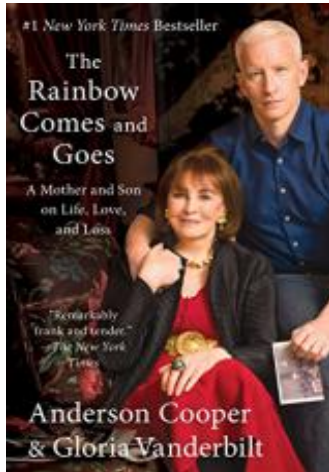


The Rainbow Comes and Goes: A Mother and Son on Life, Love, and Loss

by Anderson Cooper and Gloria Vanderbilt



About the Book

A touching and intimate correspondence between Anderson Cooper and his mother, Gloria Vanderbilt, offering timeless wisdom and a revealing glimpse into their lives

Though Anderson Cooper has always considered himself close to his mother, his intensely busy career as a journalist for CNN and CBS affords him little time to spend with her. After she suffers a brief but serious illness at the age of 91, they resolve to change their relationship by beginning a year-long conversation unlike any they had ever had before. The result is a correspondence of surprising honesty and depth in which they discuss their lives, the things that matter to them, and what they still want to learn about each other.

Both a son's love letter to his mother and an unconventional mom's life lessons for her grown son, *THE RAINBOW COMES AND GOES* offers a rare window into their close relationship and fascinating life stories, including their tragedies and triumphs. In these often humorous and moving exchanges, they share their most private thoughts and the hard-earned truths they've learned along the way. In their words their distinctive personalities shine through --- Anderson's journalistic outlook on the world is a sharp contrast to his mother's idealism and unwavering optimism.

An appealing memoir with inspirational advice, *THE RAINBOW COMES AND GOES* is a beautiful and affectionate celebration of the universal bond between a parent and a child, and a thoughtful reflection on life, reminding us of the precious insight that remains to be shared, no matter our age.

Discussion Guide

1. Why do you think it took Anderson and Gloria so long to have this kind of discussion? Does old age provide a kind of urgency for these conversations? Have you had a similar dialogue with a parent or grandparent?
2. Gloria writes, “My first reaction upon reaching ninety-one is surprise.” Have you had the same feeling upon reaching a milestone birthday? Do you think we feel frozen at a certain age? What age would that be for you?
3. Anderson writes that he assumed he wouldn’t live past 50, which is the age at which his father died. Is it hard for you to imagine living past the age at which a parent has died?
4. Great wealth can open many doors, but it can also be a burden. How does Gloria’s case illustrate this? Would you want to be wealthy beyond all imagining? Like Gloria, do you think you would reject the idea of sitting on a beach somewhere, or not?
5. The novelist Mary Gordon wrote, “A fatherless girl thinks all things possible and nothing safe,” a line that has resonated with Gloria throughout her life. Do you think this is true? How does it apply to Gloria’s decisions about romance, career and family?
6. Anderson and Gloria learn in the book that they had each fantasized about being left a letter by their deceased fathers. Have you ever imagined the same kind of letter from someone you loved and lost?
7. In what ways does Anderson take after his mother? What do you see as their most striking differences?
8. Do you believe that everything happens for a reason, as Gloria does, or do you reject the concept, like Anderson does? Why?
9. Do you tend to plan for the future, as Anderson does, or assume that things will work out, in his mother’s style?
10. Toward the end of the book, Gloria writes a letter to her 17-year-old self. If you were to write a letter to yourself at 17, what would you say?
11. What do you think of the phrase, “The Rainbow Comes and Goes”? How does it apply to the authors’ lives? Does it apply to your own life, too, and if so, how?

Author Bio

Anderson Cooper is the anchor of “Anderson Cooper 360” on CNN and a correspondent for CBS’s “60 Minutes.” He has won numerous journalism awards and nine Emmys, and his first book, *DISPATCHES FROM THE EDGE*, was a #1 *New York Times* bestseller. He lives in New York City.

Critical Praise

“Intriguing... an ideal Mother’s/Father’s Day gift, with the opening, ‘Let’s get to know each other better’...Affectionate,

heartfelt, inspirational, and sometimes hilarious, the book's message is that it is never too late to cultivate a new relationship with your family and break down those walls of silence.”

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