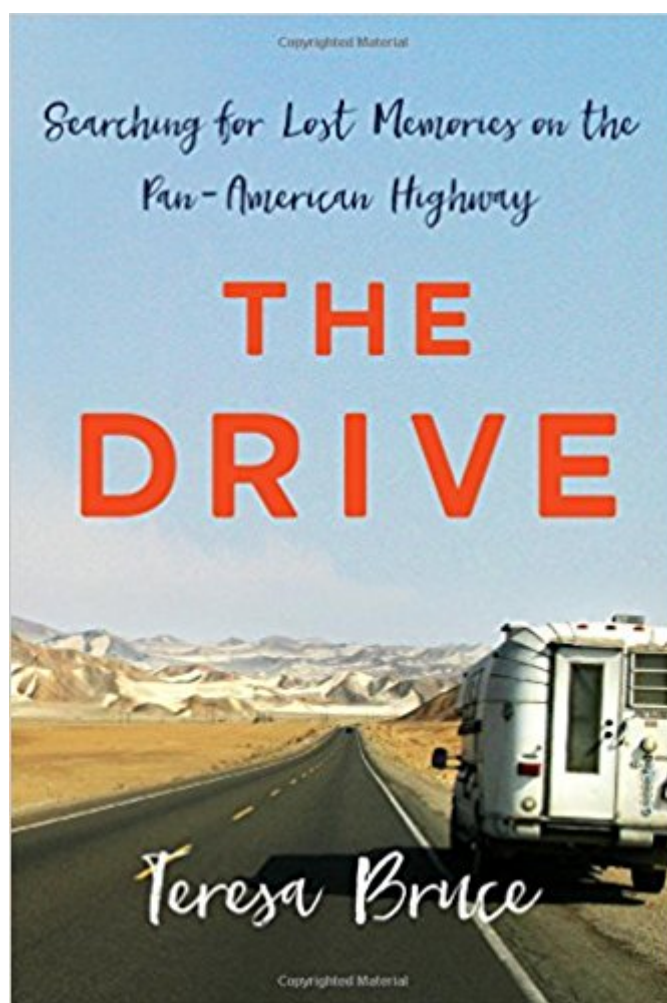


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# The Drive: Searching For Lost Memories On The Pan-American Highway



## Synopsis

The Drive follows Teresa Bruce on her 2003 road trip through Mexico and onto the Pan American Highway, in a rickety camper with her old dog and new husband in tow. Bruce first set off on the exact same route in 1973, her parents at the helm and their two young daughters in tow, as a reaction to the accidental death of their youngest child, Bruce's brother John John. Her attempt to follow the route, using her mother's travel journal as an anecdotal guide, is as much about her need for exploration as it is about trying to understand her parents and their pain, and to finally begin to heal her own wounds over the accident. Bruce is immensely talented in bringing scenery of Central and South America to life—countries from Mexico and Guatemala to Bolivia and Argentina are detailed with her innate attention to detail and sense of storytelling. The Drive details a really incredible journey through these beautiful, at times corrupt and war-torn countries, across roads that are as likely to be barricaded by guerrillas or washed out by floods as they are to be passable. The Drive is travel writing at its best, combining moments of deep heartbreak with unimaginable joy over a panoply of unforgettable settings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Teresa Bruce is a PR and marketing specialist, award-winning screenwriter, and TEDx speaker. Her PBS documentary *God's Gonna Trouble the Water* won a CINE Golden Eagle. She collaborated with her photographer husband on *Transfer of Grace*, an award-winning collection of images and prose of the South Carolina low country. This is the first time her work has been presented to trade publishers, as her previous book *The Other Mother: a Rememoir* (Juggling Board Press, 2013) was

unaged, but despite the press's limitations New York Magazine called it "loving, contemplative, and nuanced"; and it was IBPA's best memoir of 2014.

When I say I couldn't put this book down, I seriously mean "I couldn't put this book down." The intricacies of stories within this memoir are spellbinding. Beginning with the untimely and accidental death of author, Teresa Bruce's younger brother in 1972. Traveling away from the pain of this loss, her parents, with young Teresa and her sister, head down the Pan American Highway, through Mexico, Central America, to Bolivia, in a truck and homemade camper.. Years later, as a newlywed, Teresa and her husband Gary, begin their own journey - driving the same Pan American highway route in a truck and refurbished camper! Along with the harrowing stories of non-roads, passages requiring "bribes," guns, earthquakes, stomach upsets, doubts, fears, and the loss of Teresa's beloved dog, "Wipe-out," are the stories of re-connection with people from Teresa's original journey with her sister and parents. Stories of accomplishment and relationship. With notes from her Mother's diary, and photo's from her father's "carousel," Teresa and Gary are guided in this re-adventure of discovery and resolution. I desperately, at points of high-tension in the book, wanted to " read the the ending first" in need to avoid some of the breath-holding, pain and fright of the adventure. However, I did not. Had I done so, I would not have experienced the soul-settling satisfaction of knowing that I TOO could be part of this journey as well as its mightily achieved conclusion!

The authors parents in the early 70's decided to drive a home made camper, the length of the Pan American-Highway, through Mexico, Central and South America after a tragedy where they lost their young son John-John in an accident. They take off with their two young daughters on a thought out but not well planned trip. After reaching Bolivia and having had many breakdowns and lots of adventures on the way, they finally let go of their camper and move on. Now some 30 years later, one of the daughters, Teresa and her new husband, Gary decide to quite their well paying jobs and retrace her parents trip down the Pan-American Hwy in search of her old home, (her dads homemade camper). Armed with her moms old journals a camper of their own and a 17 yr old dog, they head out on their own adventure, wanting to feel what propelled her parents after their tragedy, but also wanting to put that tragedy (John-John's death) to some closure for herself. I love to read about peoples travels through Latin America and to see their reactions to places and situation, remote from their own. Having lived a large portion of my life in Central America, I can often relate to the reactions or even some of the places I am familiar with. For me this was a very fun read, which

took me right from my chair into their camper, what a ride. Beautifully written, and this book will have some photos, once published. You can also see them and her parents trip on her website. I want to thank NetGalley, and Seal Press for the ARC of this book.

Teresa Bruce's gift for vivid yet economic word smithing makes her reader feel as if they are sitting in the camper experiencing the physical difficulties of her journey into South America and the emotional reprieve from making connections with people she met along the way as she retrace a journey her family took 30 years earlier on the Pam American highway in her father's homemade camper to somehow escape a family tragedy. Through her travel, she and we are wondering if she will find her father's homemade camper he had to leave in Bolivia 30 years earlier. Surely the Mad Max-ish Frankenstein camper is long gone and turned into scraps, right? It is an intriguing mystery that has taken a mythology of its own as Teresa and her new husband journey closer and closer to Bolivia. Like the Tolkien tale of the unexpected journey, it is the unexpected encounters that bring smiles, such finding flamingos in odd locations, the border guards who detained Teresa and her husband not because they refused to pay bribes but because the guards are Bon Jovi fans and wanted to ask Americans can explain some of the lyrics to them, to tracking down and finding the kind strangers who had helped her family 30 years earlier during one many vehicle breakdowns, to current strangers going out of their way to help Teresa and Gary trapped in beleaguered cities. I finished the book in three days, that's how unputdownable this book was, I had to follow Teresa, Gary, and their dog, Wipe Out's adventure through harrowing drives, detours, reconnections, relationships, and resolution.

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