Agnes DeMille

WOMEN OF WISDOM
DANCER & CHOREOGRAPHER
DIRECTOR & WRITER
ARTS & CULTURE

BY LYNN GILBERT

WOMEN OF WISDOM SERIES:
PORTRAITS AND STORIES
OF TRAILBLAZERS WHO
TRANSFORMED OUR WORLD

Women of Wisdom

Agnes de Mille

By
LYNN GILBERT

Excerpted from *Particular Passions: Talks With Women Who Have Shaped Our Times*

Women of Wisdom

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Contents

Portraits by Lynn Gilbert
Agnes de Mille in Her Own Voice 1
Author's Note 11
Postface 12
Acknowledgments 15
Women of Wisdom Series 17
Reviews 18
Imprint 19

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Agnes de Mille

B. 1905, New York City – D. 1993, New York City

Agnes de Mille was a choreographer, dancer, director, writer, speaker, and arts advocate. Her innovative use of choreography to develop character and narrative ushered musical theater into its golden age.

Raised in a culturally elite, wealthy family, de Mille was steeped in the arts. Her father, a prominent playwright, wanted her to be a writer and required her to read the works of storytellers Hugo, Dickens, and Balzac. Her grandfather left the ministry to write plays, and her uncle, Cecil B. de Mille, was a legendary Hollywood director. Despite this artistic lineage, her parents viewed her passion for dance as unladylike, restricting her practice to one hour a day.

After graduating cum laude from a top university at 19, she pursued dance, then viewed as decorative entertainment. Lacking the traditional ballerina look and body type, she faced rejection, but found her path through choreography, applying her storytelling skills to movement to convey deep emotional and narrative themes.

Married in her late thirties, with one son, de Mille went on to choreograph countless landmark ballets and musicals. She cofounded the first union for dancers, choreographers, and stage directors. As a prominent public speaker, she championed federal arts funding.

Even a life-threatening stroke at age 70 didn't diminish her creativity, and she continued to produce revivals and wrote books critical to the history of dance. Her legacy paved the way for generations of women in dance and theater, securing her place as one of the most influential figures in the evolution of American performing arts.

WHAT I WANT TO SAY is this: I've never had any theories. I don't have any favorite kind of dancing, I don't have any favorite subject, anything like that. As Martha Graham says, and has said often, there are two kinds of dancing: good and bad. And I subscribe to that. A good work of art is a good work of art, and I don't care if it's made out of jackstraws, marble, or gesso. And what makes a good work of art is a very subtle subject. I'm not going into that now; that's aesthetics. But I hate vagueness, I hate flummery. I think there is a very great deal of it, and imagine there always has been. People get away with murder if they possibly can. Not artists—they don't want to.

The difference between an artist and a non-artist, I think, is that the artist will not settle for anything less than the truth as far as he can sense it, or feel it, or perceive it, whatever the medium. He doesn't know what the truth is, ever—he senses it. He has to feel toward it. If he knew what it was, he'd say it. Or somebody else would have said it. Now, art always has an element of personality, of involvement, of passion, of sincerity, and the individual gives into it and gets out of it the best that he can.

What I wanted to do was to feel toward my statement, and my statement would have to be what moves me, and what intrigues me.

I think it is a miracle that I turned into anything of worth because I had an amateur background. It was Edwardian. I was the petted daughter in a fairly wealthy household, in which being a lady was the thing. It was like being a knight, a Southern gentleman, or like an officer in the American Army used to be. My father thought my wanting to dance was an aberration, just like little boys wanting to be firemen. He always wanted me to write. Several of my teachers wanted me to write, but I felt deeply—and I can't explain this—but I felt I could only write when I had a child and a husband.

Ballet dancing excited me. I had seen Anna Pavlova. In ballet technique, in the case of women, it is the pointe work and the leg. In the case of the men, it's elevation, being able to jump the way they do. They are superb athletes. I was only allowed to dance one hour a day. I pined and wept and carried on, but I never disobeyed. I cheated: "Well now," I'd say, "I've thought about something else for five minutes, so I'll put another five minutes on the end." I think it would have been smarter of Father to let me be a dancer, a good dancer.

Even though I had so little opportunity to dance in the early years, I had a sense of drama. My father was a playwright, which affected me enormously. From him, I learned story continuity and dramatic tension. I read the books he wanted me to: complete Balzac, complete Victor Hugo, complete Dickens. He got me to read books with a very strong storyline. He didn't read Henry James; I was out of college before I read Henry James. My father was a brilliant man. To hear him talk about literature or theater was a treat. He had total influence in training my mind.

