



Crossing the Yard: Thirty Years as a Prison Volunteer

By Richard Shelton

University of Arizona Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Crossing the Yard: Thirty Years as a Prison Volunteer, Richard Shelton, Ever since he was asked to critique the poetry of a convicted murderer, he has lived in two worlds. Richard Shelton was a young English professor in 1970 when a convict named Charles Schmid, serial killer dubbed the 'Pied Piper of Tucson' in national magazines, shared his brooding verse. But for Shelton, the novelty of meeting a death-row monster became a thirty-year commitment to helping prisoners express themselves. Shelton began organizing creative writing workshops behind bars, and in this gritty memoir he offers up a chronicle of reaching out to forgotten men and women, and of creativity blossoming in a repressive environment. He tells of published students such as Paul Ashley, Greg Forker, Ken Lamberton, and Jimmy Santiago Baca who have made names for themselves through their writing instead of their crimes. Shelton also recounts the bittersweet triumph of seeing work published by men who later met with agonizing deaths, and the despair of seeing the creative strides of inmates broken by politically motivated transfers to private prisons. And his memoir bristles with hard-edged experiences, ranging from inside knowledge of...



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