



Traveling Blind: Adventures in Vision with a Guide Dog by My Side (New Directions in the Human-Animal Bond)

Susan Krieger

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Traveling Blind is a romance, a travel adventure, an emotional quest, and a deeply reflective description of coming to terms with lack of sight. It reveals the invisible work of navigating with a guide dog while learning to perceive the world in new ways. Although an intensely personal account, Traveling Blind is not simply memoir, for it extends beyond one person's experience to illuminate our understandings of vision informed by the academic fields of disability studies, feminist ethnography, and the study of human-animal bonds. What does it mean to "travel blind"? What is it like to live in a world where things are not black and white so much as shades of gray? How does it feel to navigate through constantly changing imagery that requires changing inner perspectives as well? What can experiences of blindness tell us about sight? The book confronts these questions and more. In a series of beautifully textured stories, the author takes the reader on a fascinating journey as she travels with Teela, her lively "golden dog," through airports, city streets, and southwest desert landscapes, exploring these surroundings with changed sight. This unusual account of travel will inspire the sighted as well as the blind, offering pointed observations on processes of learning to work with a service animal and on coming to terms with a disability. In remarkably visual detail, Krieger makes palpable an ambiguous world. Repeatedly confronted with social stereotypes (that she should be totally blind and incapable of mobility), she comes to value her own unique ways of seeing and her interdependence with both her animal and human companions. Her descriptions of exquisite natural landscapes and intimate personal moments will touch as well as educate readers.

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