My life with my parents was very happy. I was repressed as a dancer, but my God, we had the most marvelous time as children. My adolescence was a ball. It was later that I suffered.

I was interested in school and I was absolutely fascinated by college. I went to UCLA and had marvelous teachers. It was the most stimulating intellectual challenge I had ever met in my life. I used to get absolutely intoxicated when I saw the names of the courses. I always signed up for more than I could possibly take.

I was in love with all of my professors, but I fell deeply in love with two of them. One was a man and that was rather serious. My mother was so worried about it that she enrolled in one of my courses. She could do that because it was a state college. She took the course with me and kept an eye on me. I didn't deal very well with my mother keeping tabs on me. I was smothered. She didn't allow me to go away to college. I wasn't allowed to read the newspaper until I was a sophomore in college because so many of our acquaintances were getting murdered: William Desmond Taylor; the Fatty Arbuckle scandal all over the front pages. She thought it was pretty disgusting and she didn't want me to read about it.

I was nineteen when I graduated from college. I handed father a cum laude and I thought that would make him happy. Mother told me the next day that she was going to leave him. I went into shock, and so did my sister. We had not been brought up to know about people who got divorced or were disaster cases. It happened, God knows, but we didn't talk about it.

God gave me the drive to overcome the power of my mother. It took years to break loose. My sister escaped by running off and getting married when she was twenty, but I was older by a couple of years. I finally fell in love with a boy that she disapproved of.

She disapproved of every boy that she felt was paying attention to me. She didn't mind my pining, but she didn't like my being the recipient of amour. She put her whole life against this one. I nearly died of it.

In the course of it, I moved out of her house. I took a flat in New York City. You could in those days. I first went to the Ansonia Hotel, which in those days was really disreputable. It was shocking because things went on that couldn't be explained. I got a suite for twenty dollars a week. Can you believe that? It had no sunlight. It was simply hideous, with dark-red plush furniture, and very dirty, but it was mine, and I used to go in there after a day's rehearsal and shut the door and think, "This is mine, mine, and nobody is going to ask me a question." I just fell on the bed and was grateful.

It was very rough going out into the world. It needn't have happened that badly if I had had any professionalism. I should have made demands of myself that I didn't make. I would present work that wasn't ready, that wasn't thought through. My work wasn't good enough, my technique wasn't sound enough, my hair would fall down, my stockings were wrinkled. It just wasn't professional. It wasn't even neat. I didn't have a classic body. I had a long torso and shortish legs. They are pretty legs, but very short. What I did have was a real acting ability and inventive, creative thought. I couldn't fit into the mold, so I made my own, that's all.

At that time, the commercial theater was geared to a totally different kind of entertainment and show. They didn't have many dance concerts. Isadora Duncan had left, cursing America. She was in Europe. Ruth St. Denis had her own company with Ted Shawn [Denishawn] and they were in a world of their own. They had to make their own theater, their own school, their own everything. I felt they were not quite first-class. Now, when I see all the pictures of her, I respect her more than I did then, and him less. But it was to me not interesting or exciting like the Russian ballet. I had seen the Diaghilev, you see.

There basically was no ballet around except at movie houses. They did prologues to the big moving pictures, and that was pretty commercial work. "Roxy" Rothafel gave me a chance to do something, and it was immediately a hit. Then I did another one because the ballet master was on vacation in Europe. But when he got back and found that a new girl

had made a hit, and Rothafel told him I wanted to do some more, he just kept delaying and saying, "Next month, next month," and it never transpired.

That was probably why I didn't get ahead. I had to do certain kinds of dances because nothing else was accepted. My point of view was not accepted because they hadn't seen it and they didn't want it. They wanted someone who could tap, or sing a song quite prettily; they just wanted nice little soubrette stars. Well, I'm a stickler. I very seldom say, "The hell with it." What made it worthwhile was when I stepped in front of an audience and heard their laughter. I did studies of ballet girls fainting and getting exhausted and there were screams of laughter. I didn't know I was a comedienne. I thought I was a serious dancer. My mother used to say, "Oh, Agnes, this is so sad, this is tragic, I can't look."

