ForeWord Reviews

A Mother's World: Journeys of the Heart
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Pamela Michael, editor
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A welcome addition to the award-winning series of women's travel stories, this collection concerns itself with motherhood in all its manifestations. The travelers in these short stories are women with small children, mothers in search of children, children finding mothers, and women in general, discovering the compassion and creativity within themselves through the role of child and mother.

The editors have brought together an unpredictable range of perspectives, from Louise Erdrich's carefully constructed piece called "Nests" to Molly O'Neill, food editor for The New York Times, and her mother eating their way down Route 101. There are the chronicles of adopting children and their foreign cultures, as well as an adopted child finding a home in his adopted mother's birth-family. Vacationing women have very different experiences. A single woman cares for a dying child in Mother Teresa's orphanage in Calcutta, Skiing magazine's travel editor, Claire Walter, attends a menstruation ceremony on Bali, and a married couple are so charmed by the families they observe in Italy, they decide to start one of their own. Closer to home, there is an excruciating visit to a museum and an eye-opening camping trip, both with toddlers.

Diversity reigns in this collection with such titles as, "Improvisation in A Persian Garden," by Mary Catherine Bateson, "The Places I Went When My Mother Was Dying," by Wendy Dutton, and "A Hand in the Darkness," by Kyle E. McHugh. The even, lucid writing make the stories stand out from one another and the short excerpts and quotations work well as transitions. Editors Bond and Michael have brought together a fresh and appreciated view of mothers and daughters: What women take with them when they travel instead of what they leave behind.

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