

The Empress of Weehawken



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At the end of what is (she cannot help observing) an extraordinary life, Elisabeth Rother has decided to write her memoirs. She recounts her narrow escape with her Jewish husband from the Nazis, and the perilous voyage to the New World of New Jersey, but those, for her, are mere facts of life. For Elisabeth, bighearted and obstinate, the most bothersome and consuming subjects are the unconventional paths and waywardness of her daughter, Renate, and her granddaughter, Irene. "The Empress of Weehawken" is a curiously touching love letter to the difficult but sustaining love of mothers and daughters. Written in the voice of the author's very real grandmother, it is "superb . . . razor-sharp, desert-dry, and luxuriantly ironic" ("The San Diego Union-Tribune").

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