



Stick Figure: A Diary of My Former Self

Lori Gottlieb

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"I wish to be the thinnest girl at school, or maybe even the thinnest eleven-year-old on the entire planet," confides Lori Gottlieb to her diary. "I mean, what are girls supposed to wish for, other than being thin?" For a girl growing up in Beverly Hills in 1978, the motto "You can never be too rich or too thin" is writ large. Precocious Lori learns her lessons well, so when she's told that "real women don't eat dessert" and "no one could ever like a girl who has thunder thighs," she decides to become a paragon of dieting. Soon Lori has become the "stick figure" she's longed to resemble. But then what? *Stick Figure* takes the reader on a gripping journey, as Lori struggles to reclaim both her body and her spirit. By turns painful and wry, Lori's efforts to reconcile the conflicting messages society sends women ring as true today as when she first recorded these impressions. "One diet book says that if you drink three full glasses of water one hour before every meal to fill yourself up, you'll lose a pound a day. Another book says that once you start losing weight, everyone will ask, 'How did you do it?' but you shouldn't tell them because it's 'your little secret.' Then right above that part it says, 'New York Times bestseller.' Some secret." With an edgy wit and keenly observant eye, *Stick Figure* delivers an engrossing glimpse into the mind of a girl in transition to adulthood. This raw, no-holds-barred account is a powerful cautionary tale about the dangers of living up to society's expectations.

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