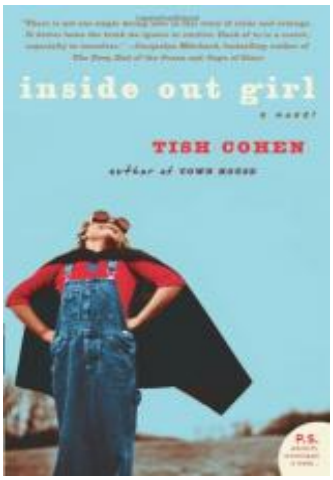
Inside Out Girl

by Tish Cohen



About the Book

Inside Out Girl is the story of Rachel, a single, working mother of two, who begins dating a man with a learning disabled daughter, much to her children?s chagrin.

Rachel?s life is anything but calm. She?s a single mother of two and publisher of a sinking Parenting magazine left to her by her father. Although she tries to be easy going, she?s constantly aware of the statistical dangers lurking around every corner just waiting to damage herself and her children. So it is out of character to say the least when she pulls over on the side of a busy highway to help a man and his quirky daughter change their tire.

The quirky young girl, Olivia, actually has an NLD (non-verbal learning disorder) and is the most made-fun of child in Rachel?s children?s school, know as the ?inside out girl? since she often shows up to school with her clothes on wrong. So it is to her son and daughter?s dismay when Rachel begins dating the inside out girl?s widowed father, Len. But when Len learns he has a brain tumor and short time left to live, he?s desperate to find a suitable parent for his wild, special, and accident-prone little girl. Along the way, Rachel unravels a mystery from her own past and learns to love and respect every aspect of her children?s lives, including her daughter?s crush on the girl next door.

Discussion Guide

1. Rachel Berman gave up an infant when she was very young. Would committing a similar act, either by choice or by not, change the way you parent subsequent children? Would you tell your children about their missing sibling?

2. Do you believe a teenager who gives up her baby for adoption is incredibly selfless or selfish? If you were in Rachel?s position as a teen, faced to do the same, do you think you might regret giving up the infant or would you feel you offered the child a better life?

3. Rachel?s teenage daughter Janie eventually reveals herself to be a lesbian. If a child of yours were to tell you he or she was gay, how would you feel? What, if anything, would change in your parent-child relationship?

4. This story is populated by children. If Rachel had never had children, how would her relationship with Piper differ? How would it differ if Piper had never been penniless?

5. Bullying is a central theme of the book. If you were the parent of a child involved in bullying another, how would you react? And as you reprimand your child for his or her actions, would the slightest part of you be secretly relieved your child was in the position of power vs. weakness?

6. As a result of giving up her firstborn, Rachel is petrified of losing her remaining children. What role does Dustin play in changing his mother? Have you ever felt overly protective of your own kids? If so, did anything in your past provoke this?

7. Len?s parents must relinquish the proposed guardianship of Olivia to Rachel. Do you think they would be accepting of this? As a grandparent, would you?

Author Bio

Tish Cohen is the author of TOWN HOUSE,a 2008 finalist for the Commonwealth Writers? Prize Best First Book Award (Canada and Caribbean region), and in development as a feature film with Fox 2000. The film is being produced by Ridley Scott?s Scott Free and will be directed by John Carney, the award-winning, critically acclaimed director of *Once*. Production is set to begin in New England in 2008. *Town House* was released to massive media interest in Canada, has been published in Italy, and will be released in Germany in April 2009.

Cohen has also written the preteen novel THE INVISIBLE RULES OF ZOE LAMA, a bestseller in Canada, which was published in 2007. The sequel, THE ONE AND ONLY ZOE LAMA, will be published in summer 2008. The *Zoe Lama* series is in development as a live action TV series with 9Story Entertainment.

Cohen has contributed articles to some of Canada?s largest newspapers, including *The Globe and Mail* and *The National Post*. Having grown up in Los Angeles and Orange County in California, and Montreal, Cohen now calls Toronto home. INSIDE OUT GIRL is Cohen?s second novel for adults.

Critical Praise

"**Inside Out Girl** is a wise, witty gem, populated with characters who will live with each of us long after the last page has been turned. Olivia Bean has taken her place alongside my favorite literary heroes."

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