



## Anywhere But Here

By Mona Simpson



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A national bestseller upon its publication, *Anywhere But Here* is a moving, often comic portrait of wise child Ann August and her mother, Adele, a larger-than-life American dreamer. As they travel through the landscape of their often conflicting ambitions, Ann and Adele bring to life a novel that is a brilliant exploration of the perennial urge to keep moving, even at the risk of profound disorientation. Simpson's first novel is ultimately a heart-rendering tale of a mother and daughter's invaluable relationship. "Mona Simpson writes with confidence, with swagger. She is already a master." - Anne Tyler "*Anywhere But Here* is a wonder: big, complex, masterfully written, it's an achievement that lands [Simpson] in the front ranks of our best novelists." - Newsweek

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## Anywhere But Here By Mona Simpson Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

"Strangers always love my mother," Ann August tells us at the start of *Anywhere But Here*. "And even if you hate her, can't stand her, even if she's ruining your life, there's something about her, some romance, some power. She's absolutely herself. No matter how hard you try, you'll never get to her. And when she dies, the world will be flat, too simple, reasonable, fair." Indeed, over the course of the dozen or so years chronicled in Mona Simpson's first novel, Ann and everyone else related to the charming, delusional Adele learn this the hard way. Ann does hate her at times; Adele does indeed come pretty close to ruining Ann's life on numerous occasions, or at least scarring it, and yet, ultimately, it isn't possible not to love her. As Ann puts it: "The thing about my mother and me is that when we get along we're just the same."

This is a woman who uproots her child from Wisconsin and moves to Los Angeles, leaving behind a dull husband (not Ann's father--who wandered off long ago but makes appearances here in memories), under the premise that life will be beautiful and Ann will become a famous television star. But her lifelong dream and goal ("It was our secret, a nighttime whispered promise" turns out, like so many things in the Augusts' lives, to be lackluster when it becomes reality. Adele merely feeds on fantasy and drags her daughter along.

Nevertheless, it's hard not to worship her. We hear from her mother, her sister, from Ann, and finally from Adele herself, and no matter how she's used people, what trouble she's gotten into, or what lies she's told--and there are plenty of all three--a certain amount of awe always remains. When we come upon Ann's proclamation that "it's always the people like my mother, who start the noise and bang things, who make you feel the worst; they are the ones who get your love." It's startling to realize how heartily we agree with her. *Anywhere But Here* gives truth to this statement in a way that few books ever have. It's dense with misery and amazement all tangled together--a realistic and thus rare portrait of love. --*Melanie Rehak*

#### From Publishers Weekly

Ann, the narrator of this engaging look at mother-daughter relationships, is uprooted from Bay City, Wis., by her mother, Adele, so that she can become a child star in Los Angeles. PW praised Simpson for her "grasp of human relationships and sheer readability."

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#### From Library Journal

Simpson's first novel opens with its two heroines, Adele and her daughter Ann, fleeing their provincial hometown in Wisconsin for a fresh start in California. The story of their journey and new life is fast-paced and entertaining, but it is Simpson's fine characterizations that are most impressive. Adele is both protector and manipulator, encouraging Ann's success as a child star but also displaying her own unrealistic expectations and selfish motives. Ann tolerates her mother's lying and eccentricity, but she longs for a rootedness her mother cannot give her. The skillfully written flashbacks to stories told by Adele's Wisconsin relatives give us a sense of the home they have left behind, and the disparity between it and their new home is immense and profound. This is an excellent novel. Lucinda Ann Peck, Learning Design Associates, Gahanna, Ohio

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### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

### **Barbara Clarke:**

Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also work as a life style. This reading practice give you lot of advantages. The advantages you got of course the knowledge your information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The data you get based on what kind of reserve you read, if you want get more knowledge just go with knowledge books but if you want really feel happy read one using theme for entertaining including comic or novel. The particular Anywhere But Here is kind of reserve which is giving the reader unstable experience.

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