



Airless Spaces

By Shulamith Firestone

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In 1970, at the age of twenty-five, Shulamith Firestone wrote and published *The Dialectic of Sex*, immediately becoming a classic of second wave feminism across the world to this very day. It was one of the few books that dared to look at how radical feminism could and should shape the future; and one whose predictions (the cybernetic revolution, for example) proved startlingly prescient of issues today. Published by Semiotext(e) in 1998, *Airless Spaces*, Firestone's first work of fiction, is a collection of short stories written by Firestone as she found herself drifting from the professional career path she'd been on and into what she describes as a new "airless space." These deadpan stories, set among the disappeared and darkened sectors of New York City, are about losers who fall prey to an increasingly bureaucratized poverty and find themselves in an out of (mental) hospitals. But what gives characters such as SCUM-Manifesto author Valerie Solanas their depth and charge, is their the small crises that trigger an awareness that they're in trouble. Some time later, after I had moved to St. Mark's Place, I saw Valerie in the street. She asked me for a quarter, and I saw that she was begging. She had lost her apartment, and presumably her welfare. Later, a friend of mine who ran a store on St. Mark's Place said that Valerie had approached him for shelter. She was covered with sores, and wearing only a blanket to beg in. She had been out on the street approximately three months without shelter. Not long after that, she disappeared from the street entirely.

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Airless Spaces By Shulamith Firestone Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1009933 in Books
- Published on: 1998-03-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.00" h x .31" w x 4.50" l, .28 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 160 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"In the century I'm most familiar with, the 20th, the explosion was never-ending, the pieces tinier and tinier. Shulamith Firestone, in her radical insider's tale, informs us repeatedly like lightly pelting rain that all of us are vanishing in a century of institutions that take and take until everyone has gone away and there's no one left to shut the door." Eileen Myles

"This book comes out of a long lonely adventure. A season in hell. The result is a series of devastating observations made entirely without rhetoric. It operates like a parable—deceptively simple and stark, almost imagistic as little pieces fit together with little pieces, pretending to be about small outcast lives when in fact it is an encyclopedia of our age—a harrowing record of what really goes on among us where the wounds of life bring on the invasion of institutions which inflict still more suffering—a stifling atmosphere of isolations where souls are automatically and needlessly lost. This is a prophetic book with enormous consequences since the airless spaces multiply now and begin to take over." Kate Millett

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Sinters:

The book Airless Spaces gives you the sense of being enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting anxiety or having big problem together with your subject. If you can make examining a book Airless Spaces to be your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your capable, increase your knowledge about several or all subjects. You are able to know everything if you like wide open and read a guide Airless Spaces. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science publication or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this e-book?

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