Dancing didn't give me any freedom because Mother moved right in with me in New York. She supervised all my costumes. I designed them, but she saw that they got made. She tried supervising my music, even though she didn't know a thing about music. That made me pretty mad. She wanted to be present at every one of my business interviews. I couldn't have any kind of a business talk without Mother being right there. It was a hassle. Other people didn't like it. She was like all those theatrical mothers, except she wasn't smart—not that way. My mother delayed me because I was kept always smothered up in a comforter with adulation, being cherished and petted and pitied.

I was starving when I signed up to do the choreography for Richard Rodgers' *Oklahoma!* in 1943. The Theatre Guild said, "Sign this, fifteen hundred dollars, no royalties, or don't sign it." The producer, Lawrence Langner, had seen many of my concerts, but he also knew I had to have work, so he squeezed me. They all do. I think it is disgraceful.

When *Oklahoma!* opened, I went out West to get engaged to a soldier, Walter Prude, the man I married. When I came back two weeks later, I was having lunch with a reporter from the *New York Times*, and he said, "Miss de Mille, I don't think you know what kind of success *Oklahoma!* is." I said, "No, I've never had a success before, so what kind is it?" He said, "The biggest success of the twentieth century," and I said, "Oh!" Well, that made me think a little, and then I went back to Lawrence Langner, who was one of the heads of the Theatre Guild, and I said, "Lawrence, I understand you're doing very well, and are

paying off all your debts, so I'm going to ask you to give me a raise." After the opening in Boston, Richard Rodgers had arranged for me to get fifty dollars a week. Now, you could have lived off that in New York City at that time; it was hard, but you could, but you couldn't pay off debts.

I said, "I have ten years of debts and I married a soldier, a second lieutenant, and he has no money and he's in the Army for the duration, and I'd like to have a little bit more because I'd like to save for his return. Also, Oscar Hammerstein tells me I mustn't take just any job, but I must choose very carefully now. So, this would make it possible. Would you make it seventy-five dollars a week instead of fifty?" Lawrence said, "No, I can't do that because I couldn't face the backers."

They made more money at that time than had ever been made in the theater. They bought a building on West Fifty-Third Street that was later acquired by the Museum of Modern Art. It had a big marble staircase, and they used to give enormous parties there. They were trying to spend their money so they didn't have to pay such gigantic income taxes. They knew how to spend it, but they wouldn't pay their workers more.

People in the theater take advantage of everybody they can. Now, for the first time in thirty-seven years, I'm getting royalties on *Oklahoma!* for the revival on Broadway. Recognition is coming in a way now. It's extraordinary. In fact, my name's up in lights on Broadway and people want me for all sorts of things. They are going to do a lot more revivals than *Oklahoma!* I did eighteen shows on Broadway and about ten or twelve of those are bang-up ones.

I didn't set out to try to change the world of dance. I had to do it because nobody cared a damn about dancing, and I got fed up with people's ignorance and indifference; particularly the American men scorned it. Well, my father did, so the pattern was set.

What moves me to do what I can do is that I am essentially a teller. I've tried everything in dancing—I've done classical work, I've done romantic, pantomime, abstract—I've done everything. What I'm good at, what is easy for me, what is my natural language, my idiom of speech, is to make a point telling a story. Now, that doesn't mean that

the stage can't be universal. Charlie Chaplin was universal. But he was very particular, and very detailed; I think he is a good example of what I'm talking about. So is Mark Twain. Their stories are about special people and special circumstances, but they are immortal and we have taken them as symbols. They make us laugh today as they made us laugh in the beginning.

I have a knack for musical-comedy theater. I have a very good sense of where a song will lend itself to a dance. In *Oklahoma!* there is a song, "Many a New Day," and the dance is just girls having fun, and girls being bitchy, or being cute and twirling around in front of the mirror. It had nothing really to do with the song, except for the mood. Oscar Hammerstein loved the dance. He was astonished, and said, "I had no idea anyone could do something like this to that song." I tried to do a dance that complements the song, not illustrates it, because if the song is any good, it's enough. The dance is an addition. The knack is to fit in the dance so it doesn't come as an unwelcome interruption, which it can be.

In musical-comedy theater, there are so many elements—the book, lyrics, spectacle—and they all have to be jostled into place and arranged. They are all fighting for air, for time, for stage space, for attention. Sometimes you have to adapt your work, remodel it, so that it is unrecognizable. It has to be done on the minute. That's when you have to be a hack. Sometimes it turns out pretty well, but it's like plumbing, it's like being a carpenter: You'd better be good.

