



A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards: A Novel

By Ann Bauer

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A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards: A Novel By Ann Bauer

Edward is nearly four years old when he begins his slow, painful withdrawal from the world. For those who love him -- his father, Jack, and mother, Rachel, pregnant with their third child -- the transformation of their happy, intelligent firstborn into a sleepless, feral stranger is a devastating blow, one that brings enormous ramifications not just for Edward and his parents, but also for their younger son, Matt, and soon-to-be-born daughter.

A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards follows this nuclear family as Rachel and Jack try to come to terms with their son's descent into autism (or something like it) and struggle to sustain their marriage under this unanticipated strain. Threaded through the novel, too, is the story of Rachel's deceased uncle Mickey, who may have suffered from a similar disorder at a time when parenting, pediatrics, and ideas about child psychology were entirely different from today's. As Rachel delves into her own family history in search of answers, flashbacks to Mickey's life afford moving insight into the nature of childhood disorders and the coping mechanisms of different families.

A spellbinding, brilliantly nuanced portrait of a marriage and a family, this compelling drama also poses provocative, real-life questions: How much should a mother sacrifice for her children? How much intervention is too much? When do parents' ambitions for their offspring become counterproductive, even destructive? Who should decide what is best for the child? Is it ever worth sacrificing a marriage for a child?

A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards is a carefully crafted, compulsively readable, emotional page-turner that reveals a remarkable gift for language and storytelling and enormous insight into the complexities and dilemmas of domestic life and parenthood. It is a striking exploration of love, faith, and sacrifice that will resonate with readers everywhere.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Bauer's nuanced debut chronicles a mother's struggle with her child's mysterious, undiagnosed illness and the once-passionate marriage that doesn't survive the decades of extraordinary stress. Love, marriage and babies follow quickly from Rachel and Jack's first electric meeting, when Rachel is a 20-year-old student at a small Minnesota college and Jack an itinerant worker. But when Edward, the eldest of their three children, turns four, he suddenly transforms from a bright, animated boy to a zombie who goes weeks without sleeping, stares endlessly at his hand and howls to fill a silent room. Settled in Minneapolis, Rachel and Jack try various doctors, codeine and even marijuana tea for their son, who is often mistaken for an autistic, but he stays locked in what he calls, during moments of lucidity, "the nowhere place." Bauer follows the family through Edward's adolescence: Jack struggles with alcoholism and holding down a job while Rachel, a journalist, binds the family together with fierce mother-love. Throughout, Rachel attempts to unravel the mystery of her long-deceased Uncle Mickey, a strange, troubled man whose plight might hold a clue to Edward's disease. Bauer's prose often pierces with authentic, unsentimental power, but blow-by-blow chronological plotting diminishes the novel's grace. (*Sept.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

In her sensitive debut, certain aspects of which were inspired by her own life, Bauer describes what happens to an apparently normal family when one of its members becomes inexplicably ill. Jack and Rachel, pregnant again, have two boys--Edward, nearly four, and Matt, two--when Edward suddenly experiences loss of speech, hyperactivity, and insomnia. They run through a gauntlet of doctors: one thinks the behaviors may be caused by brain tumors; another suggests they try marijuana. Asked to provide family medical histories, Jack and Rachel are faced with unearthing painful memories involving Jack's birth parents, whom he never knew, and Rachel's mysterious uncle Mickey, who exhibited symptoms similar to Edward's and eventually committed suicide. By the time Edward is in seventh grade, he has improved markedly yet still has days when he has "the screens pulled down inside his head." By then the marriage has failed, the stress proving too great for this family in peril, portrayed by Bauer with unflinching honesty. *Deborah Donovan*

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Review

"Recalls the early work of Sue Miller and Anne Tyler." -- *Providence Journal*

"A triumph of good writing." -- *The Washington Post*

"Bauer expertly maps the ferocity and anguish of a parent's love for a child . . . [in a] spell of exceptional storytelling." -- *Entertainment Weekly*

"A beautifully rendered novel . . . [of] searing and often heartbreaking passion." -- *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

"This is a phenomenal first novel, a story of mother love . . . told with delicacy and humor." -- Garrison Keillor

"Bauer's prose often pierces with authentic, unsentimental power." -- *Publishers Weekly*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Peters:

The knowledge that you get from A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards: A Novel is the more deep you looking the information that hide inside words the more you get considering reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to comprehend but A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards: A Novel giving you buzz feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in certain way that can be understood by anyone who read this because the author of this book is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We recommend you for having this specific A Wild Ride Up the Cupboards: A Novel instantly.

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