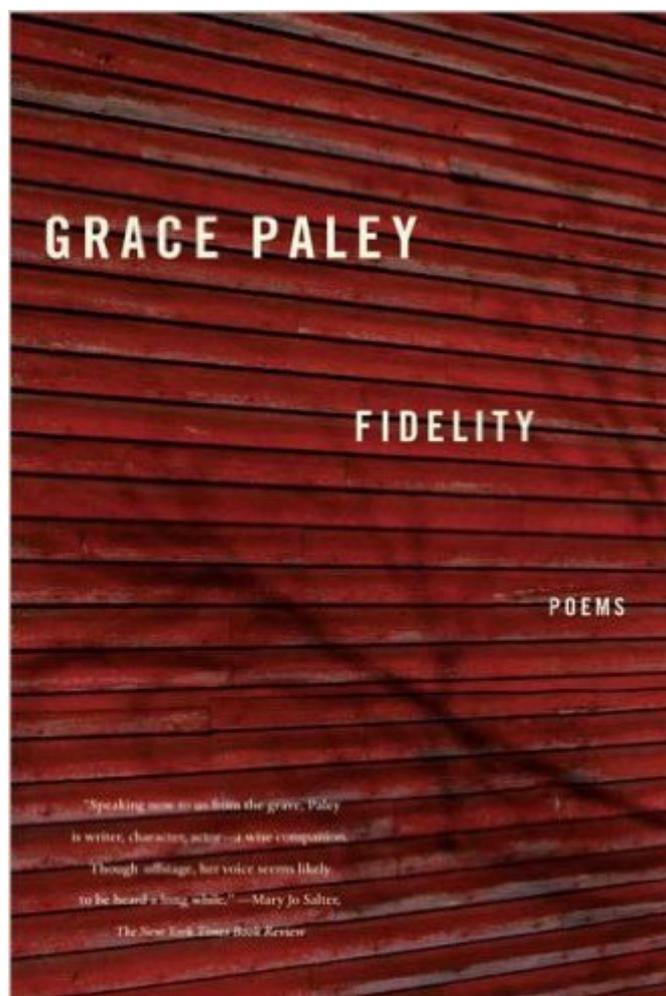


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# Fidelity: Poems



## Synopsis

Just before her death in 2007 at the age of eighty-four, Grace Paley completed this wise and poignant book of poems. Full of memories of friends and family and incisive observations of life in both her beloved hometown, New York City, and rural Vermont, the poems are sober and playful, experimenting with form while remaining eminently readable. They explore the beginnings and ends of relationships, the ties that bind siblings, the workings of dreams, the surreal strangeness of the aging body—all imbued with her unique perspective and voice. Mournful and nostalgic, but also ruefully funny and full of love, *Fidelity* is Grace Paley's passionate and haunting elegy for the life she was leaving behind.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (5 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

I would love this book even if the pages were blank if I thought that's what Grace Paley wanted us to contemplate. Even if there were no words I would still hear her voice, reading her stories and poems. But the pages aren't blank. They're filled with poetry that is definitely Paley's: spare, without punctuation, essential life with the fat boiled off. The poems are, in effect, Paley stories: about her family and friends, as if even the short fictions she once wrote had become too heavy. There are some poems here I won't remember long, but there are others that are hard to forget. "Sisters" is one. "One Day" is another. And there are others. The book has just been published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. This is from the FSG website: "Just before her death in 2007 at the age of eighty-four, Grace Paley completed this wise and poignant book of poems. Full of memories of friends and family and incisive observations of life in both her beloved hometown, New York City, and rural

Vermont, the poems are sober and playful, experimenting with form while remaining eminently readable. They explore the beginnings and ends of relationships, the ties that bind siblings, the workings of dreams, the surreal strangeness of the aging body--all imbued with her unique perspective and voice. Mournful and nostalgic, but also ruefully funny and full of love, *Fidelity* is Grace Paley's passionate and haunting elegy for the life she was leaving behind."For Paley fans, especially, but also for others interested in a look at life from Paley's unique perspective.

This wonderful book of poems was published by Grace Paley's estate. She had things to share with us until the end. She wasn't done yet. This book is small but oh so powerful and seems in keeping with the shrinking that happens with age, but the spirit stays strong. She faces aging, her illness, her approaching death and its effect on those who love her. She has the wisdom to rejoice that her children's children will help them through these hard times.".....luckily their children have imperiously called offering their lives a detour thank god they've all gotten away" Grace speaks of her sister, who had died two years ago, in several poems. She shares how she copes with her grief."I needed to talk to my sister talk to her on the telephone I mean just as I used to every morning in the evening too whenever the grandchildren said a sentence that clasped both our hearts I called her phone rang four times you can imagine my breath stopped then there was a terrible telephonic noise a voice said this number is no longer in use how wonderful I thought I can call again they have not yet assigned her number to another person despite two years of absence due to death

This is one of the most touching books of poetry I have ever read. Definitely a "must read" for those of us who are facing our own mortality and the loss of our loved ones...

What better can be written? These are the words of Grace Paley, after all, and every one of her words are precious. These poems are continuations of her life-long themes. And while she may have written better and wiser ones, perhaps, these certainly do serve to stand for her tenure in the world made so much more wonderful for her having been in it. Read the poems with and for Grace. Norma Manna Blum

Great!

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