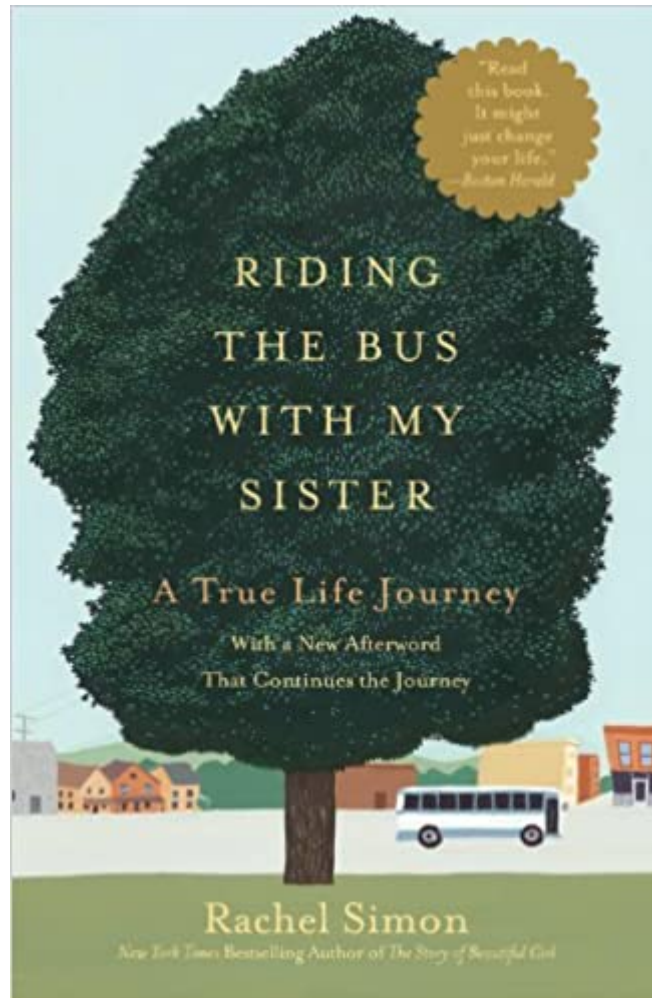




The book was found

Riding The Bus With My Sister



Synopsis

In the ten years since Rachel Simon first invited the world to board the bus with her and her sister, Cool Beth, readers across the globe have been moved by their story. Now, in an updated edition with fifty pages of new content, Rachel Simon reflects on changes in her life, Beth's life, and the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The highlight is Beth's update, which is in her own words. A new Reader's Guide is also included. Join these two unforgettable sisters on their journey, this time in an even deeper and richer way. Rachel Simon's sister Beth is a spirited woman who lives intensely and often joyfully. Beth, who has an intellectual disability, spends her days riding the buses in her unnamed Pennsylvania city. The drivers, a lively group, are her mentors; her fellow passengers are her community. One day, Beth asks Rachel to accompany her on the buses for an entire year. This wise, funny, deeply affecting true story is the chronicle of that remarkable time. Rachel, a writer and college teacher whose hyperbusy life camouflaged her emotional isolation, had much to learn in her sister's extraordinary world. Full of life lessons from which any reader will profit, *Riding the Bus with My Sister* is "a heartwarming, life-affirming journey through both the present and the past...[that] might just change your life" (Boston Herald). Elegantly woven throughout the odyssey are riveting memories of terrifying maternal abandonment, fierce sisterly loyalty, and astonishing forgiveness. Rachel Simon brings to light the almost invisible world of adults with developmental disabilities, finds unlikely heroes in everyday life, and, without sentimentality, portrays Beth as the endearing, feisty, independent person she is. This heartwarming memoir about the unbreakable bond between two very different sisters takes the reader on an inspirational journey at once unique and universal. *Riding the Bus with My Sister* was made into a Hallmark Hall of Fame movie starring Rosie O'Donnell and Andie McDowell, and directed by Anjelica Huston.

