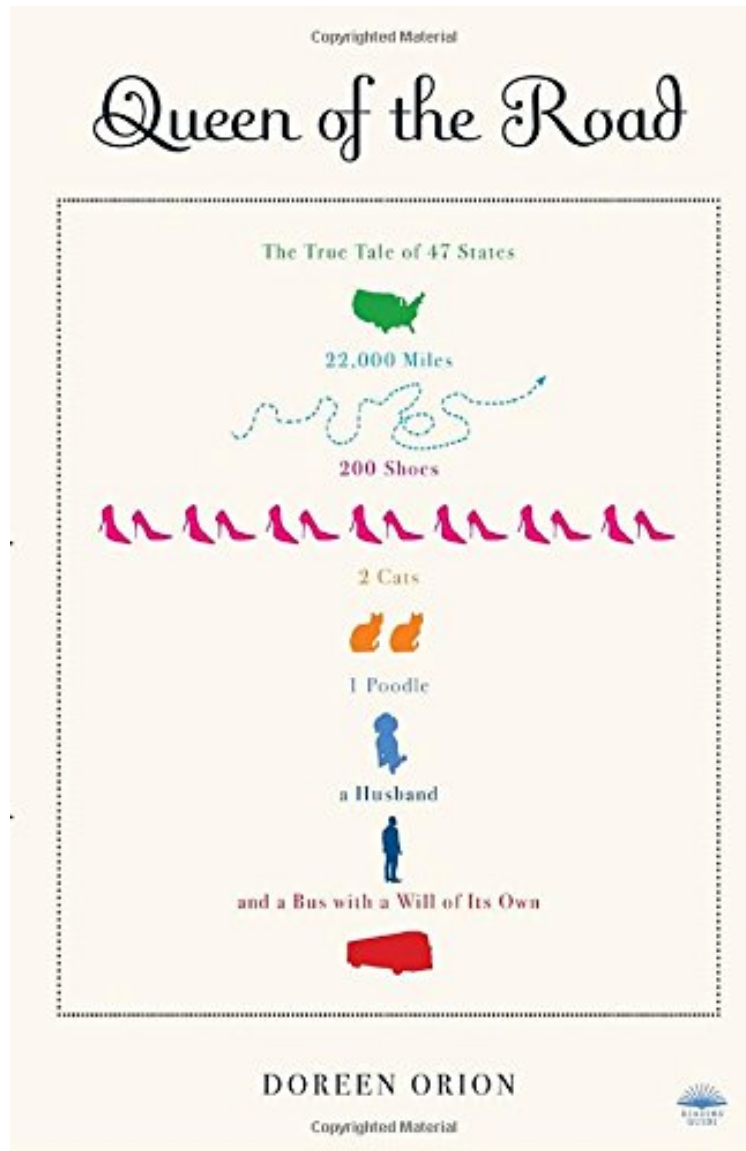


(Ebook free) Queen of the Road: The True Tale of 47 States, 22,000 Miles, 200 Shoes, 2 Cats, 1 Poodle, a Husband, and a Bus with a Will of Its Own

# Queen of the Road: The True Tale of 47 States, 22,000 Miles, 200 Shoes, 2 Cats, 1 Poodle, a Husband, and a Bus with a Will of Its Own

