



APHRODITE IN JEANS Adventure Tales about Men, Midlife and Motherhood

Author: *Katherine Shirek Doughtie*

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Subject: Relationships/Women/
Memoir (Nonfiction)

Summary: In *Aphrodite in Jeans*, Katherine Shirek Doughtie explores what happens when a woman stalemated in the middle of life dares to answer a call to live more fully. Whether discussing motherhood, working through relationships or taking care of an aging parent, these essays are in turn funny, poignant and challenging. With wicked insight and unflinching courage, Ms. Doughtie ruthlessly examines her experiences as she dares to tackle life head on.

Katherine Shirek Doughtie holds degrees in Creative Writing/Literature from the University of California, Santa Cruz and an MFA from UCLA in Motion Picture/Film, Screenwriting. She has written audio dramatizations for the Louis L'Amour Audio Books series, sold several screenplays and written essays and articles for print and online magazines. This is her first published collection of essays.

Topics for Discussion

1. In this book, the author talks about a “call to adventure” in midlife, prompting her to make significant life changes. How would you live your life if you knew you had one year left? Five years left? Ten? Given that you don’t know whether you have five minutes or fifty years left, how is that different from how you currently live your life?
2. In the beginning of the book, the author meets someone who changes her life. Who in your life challenges you to change or grow? Does what someone stands for, or how they live their life, sometimes force you to look at your own life in a different way?
3. In “Love Before First Sight,” the author describes online romances. Have you ever flirted with someone via email? Were you more (or less) honest with that person because of the safety of email? If you wrote before you met in person, how did “reality” differ from what you had imagined?
4. Describe the “ideal” you, in terms of physical appearance. To what lengths would you go to get to that ideal? What benefit(s) would you get by looking like that? Would it be worth it?
5. In “The Delicate Art of Lying” the author talks about lying by being honest. Do you consider omitting part of the truth a true lie? Can you tell when someone is lying to you? How? Do you want your partner to be really honest with you, even if it would hurt your feelings?
6. What is your checklist in looking for a potential mate? Of the good relationships you’ve had in your life, how many matched up to that checklist? Do you think what you want and what you need are two different things?
7. The media implies that younger bodies are attractive and more beautiful than older ones. However, in “The Aphrodite Phase” the author describes an increased comfort, freedom and acceptance as she grows older. Where does beauty and attractiveness come from? Does it come from physical attributes or mental attitude? Were you happier in your skin when you were younger? Or have you grown more comfortable as you’ve aged?
8. The title “Aphrodite in Jeans” refers to a contemporary, down-to-earth version of the Greek goddess of love and sexuality. If Aphrodite were your roommate, what would you want to ask her? What would she teach you about yourself? How would she challenge you to live?