



If A Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks

By Faith Ringgold

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If a bus could talk, it would tell the story of a young African-American girl named Rosa who had to walk miles to her one-room schoolhouse in Alabama while white children rode to their school in a bus. It would tell how the adult Rosa rode to and from work on a segregated city bus and couldn't sit in the same row as a white person. It would tell of the fateful day when Rosa refused to give up her seat to a white man and how that act of courage inspired others around the world to stand up for freedom.

In this book a bus *does* talk, and on her way to school a girl named Marcie learns why Rosa Parks is the mother of the Civil Rights movement. At the end of Marcie's magical ride, she meets Rosa Parks herself at a birthday party with several distinguished guests. Wait until she tells her class about this!

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If A Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks By Faith Ringgold Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #89302 in Books
- Brand: Aladdin
- Published on: 2003-01-01
- Released on: 2003-01-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.00" h x .20" w x 11.75" l, .39 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 32 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Underdeveloped poetic conceits short-circuit this profile of civil rights activist Rosa Parks. Marcie, an African-American child, is waiting for the bus to school when a strange bus pulls up; for some reason, she boards it. There is no driver, but the bus itself talks. It informs Marcie that she is riding on "the Rosa Parks bus," the very vehicle that Parks had been riding in 1955 when, refusing to give up her seat to a white man, she helped trigger the Montgomery Bus Boycott. (In a bizarre irony, Marcie is made to give up her seat, which is ostensibly intended for Parks.) The bus then recounts Parks's childhood, education and tireless work as a civil rights activist; Marcie's fellow passengers serve as chorus, intermittently chiming in, "Amen! Amen!... We know, we were there." The account is full of hard-hitting information but suffers from confusing prose ("The Montgomery Bus Boycott was the beginning of a national movement in which people of every race organized protests against segregation in their own towns"). Finally, Parks boards the bus, and it emerges that Marcie's fellow riders include Parks's husband and Martin Luther King Jr.; in a throwaway ending, Marcie debarks at her school ("I can't wait to tell my class about this!"). Ringgold's paintings help animate this uneven tale, but a depiction of the bus with facial features, hair and hat compromises her powerful folk-art style. Other picture books chronicle Parks's life more lucidly; this is a disappointingly bumpy ride. Ages 5-9. (Nov.)

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From School Library Journal

Kindergarten-Grade 4-A talking bus is literally the vehicle for this picture-book biography. Marcie, on her way to school, finds herself on a driverless bus occupied by a group of unfamiliar passengers who don't seem to notice she's there. A disembodied voice tells her that this used to be the Cleveland Avenue bus but is now the Rosa Parks bus, and then launches into an account of the woman's life. Ringgold recounts the dramatic events triggered by Parks's refusal to give up her seat: the Montgomery bus boycott; the leadership, persecution, and death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; the Supreme Court decision to ban bus segregation; and public recognition of the woman who started it all. The story ends when Parks herself enters the bus for a birthday celebration with the passengers who are now revealed as personages from her history. While the artifice of the talking bus and a few minor lapses in logic sometimes detract from a solid telling, the story does much to humanize a larger-than-life figure. Ringgold's colorful, textured acrylic-on-canvas paper paintings done in a naïf style are a perfect complement to the stark realism of the events and the simple dignity of the subject. Color and line are used to suggest ideas, such as the turbulent purple, black, blue, and chalky white and the jagged forms depicting the Ku Klux Klan and bombings. Text and art harmonize, with print changing from black to white and appearing on each page in an interesting variety of layouts. An accessible telling and beautiful illustrations result in a worthy contribution to this developing genre.

Marie Orlando, Suffolk Cooperative Library System, Bellport, NY

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From [Booklist](#)

There have been several children's books about Rosa Parks over the years, including the moving autobiography *I Am Rosa Parks* (1997), written with Jim Haskins. However, this picture-book biography condescends to kids, as if they require a sweet-faced talking bus with cute, flapping eyelashes and a smiling mouth, to entice them to the history. But beyond the intrusive frame, Ringgold tells the story in a direct text and bright acrylic narrative paintings, showing Parks as a political activist whose refusal to give up her seat on the bus sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott. There are dramatic landmark scenes from the civil rights movement, including the lunch counter sit-ins, the leadership role of Dr. King, and the grief at his

assassination. On the final pages, the magic realism is integral to the story as the passengers on the bus turn out to be Dr. King and other leaders paying tribute to "the mother of the Civil Rights movement . . . who, by sitting down, inspired people all over the world to stand up for freedom." *Hazel Rochman*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Raymond Lee:

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information these days can get by anyone with everywhere. The information can be a understanding or any news even a huge concern. What people must be consider if those information which is inside the former life are challenging to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is suitable to believe or which one typically the resource are convinced. If you find the unstable resource then you obtain it as your main information it will have huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen in you if you take *If A Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks* as the daily resource information.

Rebecca West:

A lot of people always spent their very own free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read the book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent all day every day to reading a reserve. The book *If A Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks* it is rather good to read. There are a lot of people who recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space to deliver this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book possesses high quality.

Jose Crawford:

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Florence Ross:

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