Doreen Orion

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## Husband, and a Bus with a Will of Its Own:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Along For A Great Ride By Gia Giovenale I really enjoyed this book, so much so that after reading a loaner from a friend, I bought my own copy, so I could visit the stops at leisure. Not only is the story enticing, of two people who actually followed their dream (well, at least his), but the author's wit creates almost the slightly unwilling, distaff version of a Bill Bryson travelogue. Written from the thoroughly urban view of a self-admitted shopaholic, it was at the same time funny and honestly romantic; I loved her 'Drinks of the Occasion' heading each chapter, whether created in celebration or in anxiety...toasting another chapter of their travels. For a fair part of the book I wasn't sure where the trip would end; her living up to her husband's assessment of a typical JAP, which I had arrived at well before the third chapter, but through their meanderings, her candid humor brings her to really appreciate an uncluttered and richer life. Doreen and her husband are people I'd be happy to meet in any RV setting, any state, any time. Thanks for letting us ride along on this hilarious journey!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. 3.5 stars: An entertaining memoir of traveling around the country in a converted bus By Cissa Sometimes doing something completely out of character can be amazing. Here's an account of that. Doreen is an interesting mix! Both sympathetic and, at times, very much not. This is a memoir, based on her blog, of her reluctant (at least at first) travels around the country with her husband and pets on a converted bus. "Converted bus" does not really sum it up, though- that sounds declassé, and this conversion- with its ridiculously expensive granite countertop, and the stainless steel tiles in the shower, for example- is a custom, pricey job with all possible luxuries! I have been fascinated by RVs ever since I toured them as a kid at the Minnesota State Fair. I love their clockwork efficient use of space- and as a clutter-hound myself, their minimalism has a fascination! at least for a while! They had many adventures, which Orion describes in a humorous way, even those that were no doubt terrifying at the time. She and her husband rib each other endlessly, but clearly adore each other...realistically. If you enjoyed this book, you will likely adore the mysteries that feature Joe and Dottie Loudermilk and their Airstream trailer, as they travel and have adventures! Written by Gar Anthony Haywood, I only wish there were more! While I enjoyed this book, I think the Kindle price for it is absurdly high; I got it for free through a special offer.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GREAT HILARIOUS READ I LOVED IT ONCE AND I KNOW THAT I WILL LOVE IT AGAIN. By VALERIE TOWNSEND WHEN I FIRST READ QUEEN OF THE ROAD I THOUGHT I WOULD WRITE A REVIEW BUT FORGOT. SO, HERE IT IS NOW AFTER I JUST BOUGHT THIS HILARIOUS BOOK AGAIN. MY SECOND COPY CAME IN THE MAIL TODAY ALSO ORDERED A COPY FOR A CLOSE FAMILY FRIEND . WHO LOVES TO READ REALLY FUNNY BOOKS, I THINK SHE WILL REALLY LIKE IT I JUST LOVED IT I PLAN TO REREAD IT AGAIN. AND, I AM, LOOKING READING AGAIN AND LAUGHING OUT LOUD THROUGH THE WHOLE BOOK AGAIN. I KNOW I WILL REALLY LIKE IT OR REALLY LOVE THIS BOOK AGAIN ITS A WONDERFUL HILARIOUS BOOK AND A GREAT READ I LOVE IT AND AM GLAD TO HAVE ANOTHER COPY OF AGAIN.

A pampered Long Island princess hits the road in a converted bus with her wilderness-loving husband, travels the country for one year, and brings it all hilariously to life in this offbeat and romantic memoir. Doreen and Tim are married psychiatrists with a twist: She's a self-proclaimed Long Island princess, grouchy couch potato, and shoe addict. He's an affable, though driven, outdoorsman. When Tim suggests "chucking it all" to travel cross-country in a converted bus, Doreen asks, "Why can't you be like a normal husband in a midlife crisis and have an affair or buy a Corvette?" But she soon shocks them both, agreeing to set forth with their sixty-pound dog, two querulous cats—and no agenda—in a 340-square-foot bus. *Queen of the Road* is Doreen's offbeat and romantic tale about refusing to settle; about choosing the unconventional road with all the misadventures it brings (fire, flood, armed robbery, and finding themselves in a nudist RV park, to name just a few). The marvelous places they visit and delightful people they encounter have a life-changing effect on all the travelers, as Doreen grows to appreciate the simple life, Tim mellows, and even the pets pull together. Best of all, readers get to go along for the ride through forty-seven states in this often hilarious and always entertaining memoir, in which a boisterous marriage of polar opposites becomes stronger than ever.

"Two psychiatrists driving a motor home around America, and you're still wondering whether to buy this book? Step on the gas and go straight to the register." —Jeff Arch, Academy Award-nominated screenwriter, *Sleepless In Seattle* "Doreen Orion has a fresh, wry voice that's all her own and she works it like a rodeo rider in her light-hearted and yet tender new memoir, *Queen of the Road*." —Jacquelyn Mitchard, New York Times bestselling author of *The Deep End of the Ocean* "His dream — he's always wanted to see America in a converted bus — and her nightmare — she has a bus phobia — and their mid-life crisis on wheels, make for a hilarious reading adventure." —Mary-Lou Weisman, author of *Traveling While Married* "You will never look at a psychiatrist the same way again. And you will never take a bus driver for granted, either." —John Elder Robison, New York Times bestselling author of *Look Me in the Eye* "Doreen Orion and her handyman husband Tim prove, with abundant laughs and martini shaker in hand, that

