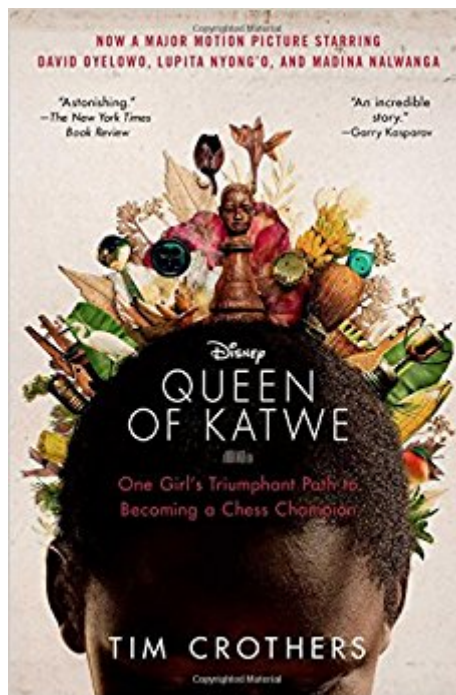




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# The Queen Of Katwe: One Girl's Triumphant Path To Becoming A Chess Champion



## Synopsis

Now a major motion picture starring Academy Award winner Lupita Nyong'o and David Oyelowo, directed by Mira Nair. The "astonishing" (The New York Times Book Review) and "inspirational" (Shelf Awareness) true story of Phiona Mutesi, a teenage chess prodigy from the slums of Uganda. One day in 2005 while searching for food, nine-year-old Ugandan Phiona Mutesi followed her brother to a dusty veranda where she met Robert Katende. Katende, a war refugee turned missionary, had an improbable dream: to empower kids in the Katwe slum through chess, a game so foreign there is no word for it in their native language. Laying a chessboard in the dirt, Robert began to teach. At first children came for a free bowl of porridge, but many grew to love the game that like their daily lives requires persevering against great obstacles. Of these kids, one girl stood out as an immense talent: Phiona. By the age of eleven Phiona was her country's junior champion, and at fifteen, the national champion. Now a Woman Candidate Master, the first female titled player in her country's history, Phiona dreams of becoming a Grandmaster, the most elite level in chess. But to reach that goal, she must grapple with everyday life in one of the world's most unstable countries. The Queen of Katwe is a "remarkable" (NPR) and "riveting" (New York Post) book that shows how Phiona's story transcends the limitations of the chessboard" (Robert Hess, US Grandmaster).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It's a story almost too uplifting to believe: a young girl from a dirt-poor slum in Uganda meets a man, a missionary from a similar background, who inspires her to take up chess, a game so unknown in her country that there is not even a word for it in her language. The girl rises to national champion and travels to the Chess Olympiad in Siberia, a journey that opens her eyes to a world she might never have known. Crothers tells Phiona Mutesi's story in a crisp, reportorial style (he's a former senior writer at Sports Illustrated), but it's nearly impossible to read the book without a strong emotional response. The author necessarily talks about the social and economic challenges that Phiona encountered in Uganda—most girls her age had no bigger dreams than simply surviving—but his focus remains centered on Phiona herself, the uneducated prodigy, the barely literate girl who, against all odds, stands poised to become a chess grand master. Inspiring without being strident about it. --David Pitt --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A must-read for all who dare to dream." (Library Journal (starred review)) "A moving and universal story of the power of potential and the wonder of perseverance. This story will inspire you--and will make you wonder how many more Phionas there are among us."--Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, New York Times-bestselling author of *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana* "This story of a young woman's triumph over the unimaginably cruel fortune she was born into would pierce a heart of stone."--Hillary Jordan, New York Times-bestselling author of *Mudbound* and *When She Woke* "The Queen of Katwe is one of the most inspiring, thought-provoking, humbling books I've ever read. It's a must-read for any chess player, woman, athlete, or frankly anyone who knows any of the previous three, aka everyone!"--Siva Sankrithi, Math Teacher & Chess Coach, Lakeside Upper School, Seattle, WA "The Queen of Katwe is gripping. We witness Phiona's incredible evolution as a player, as she competes against older and far more experienced competitors. It also offers readers a fascinating look at a war-torn and struggling nation, as well as the unlikely story of how her mentor Robert Katende, a refugee of Uganda's civil war, has created a flourishing chess program for kids in one of Africa's most treacherous slums. This story has the power to inspire girls everywhere."--Alexandra Kosteniuk, Grandmaster, 12th Women's World Chess Champion ([www.chessqueen.com](http://www.chessqueen.com)) "Moving.... A poignant reminder of the power of hope." (Kirkus Reviews) "The Queen of Katwe is an extraordinary account of one young woman's exceptional achievement. It is also a lament for this world in which only a tiny number of incredibly fortunate and exceptionally determined children have any chance of escaping the dehumanizing

