



The Trade Off

Louise Maniscalco , Susan Rudin

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"With wit and sharp insight, the authors of THE TRADE OFF provide a behind-the-scenes peek at the Machiavellian world of a luxury Manhattan store, its executives, designers, clerks—and demanding socialite customers. Told in the knowing voice of the store's ambitious shopping salon director, THE TRADE OFF is a fast-paced, entertaining read." —Dr. Joyce Brown, President of Fashion Institute of Technology

Go behind the window displays. Behind the racks. Two personal shoppers for Manhattan's biggest department stores have written a wildly dishy novel that goes behind the dressing rooms of New York's fashion elite.

At Frankel's New York, the wives of billionaires and Hollywood celebrities sip champagne while stylists and tailors cater to every whim. And one person has made it her career to help these Amex-wielding shoppers create the perfect look.

Bonnie Salerno Madden knows all of her client's preferences, whims, and fantasies. She knows the price they paid to gain access to the salon where having Bonnie as their private shopper is a first-class ticket to being the toast of the New York high-fashion social scene.

But while Bonnie is all elegance on the outside, she's barely keeping it together on the inside. A single mom to a special needs child, she needs her high-pressure job to care for her family. And when that job is put in jeopardy, Bonnie will need to make some of the riskiest choices of her life to guarantee a better future for her son, and for herself. With the opportunity to live in her own fairy tale, will Bonnie have what it takes to make the trade off?

"THE TRADE OFF is a riveting page-turner even for a non-shopper like me. The ultimate tale of New York life."—David Patrick Columbia, newyorksocialdiary.com

The Trade Off Details

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Author : Louise Maniscalco , Susan Rudin

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From Reader Review The Trade Off for online ebook

Heather Pennel says

Fun summer read

Fast paced summer fun read. I was pleasantly surprised at how good this book was. I look forward to more

Tracy says

In which the story of a personal shopper and single mother to a kid with Asperger's syndrome (minor plot line) is told. I'm not sure if it was so much that the book was solid or that I read it right after the almost-terrible *Where Does Caitlyn Go to School*, but I give this book a much higher rating for character like-ability and story development.

Tanya Batra says

Average

Had to struggle to finish this, didn't keep me very engaged. Light read with a bit of a predictable ending

Frank Hentschker says

A wonderful inside view into the whirlwind world of a single Italian New York mother from Queens, who tries to earn a living working as a personal shopper for the rich and famous in the lion's den of a large Gotham department store.

Authors Louise Maniscalco and Susan Rudin, both New York sales floor veterans of the highly confidential and secretive "Personal Shopper World" over decades, share funny and heartwarming insider stories about money and make-up, shirts and skirts, taxes and Texas.

In the fictional Frankel's department store we follow sales lady "Bonnie" Salerno Madden, who tries to juggle, as so many American women, a professional and a personal life. The demands of a high pressure job, the commitment to be a good mother and the desire to keep dreams of romance and love alive make every day in Bonnie's life count. Time for *Ugly Betty* and *the Devil in Prada* to move over for a real New York woman working in the fashion business. A fun read and for sure soon on the screen. I wonder if Nora Ephron had a personal shopper ...

Samantha says

Great book! A very fun, easy read! An interesting and exciting behind the scenes peek into the lives and tales of personal shoppers and the women who shop! Fun read for women who love to shop. I would definitely recommend this book to my friends!

Kirsten Taylor says

Where do I meet Steve Kline?

Kimberly says

Entertaining

This book was much better than I their would be. I enjoyed the single working mother with an emotionally challenged son, and that at the end of the day the man realizing, love her, love all that comes with her. And be willing to fight for it. Good read.

Alyson says

Great, quick read.

Leslie says

I have a weakness for a certain type of book. They are catty behind the scene glimpses at Celebrities and Hollywood. Examples would include Jackie Collins, A "Dead is the New Fabulous" Mystery series <https://www.goodreads.com/series/1585...> & Julia Phillips. This explains why I read this book, touted as the fictional behind the scenes stories of a personal shopper in a NYC premier retailer.

And there is plenty of work related action but what this book is really about is a single parent of an autism spectrum child struggling to balance, life and work, live in Queens but shop for the Manhattan elite and try to pretend she is perfectly happy being there for everyone but herself. It is about her relationship with her family, how she the first college graduate (FIT) can't fit in with her siblings and their garages stories. How she longs to be loved as a woman but the only men she seems to be attracted to are married; her ex and a successful businessman whose relationship status is complicated.

This is a book about emotions and feelings and failure and loneliness but also about believing in yourself and taking risks.

Katarina says

Slow and steady development of characters throughout the story. This book captured me from the first page. It's not gossipy or trashy, instead it showed me Bonnie's life: demanding job with backstabbing co-workers and unreasonable customers, single mom raising an autistic son and watching her ex husband fall in love and start a new family. She has so much on her plate that she doesn't have any energy left over for a personal life, which is why it was so great to see her evaluate and make changes. I liked this book a lot

Arionna Stanley says

Entertaining

I'm obsessed with the Manhattan life for some reason. It amuses me and thrills me. This novel feeds that obsession.

Sherrie Howey says

Bonnie is a single mother with a disabled son who works in a high end store in Manhattan attending to the couture needs of her very wealthy clients. This book is filled with outrageous demands by her clients as well as her own family difficulties and trying to balance her home and work life. The book was a quick and easy read and if you enjoyed "The Devil wears Prada" you will definitely enjoy this book!

Jamie Barringer (Ravenmount) says

On the surface this book is a light read about fashion and the fashion world. Bonnie, a middle-class, thirty-something, divorced woman with a 6yr-old, high-functioning autistic son works as a successful stylist in a department store in New York City, helping celebrity clients figure out what to wear. Very much like in the show *Ugly Betty*, Bonnie lives in Queens, and she struggles to reconcile the life she lives at work with the life she has at home. Under the surface, this book brings up all sorts of issues about class, gender, and modern society. The compromises celebrities make in their lives have consequences, which Bonnie sees firsthand, and to fit in, Bonnie feels pressured to make similar compromises.

I like that the autistic kid in this book, Peter, seems realistic, and that he is moderate/high-functioning, a part of the autistic spectrum that doesn't explicitly make it into novels very often. The author does a good job of showing that not all autistic people are vegetables or savants, although I was a bit annoyed at the way Bonnie kept insisting that Peter couldn't lead a normal life. Actually, even some of the other characters in the book seemed to recognize Peter's potential more than Bonnie did, so maybe this is an aspect of this book for a book club discussion.

I also loved that this novel is set within the real-life fashion world. The author used names and places from current, real-life fashion design and real celebrities, mixing in a few fictional characters to craft her story. There are lots of familiar faces in this novel, and if you know a few basic fashion terms and designer styles, it is easy to imagine exactly what all the clothes look like, despite the visual nature of fashion. If you watched *Ugly Betty*, *Project Runway*, or any of the other popular fashion-world shows from the past decade, you'll probably enjoy this book.

(I received my copy of this book free through a Goodreads First Reads giveaway.)

Stacy-Ann says

Great book

Didn't want to stop reading. Really good mix of characters. Bless very easy to walk in Bonnie's shoes. Loved it.

Amy Chamberlain says

Can we all just agree that sometimes I make bad reading choices? and leave it at that, and not laugh derisively? And can we all just agree that usually if you receive a book for free, it's worth exactly what you paid for?

Good. And now we can move on.
