



The Lioness in Winter: Writing an Old Woman's Life

Ann Burack-Weiss

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When she started working with the aged more than forty years ago, Ann Burack-Weiss began storing the knowledge and skills she thought would help when she got old herself. It was not until she hit her mid-seventies that she realized she had packed sneakers to climb Mount Everest, not anticipating the crevices and chasms that constitute the rocky terrain of old age. The professional gerontological and social work literature offered little help, so she turned to the late-life works of beloved women authors who had bravely climbed the mountain and sent back news from the summit. Maya Angelou, Colette, Simone de Beauvoir, Joan Didion, Marguerite Duras, M. F. K. Fisher, Doris Lessing, Mary Oliver, Adrienne Rich, May Sarton, and Florida Scott-Maxwell were among the many guides she turned to for inspiration.

In *The Lioness in Winter*, Burack-Weiss blends an analysis of key writings from these and other famed women authors with her own wisdom to create an essential companion for older women and those who care for them. She fearlessly examines issues such as living with loss, finding comfort and joy in unexpected places, and facing disability and death. This book is filled with powerful passages from women who turned their experiences of aging into art, and Burack-Weiss ties their words to her own struggles and epiphanies, framing their collective observations with key insights from social work practice.

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