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Customer Reviews

This perceptive, uplifting chronicle shows how much Simon, a creative writing professor at Bryn Mawr College, had to learn from her mentally retarded sister, Beth, about life, love and happiness. Beth lives independently and is in a long-term romantic relationship, but perhaps the most surprising thing about her, certainly to her (mostly) supportive family, is how she spends her days riding buses. Six days a week (the buses don't run on Sundays in her unnamed Pennsylvania city), all day, she cruises around, chatting up her favorite drivers, dispensing advice and holding her ground against those who find her a nuisance. Rachel joined Beth on her rides for a year, a few days every two weeks, in an attempt to mend their distanced relationship and gain some insight into Beth's daily life. She wound up learning a great deal about herself and how narrowly she'd been seeing the world. Beth's community within the transit system is a much stronger network than the one Rachel has in her hectic world, and some of the portraits of drivers and the other people in Beth's life are unforgettable. Rachel juxtaposes this with the story of their childhood, including the dissolution of their parents' marriage and the devastating abandonment by their mother, the effect of which is tied poignantly to the sisters' present relationship. Although she is honest about the frustrations of relating to her stubborn sister, Rachel comes to a new appreciation of her, and it is a pleasure for readers to share in that discovery. Agent, Anne Edelstein. (Aug. 26) Forecast: A blurb from Rosie O'Donnell and an author tour should pique women readers' interest. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Adult/High School-When she received an invitation to her mentally retarded sister's annual Plan of Care review, Simon realized that this was Beth's way of attempting to bring her back into her life. Beth challenged the author to give a year of her life to riding "her" buses with her. Even though Simon didn't know where it would take her, she accepted. During that time, she came to see her sister as a person in her own right with strong feelings about how she wanted to live her life, despite what others thought. Not everyone on the buses, drivers or passengers, liked or even tolerated Beth, and it shamed the author to realize that she sometimes felt the same way about her sibling. As the year passed, Simon came to the realization that "No one can be a good sister all the time. I

can only try my best. Just because I am not a saint does not mean that I am a demon." The time together became a year of personal discovery, of acceptance, and of renewed sibling love and closeness. Clear writing and repeated conversations allow readers to hear the voices of both sisters. There is much to mull over, to enjoy, and to savor in this book. Peggy Bercher, Fairfax County Public Library, VA Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Reading this now after having watched the movie. Uncanny the similarities. This could be me and MY sister. My sister, also a forceps baby born to a heavily drugged mother, born the year before me (1959)...mentally handicapped (NOT Downs Syndrome, which in many ways would have been easier). There but by the grace of God go I. She basically cleared a birth path for me (I just fell out, 1 month early). I try to remember this during the difficult times, she made way for me, and suffered the consequences. She is my hero. It is nice to find someone (Rachel) who truly understands. I also heard all my childhood "You have to take care of Mary..." frightening stuff for a kid just trying to figure out how to take care of herself. We did not have other brothers and sisters, it was all on me. But Mary, like Beth, is doing well on her own, and I am here to help when needed. Love.

This book has been particularly poignant for me... my brother is affected. What I appreciate most about this book is Rachel Simon's exquisite detail and ability to "say it like it is!" In writing this book, she has addressed a long (purposely, often) ignored topic and segment of society. While things are much improved over the last 60+ years, appropriate diagnoses and treatments of mentally "challenged" have been painfully slow and continues to be a severe hardship for the patient and their loved ones. And I am so happy that someone has addressed this and so clearly and effectively. This needs to be on every high school's reading list. Thank you so much, Rachel Simon! Bravo!

I first read Rachel Simon's book *The Story of Beautiful Girl* and found it touching and insightful. That directed me to look up her other books and this one caught my attention. I borrowed it from the library and found so many touching lines and such honesty that I decided I wanted to purchase my own copy so that I could make notes and share it with loved ones. I honestly felt uplifted by the story of Rachel and her sister Beth and found their relationship parallels my own relationships with others. Rachel's growth through the story inspires me to try to look at life in the same ways she does. It just made me so happy.

A moving story of the difficulties of growing up as a sibling of a sister with a mental disability. It was a good mix of their childhood years in a slightly dysfunctional family and the adult life of trying to live independently as a mentally disabled person with an obsessive behavior. I do feel that the story could have been cut quite a bit as it became repetitious at times.

What an eye opening book! This was well written and really made me examine my thoughts and feelings about people with challenges. Everyone has a purpose whether we are able to see it or not. Beth could be brutally honest - but maybe we need someone like that to shake us from our complacency once in a while. ALL siblings need to reconnect now and then to find common ground on which to relate. I really enjoyed this read.

Great book. A real eye opener. I got the audio version read by the author. Very enjoyable.

This book was suggested for our book club. I had thought it would be a nice book, it turned out to be a great book. Not only did we get to understand Beth and her disabilities, but the richness of character of our bus drivers. No wonder Beth didn't want to work, she got so much more learning about life from the different bus drivers. It just shows there are wonderful people out there in the world. we just need to slow down and pay attention to them. This book was a real eye opener. My only criticism is all the "preaching" done in the "add on" chapters. When the book ended at the original ending it was pretty close to perfect. Unfortunately the author decided we needed to be educated on all the inadequacies of our government's dealings with the handicapped. This went on for a few more chapters. I stopped before I finished the last one, I didn't want to ruin the glow I felt from the original ending.

Loved this book, the family dynamics were told in such a real way. As a mental health care worker and as a mother with a son with a mental illness, I found this book to be refreshingly honest, and also humorous. The way the author named the person first then added the disability is how I've always talked about my son and my clients, it's nice to see I'm not the only one :) I've recommended all my co-workers read it!

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