sometimes the best way to enrich home-life is to leave the home...or, better yet, just put it on wheels." –Franz Wisner, New York Times bestselling author of *Honeymoon with My Brother*"Orion has every good travel writer's ability to make readers feel they are there, to capture the telling details of places, and to present the account in a witty, accessible way. Reading the book makes you want to hit the road and have some of your own grand adventures. This is a fun read that will make just about anyone start itching for a road trip. Grade 'A.'"–Rocky Mountain News"A Charles Kuralt-Albert Brooks-style romp where they meet up with nudists, robbers and more. Required Reading." - The New York Post "Hot Summer Read." - Chicago Tribune"The Elizabeth Gilbert Antichrist." - The Oregonian"Beneath its fun and frothy exterior, you'll find in this wild ride across America's highways and byways a lovely portrait of a marriage that treats its ups and downs with humor and grace." - Elle MagazineA charming, insightful and - most important - hilarious book that evokes the best of Bill Bryson and David Sedaris, but spotlights the unique voice of a gifted memoirist. - Jonathan Kellerman, New York Times Bestselling Novelist"Queen of the Road is basically what would happen if you took me, gave me a modicum of maturity and a better education, and then tricked me into living on a (very nice) bus with my husband and pets for a year. I loved this book and I love this author." - Jen Lancaster, bestselling author of *Bright Lights, Big Ass*, *Bitter is the New Black* and *Such a Pretty Fat*The author's charm, intelligence and wit make this multi-faceted memoir a must-read. *Eat, Pray, Love* - without the depression - meets *Confessions of a Shopaholic* - without the ditz. - Denver Magazine"A funny, inspiring travel memoir of one couple's cross-country motorhome trip and how it changed their lives.... an action-packed, romantic journey of trials and transformations." - Family Motor Coaching Magazine."Part travel memoir, part diva-on-a-bus-tour comedy." - 5280 MagazineAbout the AuthorDOREEN ORION is a triple-boarded psychiatrist on the faculty of the University of Colorado Health Science Center. She is an award-winning author, has lectured throughout the U.S., and has appeared on major national media such as *Larry King Live*, *48 Hours*, *Good Morning America* and been interviewed by the *New York Times*, *People Magazine* and many others. Still, she considers her greatest accomplishment that her bus was the centerfold for *Bus Conversions* magazine (which she is the travel writer for), thus fulfilling a life-long ambition of being a *Miss September*.Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

Chapter OneDETHRONEDWhen my long-dreaded thirtieth birthday arrived, I really wasn't as upset as I imagined I'd be, for I had achieved a much more important milestone: my sartorial centennial. I owned one hundred pairs of shoes. Then, at age forty-four, I found myself trying to cram a mere half that number into a living space of 340 square feet.The whole thing was Tim's fault.When he announced he wanted to travel around the country in a converted bus for a year, I gave this profound and potentially life-altering notion all the thoughtful consideration it deserved."Why can't you be like a normal husband with a midlife crisis and have an affair or buy a Corvette?" I demanded, adding, "I will never, ever, EVER, not in a million years, live on a bus."Something less than a million years later, as we prepared to roll down the road in our fully outfitted, luxury bus, it occurred to me that Tim had already owned a Corvette, long ago when he was far too young for a midlife crisis. While I pondered who he might be seeing on the side (and whether his having an affair might prove less taxing than living in a metallic phallus on wheels), I wedged and stuffed--and, oh my GOD! bent--the cutest little Prada mules you've ever seen into my "closet," which was really not a closet at all, but much more resembled the cubbyhole I'd been assigned many pre-shoe-obsession years ago at Camp Cejwin. How had I let myself go from "never ever" to...this? Both Tim and I are shrinks, but he's obviously the better one. It took him five years, yet he whittled down my resolve, no doubt with some fancy, newfangled brainwashing technique ripped out of one of our medical journals before I could get to it.That wouldn't have been the first time my sneaky husband tricked me into doing something I didn't want to do. Well, OK. It was only the second time (that I know of), but the first was a doozy: Almost twenty years before, Tim lied to get me to go on our first date. We met in 1984 when we were both married to other people. I was a fourth-year medical student living in D.C., but doing as many rotations in Tucson as I could, because that's where my first husband had just moved for graduate school. (He wanted to be an archeologist and put his studies on hold so I could finish my medical training. In return, I told him I'd do my residency wherever he wanted to get his Ph.D., not for one moment thinking he'd pick a city with no Nordstrom.) Tim was a second-year psychiatry resident in the Tucson program, and I was assigned to his team.Although he was terribly nice and we got along well, I was, after all, happily married and didn't give him a second thought when the rotation was over. As for Tim, his marriage to Diane (or D1; I'm D2. There'd better not be another upgrade) was already crumbling. Two years later, I was the second-year resident, Tim was about to graduate, and we were both divorced.Tim and D1 had been high school sweethearts and their marriage was more a function of inevitability than compatibility. As for my ex and me, we just got married too young. Shortly after I graduated from medical school, I could see that our two-year union had been a mistake and vowed not to marry again for a long, long while.Seven months later, I ran into Tim.I was at a bar with a group of friends, drinking, dancing, and having a grand ole time. Tim walked in with a friend of his. Since we hadn't seen each other in nearly a year, we chatted briefly, but apparently enough for him to realize I was no longer married. Again, I didn't give him another thought-until he called a few days later."Hey, Doreen. It's Tim." What is this guy calling me for?"A bunch of us from my class are getting together Saturday night to go back to the bar. You know, me, Mike, Walt, Ann...Dave. I wondered if you'd be interested in coming?" Did he say Dave?"Uh...sure! See you then." Seems innocuous, right? But, you see, Tim had