The great dances were done quietly by myself in the first two weeks of a show when the pressure was not on. My regular work was done by getting veterans and paying them myself. They came into the studio and let me try things out on them. I could only work a couple of hours a day at most with them, and then I'd think and think and work by myself, then go back the next day with some more ideas. That would go on for two weeks.

Now, that was against union rules. It was called "prerehearsal choreography." You weren't supposed to try anything out or prepare anything before the regular choreography started because the kids would then be due union wages. It is a burden and expense the management will not take. You can only work with them for five weeks and then they go

on performance salary. I didn't pay them what the union requires. I paid them a very decent wage for two hours of their bodies, but not a performing salary. I have been up in front of the Board of Censors seven times for this.

These restrictions destroy the quality of the work. Nobody can work under these circumstances in the theater, and nobody does. Everybody cheats. Michael Bennett did a very revolutionary thing in *Chorus Line* by putting the dancers on salary. It was low, but I think it was for six months. Then he gave them a share of the show. They're very rich now. He did the same thing in *Ballroom*. That was not a success, so they're not rich; they lost. That's a pity. They took the chance and the union said OK. That's an innovative thing. Even though this helps the quality of dance, the union doesn't care about quality. All unions are backward. Jerome Robbins and I kept saying, if you have better dancing, then you have more dancing and therefore you have more jobs.

I think there are more good men choreographers than women now, but the great creative figures, the revolutionary figures, have been women. That's true in every country, and that's extraordinary. I don't really know, but I think one of the reasons is that men haven't really respected dance as an art. If men have that kind of creative brain, they go into science.

I never had a young married life. My husband went into the Army right away. While he was in the Army, I was in England. I came back six months pregnant, and he was in the hospital with gallstones.

My son was a sick child. He was born with an impaired intestine and he was mortally ill. By the grace of God, a surgeon invented an operation that saved his life. His was the twenty-third operation of its kind in medical history. The first four and a half years of his life, we didn't have a nursery, we had a clinic. It was terrible. I had a trained nurse living with us. He was more sick than well, fragile and very small. When he was four years old, he weighed only twenty pounds. He lost two or three years' growth, so his pictures in school show gangling ten-year-olds, and then little Prude down there. And of course, it was very hard for him because he couldn't play with the boys, couldn't hold his own in their rough games. He couldn't really hold his own with the girls either. He always got the fat girls.

It was difficult. I spent a lot of time in children's hospitals, and I spent a great deal of time just plain nursing in the nursery. I would be up all night, spelling the trained nurse, taking the night watch, and then go in for an all-day rehearsal. Every contract I had was written with the clause, "if the baby's health permits." Sometimes I lost out, but I was so powerful in those days that people just used to wait for me.

When I couldn't dance anymore, I started writing. I had a husband and child, and that was the time to do it. The writing wasn't easy, but it was private, so I could make all my mistakes without public mockery. I've had a great deal of pleasure out of writing. I don't give myself deadlines. Every contract I've signed with the publishers has been with the understanding that I could set my own pace. I would get it done when I could. I never sit steaming over a typewriter because I don't type, but I don't steam over a pen or a pencil either. I let it simmer, accumulate, and then when I'm feeling ready, I take a pencil and a piece of paper. I used to do it in restaurants, just take out a piece of paper and write like mad for half an hour, forty minutes. Then I'd have something I could chew on and correct, edit, and fix in place. That's the way all my nine books were done.

I had a stroke in 1975 which left my right side paralyzed. My illness has enriched my life, in a peculiar way, very much. In a strange, dreadful way, it has. It's awful that it takes this, but it did. My husband and I have both reached another plateau. Our relationship is quite different. I was always working. I had spent so much time with the child and the child was so ill, and my husband was so distressed by a sick child. I just realized that he loves me very much because he does. He brings my dinner to me every night. The maid cooks it but he serves it to me at my bedside. I can't take a bath without somebody helping me. If she isn't here, he is. He does things he wouldn't ordinarily have to do for anybody, let alone a woman. If he takes me walking, I have to be on his arm, because the pavements of New York are as uneven as a rocky mountain path, and as hazardous.

I can't feel, you see. I have no feeling in the right side of my body. If I put a foot out and it strikes something, I don't know what it's struck. You don't realize that your body is getting radar signals all the time. Now, when I walk down the street, my head is low because I have to see the pavement, I have to see where I'm going. So, I take his arm and that makes me steady. He cares, period.

