when Ifi got a job or why Job agreed that this would be acceptable, were left out entirely.

Rachel says

Iromuanya does this thing where in the beginning the situations her characters find themselves are absurd and even funny, and I found myself wondering where this was going. But then I got to know the characters and their stories and it wasn't so funny anymore, I was rooting for them, I wanted them to succeed! It was nominated for the Pen/Faulkner Award for Fiction, which is where I heard about it.

Shannon says

It pains me to do this; you'll note it even took a few days. But after this book got off to a 4-4.5 star start, I now know why the rating is hovering around 3 stars. Thoughts coming soon....

Samuel Maina says

This book aptly captures the struggles that people who live abroad (USA) go through trying to convince those back home that they are doing well by putting up a face.

That is not to say that there are no people that are doing well out there but that a majority do not do well. Job Obgonnaya a nurse assistant wants to use the title of a doctor.

Which is why when Ifi's aunt arranges a marriage for her niece to a "doctor" working in America; it is not readily admitted that this is a man who is a nurse assistant.

Ifi comes to the land of promise married to Job and they end up getting a son who later dies leaving both of them with nothing to look up to.

Peter and Sheryl seem to be the real trouble in Job's life. Is it not funny how Job likes to complicate his life; not forgetting Gladys. It is no wonder this guy has to be left eventually,

Arranged marriages although seems like a mainstay in Africa's cultural landscape and they do not seem to always end well. The first 6 months of marriage are the most critical.

Money is time in America cliché seems too much....I am more used to the time is money cliché. Music wise,

Fela gets a mention and Tchikovsky as well.

Emeka is too full of himself. I like him when he says “when you have lived in America long enough, you will know that Americans have nothing and everything all at once.” I laughed. This is the same guy who says “Every fool who makes the mistake of ordering the wrong dish reveals something of himself.” He gives an example “those who order lobster and crab are fools.” “We are in the middle of the country, and there is no ocean. You are eating the remains of a dog and its feces.” I laughed a little more.

First rule of America “Ask to speak to the manager and he will give you what you want. That is the first rule of America.”

Infidelity is real.

A good read.

Lark Benobi says

Job and Ifi are living breathing three dimensional characters who are somehow dropped into a plot that feels like a piece of Ikea furniture still disassembled and in its box. Is it a table? Is it a bookcase? the two central characters are so strong and believable, so I had high hopes, and even though I'm being harsh here I'm glad to have met these fictional characters. But their story is a muddle full of contradiction, melodrama, and coincidence. The ancillary characters behave in ways that completely baffled me. It reads like a terrific first draft.

Mocha Girl says

Well told story of African immigrant's "dream deferred" in America -- I can't help but think this was inspired by actual experiences. Sad and bittersweet -- touches on so many challenges, stereotypes, familial obligations/expectations, tribal traditions, old and new customs, issues with assimilation, etc. Although, the experiences weren't new to me (I'd read about them before in other novels), the author's voice, tone, and perspective lent "freshness" to the story and writing. Well done, excellent debut, imo.

Amanda says

An interesting story about the lies people keep and why they keep them and how we dance around the pink elephants in the room in the interest of self preservation. I really enjoyed this book. It was well written and the author was great in our Rumpus chat. Being a child of Nigerian immigrants herself, she really seemed to understand this culture and created characters that had an incredible amount of depth. An excellent example of how a book can be incredible even when it's protagonist is probably hated by most who read it.
