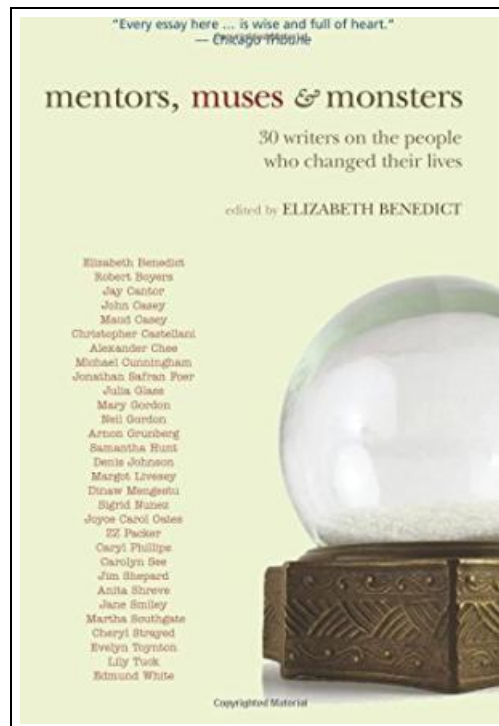


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State University of New York Press, United States, 2012. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . Brand New Book. In the rich, impassioned essays collected here, thirty of today's brightest literary lights address the question of mentorship and influence, exploring those times in their development as writers when a special person, a beloved book, or a certain job gave them the courage to take a bold chance on their own gifts. For Jane Smiley, the turning point was the support of her fellow classmates--not her teachers--at the famed Iowa Writers Workshop. For Jonathan Safran Foer, it was a brief encounter with Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai. For Michael Cunningham, it was an illicit cigarette break with a tough-talking teenage girl at Hollywood High who challenged him to read Virginia Woolf. And for Elizabeth Benedict, inspiration came after writing an essay about her Barnard mentor, Elizabeth Hardwick, after she died in 2007. In drawing together these essays, Benedict found dozens of writers eager to tell the stories of their own influences. As most of these encounters occurred when the writers were young--unsure of who they were or what they could accomplish--many of these essays radiate a poignant tenderness, and almost all of them express enduring gratitude. Rich, thought-provoking, sometimes funny, and sometimes heartbreaking, these portraits of the artists as young men and women illuminate not only the anxiety but the necessity of influence--and the treasures it yields. Thirty essays--and thirty dazzling paths to creative awakening and literary acclaim.

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