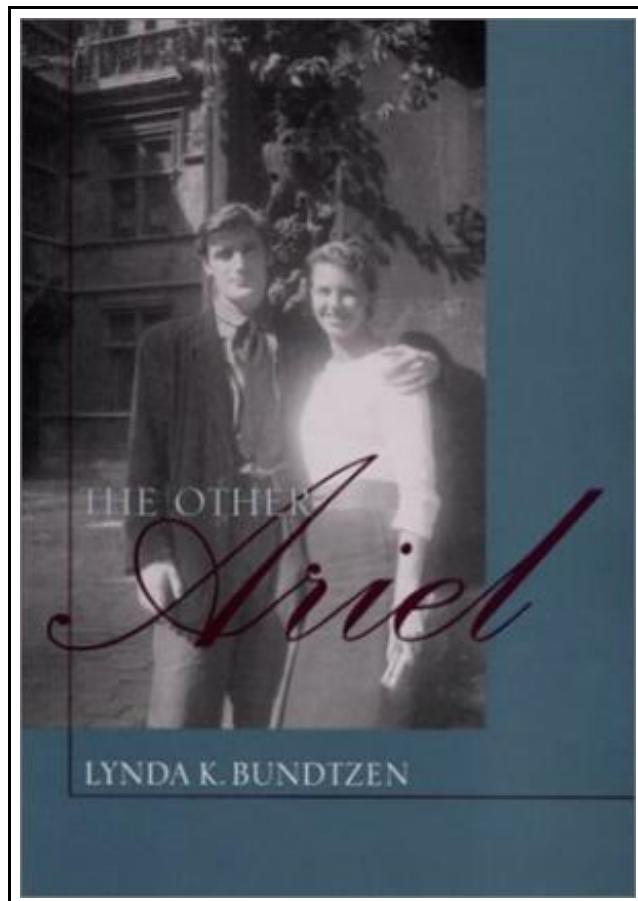


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## THE OTHER "ARIEL"

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University of Massachusetts Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Other "Ariel", Lynda K. Bundtzen, Sylvia Plath, who committed suicide in 1963 at age 30, is now widely regarded as one of America's greatest poets. Her second collection, "Ariel", which was issued posthumously in 1965, received superb reviews and became one of the best-selling books of poetry published in the 20th century. What is less well known about this celebrated volume is that the poems it contains are not the ones Plath herself selected when she assembled her manuscript. With great care and critical insight, Lynda K. Bundtzen examines Plath's original typescript for "Ariel" and compares it to the version that was published by her estranged husband, Ted Hughes. In his role as Plath's literary executor and "Ariel"'s editor, Hughes deleted 12 poems that he considered too "personally aggressive" in their attacks on him, while adding several others composed in the final weeks of Plath's life and coloured by her suicidal depression. Bundtzen argues that Plath's original plan represented a conscious response to her disintegrating marriage - the swearing off of an old life with Hughes and the creation of a new self as a woman and poet. The poems Hughes deleted show her in an angry dialogue over their marital breakup, with Plath writing several of these bitterly ironic poems on the verso of Hughes's manuscript for an unpublished play entitled "The Calm". Beneath the surface of Hughes's "calm" we see a "tempest" building by the woman who chose Shakespeare's Ariel as her poetic identity. Bundtzen pays particular attention to a sequence of five poems about beekeeping which Plath originally intended as the book's conclusion. Interpreting them allegorically, and drawing on the rich folklore that surrounds the relationship between the beekeeper and her bees, Bundtzen shows these poems...

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