

## Woven on the Wind: Woman Write About Friendship in the Sagebrush West

Linda M. Hasselstrom, Nancy Curtis, Gaydell Collier



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The American West conjures images of wide-open spaces, harsh but beautiful landscapes embroidered with winding rivers and streams, long dusty roads to nowhere, sagging barbed wire fences that separate neighbors in the loosest sense. Here the only hustle-bustle is the wind gathering strength across the plains and the rush to get a day's work done before darkness swallows the countryside whole. In this region where time and space are writ large and solitude is a fact of life, how exactly do friendships among women develop, let alone thrive? What does that human connection provide; what does it mean? And what can these friendships teach us about these women, about ourselves?

In the grassroots tradition of LEANING INTO THE WIND, WOVEN ON THE WIND collects true stories, poems, and reflections from women of the interior West--also known as sagebrush country--writing about their kinship with other women. A communion of voices, WOVEN ON THE WIND tells of the beauties, ironies, rigors, heartbreak, and humor of western life and how it is enriched by friendships past and present. A mother makes a harrowing bus trip during a legendary storm to bring her blind daughter home for Christmas with the help of unlikely friends. A trio of women steal a motorcycle from an estranged husband for a wild ride to redemption. A newlywed finds a true sense of family in the faces of strangers, her new Black Crow kin. Handmade gifts left in a roadside mailbox help shepherd a terribly pregnant young wife through a harsh Montana winter. Through marriage, childbirth, drought, doubt, careers, catastrophes, and change, these western women stand strong or lean gratefully on their friends. The voices in this volume--unsentimental, unflinching, and utterly unforgettable--take us into the souls, kitchens, barns, and hearts of nearly 150 women and show us how, in a life stripped down to what really matters, friendship can both ground us and help us to grow.

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