



# Breaking The Habit

*Judith Graham*

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## **Breaking The Habit** Judith Graham

**A former Dominican nun's story of dedication to her vocation and escape.** 'You have made the most important decision of your life and the greatest sacrifice a human being can make. Well done Judith.' In 1955, at seventeen years of age, Judith Graham entered the Dominican Order and began her life as Sister Stephen. In this compassionate yet frank account she recalls her years as a Dominican nun during the repressive pre-Vatican II era. The vows of a nun - those of poverty, chastity and obedience - encapsulated in the commitment of 'death to self' proved too much for Sister Stephen. Her battle for acceptance and spiritual fulfilment was stifled by the rules and regulations of the Church. Yet leaving the Order was even more difficult. After a twelve-year struggle she escaped from the convent 'feeling like a battered wife'. *Breaking the Habit*, first published in 1992, is a warm, personal story of increasing doubt and subsequent growth, and of freedom of spirit - 'a freedom I will never take for granted.' It also captures a way of life that no longer exists, and one woman's struggle to regain her sense of self. 'The story is riveting. But it is the writing that delivers the story, after all.' Jane Tolerton, *The Waikato Times*

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