poverty that prevails in Katwe and places like it." (Bill Littlefield, host of "Only a Game" on National Public Radio) "It's a story almost too uplifting to believe" | Crothers tells Phiona Mutesi's story in a crisp, reportorial style, but it's nearly impossible to read the book without a strong emotional response | Inspiring. (Booklist) "The Queen of Katwe Tim Crothers gives us an inspiring and heart-wrenching story." (Chessville.com) "An inspirational profile of an amazing chess player from one of the world's worst slums." (Shelf Awareness) "Phiona's story ... will break readers' hearts. Phiona's perseverance, courage, faith, and hope will have the very same readers rooting for her success." (School Library Journal) "Part of Crothers's achievement is his presentation of the terrible circumstances millions of people battle every day to sustain themselves and feed their families, nearly all of them lacking the bright, improbable possibility provided by Mutesi." (The Boston Globe) "Tim Crothers powerfully captures the crushing poverty in which Mutesi and her family still live." (The Age (Australia)) "Phiona's story transcends the limitations of the chessboard--her life not confined to the miniature pieces that her hand glides from her side of the board to attack her opponent's king. No, Phiona succeeding at chess, like the fight to become great athletes for so many impoverished people around the world, has been a game for her life." (Robert Hess, U.S. Grandmaster The Sports Quotient) "Riveting." (New York Post) "[A] remarkable story." (NPR, "Tell Me More") "Wonderful.... A story of resilience and creativity in the midst of immense need." (ForeignPolicy.com) "So compelling" | Crothers writes the story matter-of-factly ... reserving judgment and bias. It beckons the reader to wonder at the possibilities that lay before Mutesi, and it reminds us of the harsh reality in which she continues to live. (Charleston Post Courier) "Astonishing." (New York Times Book Review) "This extraordinary story will stop you and make you want to count your blessings! It confirms how the strength of the human spirit and determination can prevail. Tim's portrait of Ugandan chess prodigy Phiona Mutesi offers hope and inspiration to all humankind." (Laura Schroff, New York Times-bestselling author of An Invisible Thread) "Phiona Mutesi is [a] young star. An incredible story." (Gary Kasparov, Chess Grandmaster)

A great story however, the text did not flow easily from one subject to another. At times the story was difficult to follow. On the other side of that the book raises awareness as to the issues and hardships the people of Uganda face daily. The story also created within me a desire to seek out ways in which I as an individual might be able to assist the organization mentioned in the book to make life easier for the children of Katwe.

Amazing story of a slum girl's progress from knowing nothing about chess to the point of being a champion, on her way to becoming a grand master. Very uplifting and inspiring!

Katwe is a part of Kampala that has mud mixed with sick and worse as a landscape. That a girl can rise above the squalor is a testament to many--her teacher, the writer who wrote the article, the game of chess, and Phiona Mutesi, the girl herself. You know, there is no word for chess in Buganda, the basic language of Uganda. Phiona speaks English but she "is the ultimate underdog." She has the good fortune to meet Robert Katenda a missionary who believes in God and the discipline of chess. She also has the good fortune to have her tale told by a gifted reporter, Tim Crothers. After living in Uganda for three years I wanted to stop strangers on the street in California and question them, "do you know what's going on in the world?" This book will shake you. A fortunate experience.

This is an inspiring story of an Ugandan slum child who learned chess and went on to win a chess tournaments and become an African "grand master" chess player. It is a bit hard to read about the difficult conditions she had to endure in the slum of "Katwe" outside Kampala, Uganda.

This was a heart wrenching story. It helped me be thankful for what I have and see a glimpse at another part of the world.

Amazing story! At beginning it was a tough read due to the hard life described of several generations in Ugandan slum. But this is a story that needs to be told! We are so isolated in the West. The story of chess and the personalities involved, as well as the rise of Phiona and her amazing talent is a phenomenal story! The approach of the missionaries was interesting and practical - they came to help and participate in the community for the long haul. Should be required reading!

A terrific book; better than the movie as you get a better sense of Phiona's struggles, her dreams, and her faith. This quote speaks volumes ..."Phiona Mutesi is the ultimate underdog. To be African is to be an underdog in the world. To be Ugandan is to be an underdog in Africa. To be from Katwe is to be an underdog in Uganda. To be a girl is to be an underdog in Katwe."

Inspiring story, puts a light on how poor and unfortunate these countries are. Not so much a chess

book , but a book about how chess was used to help struggling kids.

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