dangled Dave in front of me because he knew I was attracted to him. How did he know? Because every woman with a pulse was attracted to Dave. And I snapped up the bait with no more thought than the many times I'd gone home with a designer dress that didn't fit, just because it was on sale. Tim hadn't dated much since his marriage had broken up and was not in a place where he wanted to risk rejection. So, you might ask, what's wrong with arranging to go out in a group? Determine if we're compatible? Have an out if...? See how good that man is at deception? There was never a group going out. It was always just going to be me and Tim. That Saturday night, a few hours before we were to meet, the phone rang. "Hey, Doreen. It's Tim." What is this guy calling me for? "I'm really, really sorry, but everybody's flaked out. Nobody can come tonight. I thought I'd show up anyway, hang out, have a beer. You're welcome to join me...if you're not doing anything." "Uh, sure. See you, then." I couldn't make other plans that late on a Saturday evening. Guess I might as well go. And that's exactly what Tim knew I'd be thinking when he'd concocted his evil plan. We met at the bar (aptly named "The Bum Steer"), where we talked, laughed, ate, talked, laughed, drank, and talked and laughed some more. Hey. This guy's kinda...wonderful. Of course, I didn't know that he'd hoodwinked me, yet. He waited a few weeks to tell me. By then, I was so smitten, I was actually flattered he'd gone to all that trouble. If only I'd realized it was the start of a pattern--sure, one that recurs only once every twenty years, but a pattern nonetheless. I shudder to think what he'll make me do in another twenty. That first night, I found myself falling. What is going on here? Then I remembered my vow. I don't want to get involved with anyone. So I strengthened my resolve. I can't get involved with him. But, all too soon, there it was: How...can...I...not? That first "date," which wasn't even supposed to be a date, lasted eight hours. We've been together ever since, progressing through the all-important M's--Monogamy, Moving in, Mortgage, and Matrimony. And then, unfortunately, motor home. As a pampered Princess from the Island of Long, I have always been smug in my position as role model for my friends. They marvel at how I get Tim to do: 1. all the ironing (by exiting the house in horribly wrinkled clothes); 2. all the laundry (by washing everything together, so his favorite baseball shirt turned pink); 3. all the dishes (by being incapable of stacking the dishwasher in an energy-efficient manner). He also walks the dog (I'm a cat person), cleans the house (I'm a pig, but in fairness to me, the first time he suggested we split chores on a weekly basis, I said, "That's fine, honey, but on my week, I'll write a check"), and takes out the garbage (are there really any married women who still do this?). But once we announced we were doing the "bus thing," as we came to call it, my friends started viewing me with disgust. They insisted I'd let them down. As their husbands eyed mine with envy and tried to get him to divulge his secret recipe for spousal capitulation, the wives shunned me as if the decision to chuck everything and live in a glorified tin can was a symptom of some contagious insanity. The most curious reaction from our married friends, however, was incredulity--not about the bus, but about the amount of togetherness the bus would require. "How in the world can you spend twenty-four/seven with each other? We could NEVER do that!" they'd say, shaking their heads in a unison of misery at the thought. Tim and I would just exchange knowing looks and try not to smile. Twenty-four/seven was actually the one aspect of bus life we were both looking forward to. I even think there are a few of my friends who believe I'm rather quiet, just because I never have much to contribute on the "let's bitch about our marriages" front. I know I'm lucky. Unfortunately, Tim knows it, too. He loves when Joanne, one of my best buddies from residency, calls. She's one of the absolute nicest people I have ever met (second only to my husband). But she also has the absolute worst luck with men. Tim can always tell when I've spoken to her during the day, for as soon as he walks through the door at night, I invariably hurl myself into his arms and beg, "Don't ever leave me!" He'll shoot me a smug little smile and ask, "How is Joanne?" "Twenty-four/seven? No problem. Bus? Well...I tried to convince myself (really I did) that my living on one was a natural fit. Although I love the idea of travel, in practice I don't particularly like doing it; the closets are never big enough and there's always the risk of ending up on a hotel's first floor, which smacks way too much of camping for me. I loathe camping. In fact, my idea of "roughing it" is to stay at the Holiday Inn. Tim and I lived in Boulder, Colorado, for ten years before we hit the road. Boulder is always at the top of every "Most Nauseatingly Healthy/Active Cities" list--though many in surrounding towns refer to it as "Nestled Between the Mountains and Reality"--so sure, I can appreciate natural beauty. I just don't want to have to walk around in it. Besides, the whole fresh air thing is overrated. I'm a physician. A scientist. Stale air, fresh air, it's all the same molecules. I had so shunned the "great" outdoors, in fact, that I had never even been stung by a bee until the age of forty-three--and that was in my own house. I just like being inside. I like not getting dressed. I like not putting on makeup. I like not brushing my...well, never mind. Some might call me lazy. I can't be bothered to disagree. I'd never even realized how strange my love of the great indoors was until one February, when I heard Tim talking to a neighbor in our yard. I poked my head out the door to say hello. "Doreen! It's nice to see you!" she exclaimed, as if I were a burn victim, finally emerging from the hyperbaric chamber. Tim, of course, couldn't resist singing out, "Guess it's six more weeks of winter!" I had even gravitated away from patient care to doing insurance reviews so I could stay home all day, in my nightgown, with a cat on my lap. For years, Tim used to come home and exclaim in amazement, "Don't tell me you haven't gotten dressed all day!" But I was proud of my record: 118 hours without leaving the house. Once I perfected the art of not even leaving the bed in the morning, it took Tim a while to get used to this new development. But I figured he'd come around. How could he not be impressed? I found out just how one day when, seeing me sitting up against the headboard, typing away on my laptop, cell phone standing by with papers strewn about, he exclaimed,

