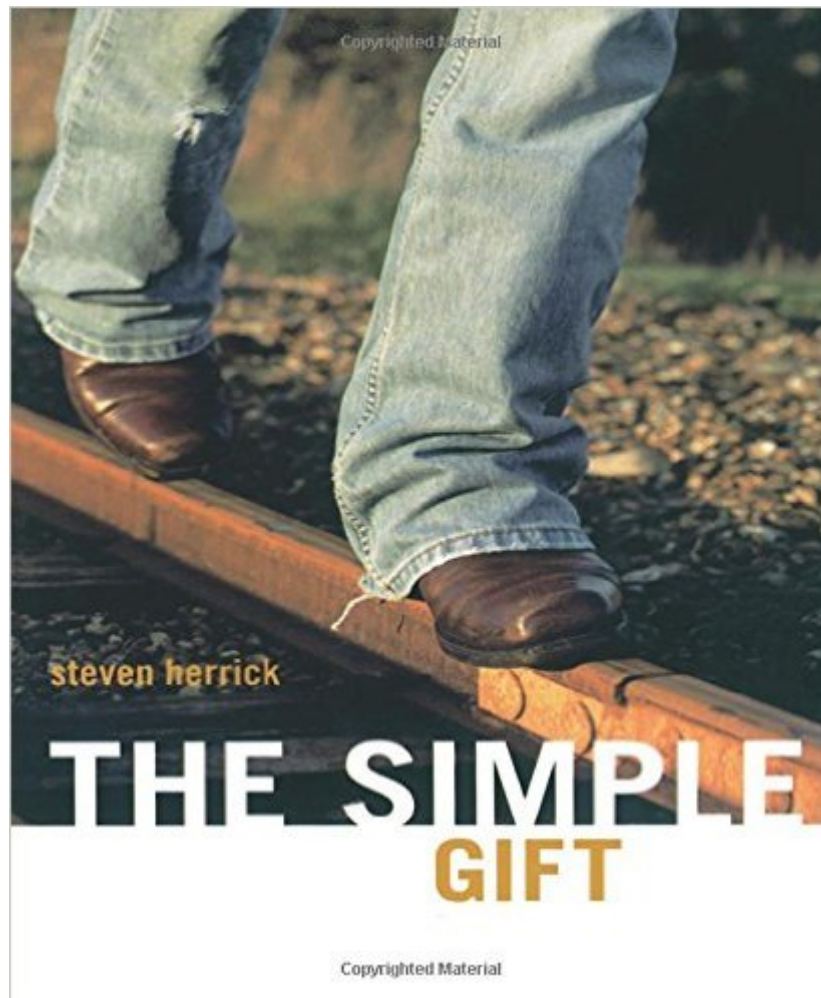


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# The Simple Gift



## Synopsis

I'm not proud. I'm sixteen, and soon to be homeless. Weary of his life with his alcoholic, abusive father, sixteen-year-old Billy packs a few belongings and hits the road, hoping for something better than what he left behind. He finds a home in an abandoned freight train outside a small town, where he falls in love with rich, restless Caitlin and befriends a fellow train resident, "Old Bill," who slowly reveals a tragic past. When Billy is given a gift that changes everything, he learns not only to how forge his own path in life, but the real meaning of family.

## Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Simon Pulse (May 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689868677

ISBN-13: 978-0689868672

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.4 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #762,927 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #116 inÂ Books > Teens >

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Drugs & Alcohol Abuse

## Customer Reviews

In a counterpoint to THE LORD OF THE FLIES, and other grim tales where a lack of structure or authority leads to chaos and harshness and evil intent, Australian author Steven Herrick has created a world in which a young man striving for autonomy is able to attain an idyllic existence away from the rule makers and the rule breakers. When sixteen-year-old Billy Lockett packs a few things (including the old man's booze and cigarettes) into his schoolbag, says good-bye to his dog, and walks out of the house, he doesn't know where he will end up. But Billy's certain that anything will beat living with his abusive father. "Please don't tell what train I'm on And they won't know what route I've gone"--Elizabeth Cotton, "Freight Train" Hopping a westbound freight train in a teeming rain, Billy immediately crosses paths with the first of a series of characters who will each enrich and transform his life with their kindness, and who will each in turn take something away themselves for having been able to see through Billy's exterior. "Men.....Billy There are men like Ernie, the train

driver, in this world. Men who don't boss you around and don't ask prying questions and don't get bitter at anyone different from them. Men who share a drink and food and a warm cabin when they don't have to. Men who know the value of things like an old boat built for long weekends on a lake. Men who see something happening and know if it's right or wrong and aren't afraid to make that call.

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