In the hospital, it was very surprising, revelatory, it was remarkable; he didn't know he felt so deeply. He didn't know he could give this kind of loving dedication to another human being. It had never been demanded of him.

I'm quietly contented now. It's happiness that I didn't know before. My last book, *Where the Wings Grow*, has a different mood than my other books because I wrote it in the hospital with my left hand. The pages would fall on the floor and I had to leave them there. I was dying and remembering the happy days. I had to be beaten to dust in order to find out what I wanted from life. I know a little now. I had been hectic and didn't feel I had done what I wanted to do, I didn't feel I had been represented in what I wanted to be represented in. Well, I was dying and I realized I had done the very best I could. If I couldn't do better, I wasn't designed to do better and I wasn't worthy to do better.

I don't feel worthy of having done first-class dances. Martha Graham has real creativity. Real creativity is very rare. There are very few people in the world who are truly creative. I wanted to be one of them. I had to examine why. That's the new book. I'm still thinking that one through. It's vanity, of course. I'm a manipulator. I think Beethoven is a real creator; I think Aaron Copland is a manipulator. He takes what has been done before, rearranges it, and is like a first-class goldsmith. I'm a goldsmith first class.

I haven't done but one choreographic work since I've been ill. What I've lost is the energy. It takes great passion and great energy to do anything creative, especially in the theater. You have to care so much that you can't sleep, you can't eat, you can't talk to people. It's just got to be right. You can't do it without that passion.

Author's Note

BY LYNN GILBERT

As the author of *Particular Passions*, I am updating what I feel has been overlooked. In 1981, when *Particular Passions* was first published, five years after its conception, it was presented as a book that would inspire. Almost half a century later, I realize this book is much more. It is a historic record of trailblazing women who shaped the American landscape.

A group of pioneering women in multiple disciplines emerged in the mid-1970s. Some gained recognition and even fame. Others remained in the shadows but had an equal impact. Over time, women moved into the workforce and emerged in significant roles. It was no longer unusual.

We are moving backwards, unfortunately. Women are being stripped of their rights, even by the highest court.

There was no list of women of achievement in the mid-1970s. This book records, for the first time, these pioneers. Listen to their stories, struggles, and achievements in their own words.

Enjoy this Agnes de Mille chapter.

Lynn Gilbert

APRIL 3, 2024

Postface

BY LYNN GILBERT

In 1976, when I was asked to photograph Louise Nevelson for the Pace Gallery, I went to her studio to meet her and was dazzled. Her house on Spring Street was very spare but very ordered. One could see the disciplined structure that dictated the way she lives. Surrounded by the amazing work of her own hands, she created her own atmosphere, her own environment. That day, she had an extraordinary outfit on—a Chinese robe over an American couture gown. A silver African necklace around her neck, a black velvet riding hat, those clodhopper space shoes. The effect was bizarre, yet right. Feeling the tremendous energy and focus of her personality, I was deeply moved.

Back home after the session, I said to myself: There are other women like her who have created something extraordinary and enriched life for themselves and others. Who are they? How were they able to develop themselves and make their astonishing contributions to society? The idea of photographing them and doing brief profiles took form in my mind.

My first task was deciding whom I would include. *Who's Who* was the logical place to start, but I found that the entries only provided information on positions held and awards won; it was impossible to assess the real contributions and far-reaching effects of the subjects. I knew I was in for a lot of research. Plunging in, I used the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and began reading any and every article on a woman or women I could lay my hands on. When an article mentioned a woman who I thought might be considered, I would follow up on that.

Eventually, I found lists of outstanding women that had been compiled in popular magazines, and realized that the lists themselves were new to arrive on the scene. Only in the early seventies did the almanacs, of which there are many, begin to compile lists of distinguished women. In the mid-1970s, *Fortune* magazine wrote its first full-scale article on women in finance and industry, followed by one in *BusinessWeek*. The most thoroughly researched list to appear in any of the women's magazines was published in 1971 by the *Ladies' Home Journal*. According to the author, the 75 Most Important Women were the "women who had made the greatest impact on our civilization within the last five years and would continue to affect us significantly for the next five years." The author added that it is a "representative list that speaks highly for the quality of feminine leadership in America." But it was interesting to see that the positions of a number of women on this list were predicated on their relationships to men of national or international importance. Included were

Rose Mary Woods, "Executive Secretary to President Nixon since he became senator," Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, "widow of President Kennedy and wife of a Greek near-billionaire—the woman most other women would like to be," and Rose Kennedy. I wanted my list, in contrast, to include only women whose contributions had come from their own energies and endeavors. My criterion would be women who had done pioneering work in their field that had significantly changed society and/or opened up a new field for women.

