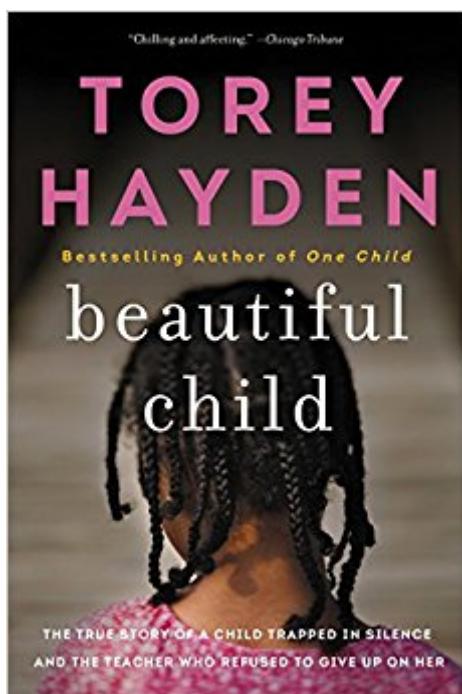


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Beautiful Child: The True Story Of A Child Trapped In Silence And The Teacher Who Refused To Give Up On Her



Synopsis

From the bestselling author of *One Child* comes this amazing, true story of a mute and withdrawn seven-year-old girl and the special education teacher determined never to abandon a child in need. Seven-year-old Venus Fox never spoke, never listened, never even acknowledged the presence of another human being in the room with her. Yet an accidental playground bump would release a rage frightening to behold. The school year that followed would be one of the most trying, perplexing, and ultimately rewarding of Torey Hayden's career, as she struggled to reach a silent child in obvious pain. It would be a strenuous journey beset by seemingly insurmountable obstacles and darkened by truly terrible revelations—yet encouraged by sometimes small, sometimes dazzling breakthroughs—as a dedicated teacher remained committed to helping a "hopeless" girl, and patiently and lovingly leading her toward the light of a new day.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Hayden has chronicled experiences from her long career as a special education teacher in several books, including *One Child* and *The Tiger's Child*. Successes in this difficult and often frustrating field can be few and hard-won, which Hayden deftly illustrates while simultaneously offering hope and joy in small victories. This time she brings to life the story of a scruffy seven-year-old, Venus, who is so unresponsive that Hayden searches for signs of deafness, brain damage or mental retardation. Familiar with Venus's siblings, other teachers warn Hayden not to expect much from

Venus. Yet the author is relentless in her attempt to diagnose the cause of Venus's "almost catatonic" state, which is punctuated by occasional violent outbursts. Suspecting "elective mutism," a refusal to talk "for psychological reasons," Hayden persists in trying to draw Venus out. Her patient dedication finally pays off when the girl shows an interest in She-Ra, Princess of Power comic books. From there, a story of domestic abuse, removal to foster care and a slow emergence from silent isolation unfolds. However, Venus is not the only fascinating character here. Hayden sets Venus's bittersweet and complex story against the backdrop of other students, including one boy with a very high IQ but behavioral problems, another with Tourette's syndrome and a girl who inexplicably spouts sophisticated poetry and talks to her hand. In this first-person narrative, Hayden also shares her own thoughts, worries and strained relationship with a mismatched classroom aide, creating a rich tapestry of the dynamics of a group of special needs youngsters and the adults who try to help them. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Adult/High School-A crisply analytical depiction of one year in a special education classroom. Hayden's approach is straightforward and heartwarmingly compassionate not only in its portrayal of the relationships she developed with her students, but also in its appraisal of a philosophical conflict with her teacher's aide and the effect this had on the functioning of the students. The challenge of creating a highly structured, safe, yet sensitive and supportive environment for five children between the ages of six and nine, all with multiple emotional and developmental handicaps, is a study in creativity, perseverance, and keen observation. The author vividly describes her early struggles to inspire bonding among her charges and incremental progress in leading them toward norms of social behavior. The book ultimately focuses on Venus, age seven, whose impoverished and abusive home life frames the backdrop upon which her steps toward trust are poignantly rendered. Twins Shane and Zane, affected by fetal alcohol syndrome; Jesse, afflicted with Tourette's syndrome; and brash and aggressive Billy certainly present a full spectrum of challenges, but it is with Venus that the teacher's most indomitable problem-solving skills are engaged. Insightful and eminently readable, this book will be of particular value to students with a career interest in special education, social services, or counseling. Lynn Nutwell, Fairfax City Regional Library, VA
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Torrey's well written book touches the heart as she goes through her days in the classroom with her

special education students. She introduces each child and their needs, but especially Venus her most challenging student, who most people had given up on helping. Torey's tenacity and concern for Venus worked small "miracles" in this troubled and abused child's life. There were times while reading the book that I couldn't put it down and read with a broken heart for Venus. I highly recommend this book for your reading. If you've ever spent time with children in an educational setting, you will especially enjoy *Beautiful Child*.

The amazing part about this story is that it's true and Torey touched real people and changed their lives for the better. Truly astounding. I must admit I wasn't a complete fan, but definitely a great read. BTW: I'm biased - focus on learning theories involving behavior mod as a psych student.

I enjoyed this book, and laughed at the comments made by Billy, and was saddened by the way children are treated by their parents. Torey did a great job in putting this altogether and then ended it superbly - don't want to add a spoiler here. The story telling developed well, and as such, I could not put the book down. A must read.

The story is told with frank and honest language, is beautifully crafted and unfolded in a way that reveals slowly, as though you were there, the events that affect this child, the interventions and setbacks, and satisfyingly, there is an epilog. I bought this for a class in identifying special needs children in the classroom. I think it is a good read for anyone, but especially anyone who works with children – in a classroom, clinic, or daycare.

I have followed Torey Hayden's teaching career from the beginning. Each year her teaching methods seem to evolve as she is met with a new group of students. All of Torey's pupils are individuals to her, each with their own set of problems and strengths. Most learn much from Torry, who seem to learn much from each of them.

Great book. Torey does a great job at showing her passion for children. As a social worker myself I can identify clearly with her excitement when children succeed. This is the second book I have read of hers and I was not disappointed.

This was not my favorite Torey Hayden book. That being said it was an interesting and compelling book.

a vey heartwarming story about a teacher of a special needs student who has severe mental problems. The teacher has to learn to go inside the child's personal life and home life to fully understand how to reach the child. She goes above and beyond to unravel the *faÃfÆ'Ã §ade* of the child. To understand the complexities of the child's behavior she must first learn to understand the child.

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