



Aunties: Thirty-Five Writers Celebrate Their Other Mother

Ingrid Sturgis

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An aunt is not just another mother—and aunts defy any sort of archetypal image. Like humanity, they span the spectrum, from down-home Auntie Em to the uninhibited Auntie Mame. Some aunts are smart, others are crazy. Some act bravely, others downright foolish. Now in Ingrid Sturgis's marvelous *Aunties*, she gives these extraordinary women their due, sharing a wonderful, eclectic collection of thirty personal essays that explore the complex, seldom-profiled bond between aunts and their nieces and nephews.

Profiling a variety of aunts from different cultures, temperaments, and walks of life—the surrogate mother, the wild aunt, the eccentric aunt, the mentor—the essays are written by well-known journalists and authors such as Pearl Cleage and M.J. Rose, as well as everyday people . . . all of whom bring their subjects to stirring life in their own unique ways.

“Tia Sonia” made her living as an old-world witch in Honduras, providing her niece, Beverly James, with a tenuous connection to the country of her birth—and imparting a valuable lesson after she fails to predict her own tragic demise; the dramatic and glamorous “Tropical Aunts”—also known as Aunt Debs and Aunt Ava—ventured north from Florida only twice, but left an indelible mark on Enid Shomer's ideas about being an independent woman; in the heartwarming “Bloodsense,” Mark Holt-Shannon's magical Aunt Lolly, a woman with a heart as big as the ocean, provided unconditional love—and a bridge between three boys and the father who left them all behind.

A wonderful celebration of family, *Aunties* is a labor of the heart and a show of reverence to the women whose intangible gifts of love and respect often pass without recognition. Through the vivid memories of real relationships, these narratives pay tribute to aunts everywhere.

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