"Look at you!" At first I didn't quite get his meaning, and asked with considerable pride, "Yep. Who else doesn't have to get out of bed to work besides whores?" "Even whores have to leave their beds to get johns," he said with disdain. In fact, however, I always managed to get out--technically speaking--at least once a day: In the neighborhood, I'm known as "the Mafioso" because I'll venture outside to pick up the mail or the paper in a bathrobe, like Vinny the Chin, who roamed Greenwich Village in his pajamas so if the Feds ever got anything on him, he could plead insanity. I tried pleading insanity when I first told my girlfriends about the bus. Although they agreed with the diagnosis, it didn't seem to make them any more forgiving. I also tried to convince myself that on a bus, I could do what I really loved (stay at home in my pajamas), while doing what I thought I should love (travel). How in the world could I ever have thought this was a bad idea? I even came to view it as a promotion of sorts: from Long Island Princess to Queen of the Long Narrow Aisle. Tim, on the other hand, never had any reservations about the bus thing from the moment he stopped at the local newsstand and happened upon Bus Conversions magazine. He had found his people and his cause. Ever since he started his private practice nearly fifteen years before, Tim would come home from work at seven or eight in the evening, then make an hour or more of patient calls he hadn't been able to get to during the day. While he often counseled people to take better care of themselves, it was not something that he himself seemed able to do with any ease, largely because he was working himself to death taking care of them. He also tried to be as available to his patients as possible and if someone asked him to take a very difficult case, he always said yes, just because he believed he could help. His practice was killing him. As I railed against the bus thing, I accused Tim of wanting to do it just so he could escape psychiatry. If he really needed out, I was all for it, but why should I have to give up my life (which I was perfectly content with) for a year? While he assured me this wasn't the case, that the bus thing was something he truly wanted to do, I maintained my skepticism, although the most he would admit to was hoping the bus year would help him "mellow out." Eager to change the subject, he proceeded to ask how I myself might like to be different by the end of the year. I cocked my head and batted my eyes, relishing this rarest of moments when my darling husband was the one to walk into a trap. "Why?" I asked with all the sweetness I could muster. "Do you think there's something I need to change?" Tim must have seen his bus dream flash before his eyes. "N-no," he stammered. "I-I just thought maybe you'd like to...you know...well..." His eyes seemed to roll back into his brain, desperately searching its contents for a way out of this one. Finally, he sighed.