



Rules of the Road

By Joan Bauer

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Meet Jenna Boller, star employee at Gladstone Shoe Store in Chicago. Standing a gawky 5'11" at 16 years old, Jenna is the kind of girl most likely to stand out in the crowd for all the wrong reasons. But that doesn't stop Madeline Gladstone, the president of Gladstone's Shoes 176 outlets in 37 states, from hiring Jenna to drive her cross country in a last ditch effort to stop Elden Gladstone from taking over his mother's company and turning a quality business into a shop-and-schlock empire. Now Jenna Boller shoe salesperson is about to become a shoe-store spy as she joins her crusty old employer for an eye-opening adventure that will teach them both the rules of the road and the rules of life.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Funny young adult writers are a rare treasure, and Joan Bauer is one of the funniest. Critics and young readers rejoiced at her three previous novels--*Squashed*, *Thwonk*, and *Sticks*--and with *Rules of the Road*, she has written a story that is wise and touching as well as comical. Jenna Boller is too tall for a sophomore and she's not much good in school. Her sister Faith got all the looks in the family, but boy, can Jenna sell shoes! She's supremely happy at her after-school job at Gladstone's, where the big white sign over the door says "We're Not Just Selling Shoes, We're Selling Quality." When elderly Mrs. Madeline Gladstone, the crusty president of the company, chooses Jenna as her driver on a business trip to visit other Gladstone's stores, Jenna goes reluctantly--with trepidation at driving the huge Cadillac, and at the prospect of leaving her alcoholic father behind. But on the road, Jenna learns "great road truths" such as "Never eat at a place called Mom's, because it's a safe bet Mom's been dead for years." She also proves to be indispensable (possessing an eagle eye for shoddy quality and sloppy service), and soon learns to admire and love the irascible Mrs. Gladstone as well as her old friend, "World's Best Shoe Salesman" Harry Bender. When Harry dies suddenly, Jenna realizes that she wishes he had been her father. Trouble looms in the form of a company takeover by Mrs. Gladstone's sleazy son, Elden, "Shoe Rodent," but Jenna summons courage from Harry's memory and saves the day for quality shoes. *Rules of the Road* is a treat that will utterly delight readers.

(Age 12 and older) --Patty Campbell

From Publishers Weekly

Bauer's novel about an earnest teenager who chauffeurs a crabby, wealthy woman has the underpinnings of a quirky *Driving Miss Daisy*, but the story quickly runs out of gas. Sixteen-year-old Jenna Boller has the world by the tail. She's just received her driver's license and she loves her job at Gladstone's Shoe Store. Even better, she's been tapped to drive Mrs. Madeline Gladstone, the imposing president of the shoe store chain, from Chicago to Dallas for an important shareholders meeting. During the road trip Jenna gets a chance to demonstrate her passion for shoe salesmanship at various Gladstone stores; she also learns of Elden Gladstone's plan to push his mother aside in favor of a major merger. While Jenna educates herself in the ways of big business and dealing with difficult people, she also ruminates about her alcoholic father, her ailing grandmother and her mom and sister waiting at home. She arrives back in Chicago both braver and wiser. As in *Squashed*, Bauer begins with an intriguing premise, weaves in unusual settings and scenarios and creates an offbeat first-person narrator to relay them. But a supporting cast of stock characters and forced dialogue may disappoint readers of her previous novels. Ages 12-up.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up? Jenna Boller, 16, has had a lot of practice at being responsible. Her mother is a nurse who works the night shift, and her younger sister yearns for attention. Jenna's long-divorced, alcoholic father embarrassingly shows up whenever he gets an occasional urge to "make it up" to her. In addition, her wise and beloved grandmother is grappling with Alzheimer's disease. So the teen's mother reluctantly agrees to let her accept a summer job driving the elderly Madeline Gladstone, the crusty and demanding president of the shoe chain for which Jenna works, from Chicago to Texas. Jenna is surprised to learn that Mrs. Gladstone has problems, too: an aching hip as well as an aching heart. Her conniving son is maneuvering to take over the company and sell out for a huge short-term gain. Jenna comes to admire and love her boss and eagerly enters into an alliance of loyal employees to save the company. In making this valiant attempt, she finds herself truly transformed. Bauer's juxtapositions are inviting?youth and age, wealth and work-a-day struggle, big-city loneliness and big-state caring, practicing alcoholism and big-hearted sobriety, stockroom wisdom

and boardroom chicanery. The author creates some fabulous and sometimes flamboyant characters, witty dialogue, and memorable scenes, thus making readers really care about the intricacies of matching shoes to people and finding the right focus for Jenna as she strives to meet tall goals. Bauer's best yet.?Cindy Darling Codell, Clark Middle School, Winchester, KY

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Timothy King:

Reading a publication tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With looking at you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. Plenty of author can inspire all their reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only situation that share in the books. But also they write about the ability about something that you need example of this. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors nowadays always try to improve their proficiency in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write for their book. One of them is this Rules of the Road.

Diane Gibbons:

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book especially book entitled Rules of the Road your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe unknown for but surely can be your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a guide then become one application form conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get previous to. The Rules of the Road giving you another experience more than blown away your head but also giving you useful data for your better life in this particular era. So now let us show you the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary wasting spare time activity?

Kristopher Lewis:

Rules of the Road can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that could increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to place every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing Rules of the Road nevertheless doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one among it. This great information could drawn you into brand new stage of crucial pondering.

Louise Perez:

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