

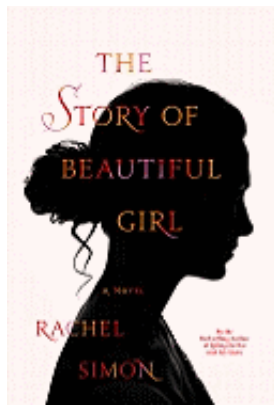


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# The Story of Beautiful Girl

*Rachel Simon, Grand Central, \$24.99 (346p) ISBN 978-0-446-57446-4*



In this enthralling love story, Lynn timer, a young white developmentally disabled woman with limited speech, and Homan, a deaf African-American man, meet at the Pennsylvania State School for the Incurable and Feebleminded in the late 1960s. Despite strict rules, poor conditions, an abusive staff, and the couple's lack of language, Lynn timer and Homan share tender moments. After their escape, a few days of freedom not only enables the secretly pregnant Lynn timer to give birth outside the walls of the corrupt institution, it also secures the couple's admiration for one another. Fears of discovery force them to leave the baby in the hands of a nurturing widow, Martha Zimmer. Soon after, the school's staff apprehend Lynn timer, while Homan flees. Although their stories diverge and unfold independently of one another, memories of their short time together sustain them for more than 40 years as they develop the confidence to eventually parent, learn to sign and speak, and finally, reunite. Simon (*Riding the Bus with My Sister*) who grew up with a developmentally disabled sister, has written an enormously affecting read, and provided sensitive insight into a complex world often dismissed by the "abled." (May)

Reviewed on: *02/21/2011*

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