When I had exhausted the *Readers' Guide*, I consulted experts in the fields of art, medicine, science, law, and so forth, and asked them for their recommendations. I finally created a master list of women, with a second column consisting of the writers, editors, and experts who could help me assess the subjects' contributions. I decided that each subject would need at least three referrals by solid sources in order to be included.

Throughout the selection process, I tried to be receptive to the information I was being given. When I was compiling a list of Black women, for instance, the women who were repeatedly suggested to me were almost exclusively in the field of civil rights. I checked my own impulse to find a Black writer, a Black scientist. Any list is necessarily somewhat arbitrary. But by feeling my way, I tried to be true to the names that continued to emerge with the most insistence. I finally arrived at a list of over fifty women.

Several of the women, among them Marian Anderson, Martha Graham, Susan Sontag, and Susan Langer, who indisputably should have been included in such a book, preferred not to be. There were several others, including Jane Jacobs, the architect and city planner, whom I was not able to reach. Lillian Hellman agreed to be photographed for the book, but not interviewed. I photographed three women—Margaret Mead, Cecelia Payne-Gaposchkin, and Aileen Osborn Webb—who were not interviewed before their deaths. Dorothy Height and Dede Allen could not be included for reasons beyond our control. Therefore, the forty-six women included here do not represent a definitive list, but rather a sampling of the scope and significance of women's contributions to American society over the last fifty years.

At this point, I envisioned the book as portraits of the women, each accompanied by a brief text. I hoped my photographs could portray each woman with dignity, and hoped to catch a gesture, a glint in the eye, or some small detail that would enable me to go beyond their public and sometimes well-known image and capture an essential inner quality. To put my subjects at ease during the photography sessions, I prepared by reading published interviews and profiles and their own books and articles, and as we talked, many of the women told me stories I had not seen in print. I went home and wrote down everything I could remember, but it was not long before I realized that these stories were more compelling than the primarily visual book

I had planned. I felt that if I could understand these women, how they function in our society, it would not only help me understand my own life, but perhaps help others.

I wanted the text accompanying the photographs to reflect the style of my portraits: to be revealing, yet written with honesty, dignity, and kindness. As the book evolved, I needed a writer who would go back to the women, gain their trust, listen to the stories I had heard, and go beyond. Again, I relied on research—interviews and profiles—to find a journalist with a sensibility compatible with mine.

Particular Passions turned into a collaboration when I read an interview of Elsa Peretti by Gaylen Moore for the *New York Times Magazine*. I said to myself: This is the first writer of profiles who knows what a person is really about. We proceeded slowly and surely, coping with the difficult logistics of interviews, writing, and editing. This idea of mine took five years to fulfill, and with the collaboration of Gaylen Moore, it has resulted in a book far richer than any I could have imagined.

I hope that our book will not only add to the feminist literature of our time, but will inspire women everywhere to pursue their own particular passions.

Acknowledgments

There are many people I wish to acknowledge for having made this book possible.

Thanks to Arne Glimcher, founder of the Pace Gallery, who entrusted me with photographing Louise Nevelson after I photographed his children. My experience with Nevelson was the pivotal moment that shaped the direction of my life and the inspiration for this book.

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Without the encouragement of my husband, Ronnie, our sons, Paul and George, and my beloved housekeeper, Lessie Freeman, I'm not sure I could have tolerated the endless roadblocks during the five years that it took to complete this book.

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To Gaylen Moore, my writer, I owe my deepest gratitude. After firing the first writer during a search that lasted a year and a half, I interviewed thirty writers before I found the person who would share my vision. I wanted the shared stories to be the basis of my book. Gaylen returned to interview and record their voices, to let you feel as if you were in each person's presence.

The editor, Carol Southern at Clarkson Potter, did a superb job. Her faith, and that of publisher Jane West, enabled me, against all odds, to get this book published. Anne Goldstein, assistant editor, was so moved by the book that it enabled her to leave publishing to follow her own "particular passion."

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BY LYNN GILBERT

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