

Praise for *Living by the Dead*, by Ellen Ashdown

“Life and death in a cemetery: This is a charming, brave, and funny book, with a sad heart.” —Bailey White, regular NPR commentator, *Sleeping at the Starlite Motel, Mama Makes Up Her Mind, Quite a Year for Plums*

“When is the last time you read a fresh, intelligent perspective on death, dying, and the dead? This book about a cemetery seduces with delight—by turns moving, funny, bitter, inventive, melancholy, playful—until it delivers its last wrenching blow. Ellen Ashdown weaves the story of her family through the graveyard in which some of them are buried, and beside which she abides, bringing thoughtfully and finally heartbreakingly to life those who pass by, pass through, and pass on. Here is new proof that America abounds with first-rate writers who do not reach the imprints of New York and Boston. We must be grateful for literary presses like Kitsune Books for bringing them to print.” —Janet Burroway, *Writing Fiction, Raw Silk, Cutting Stone, Opening Nights*, and forthcoming *Bridge of Sand*

“Ellen Ashdown's *Living by the Dead* is a compact and mesmerizing memoir more about life than death. Ashdown takes us like friends on her forays into Tallahassee's Roselawn Cemetery where we giggle and gape at the weird whimsy of humankind—both alive and not—while she teaches us to respect and honor it at the same time. It's Ashdown's observations on the blurry line between the living and the dead who, from the grave, give us some of the secrets of life.”

—Marina Brown, freelance writer, RN and Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse

“Ellen Ashdown's moving memoir chronicles one woman's walk on the edges of life's great unknown—death. She and her husband move into a house near a cemetery that one by one takes those she loves. Yet she keeps observing with clear eyes and a heart that aches, yes, but never shuts itself off from the beauty that surrounds her. This is a luminous meditation on death but more than that an affirmation of the deep and quotidian glory of the world.” —Barbara Hamby, *The Alphabet of Desire, Delirium, Babel*

“*Living by the Dead* is a book about life and memory—and walking through a cemetery. Writing with the soul of a poet and a ravenous curiosity, Ellen Ashdown interrogates the cemetery's stones and herself, wondering about the bluebirds or the raging grief that possesses her. Through the simple act of taking one step after another, Ashdown travels through her own inner journey of loss, grief, and love.” —Sally Sommer, dance historian and critic, New York correspondent for *Le Monde*, dance editor for *Encyclopedia of African-American History and Culture*