# Shelf Life

November 1, 2001 By Stephen Winter

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**Anne Heche**'s flighty, flinty narcissism makes her a compelling actress but proves her undoing in ***Call Me Crazy*** (Scribner, $25). The memoir skims over various (now-legendary) loves and alleges sexual abuse at the hands of her father, a closeted Baptist minister who died of AIDS. Neither a juicy tell-all nor a meaningful account of abuse survival, Heche manages to be flip and chirpy even when dealing with the most ghastly details of her life. A better bedside bet: **Pearl Cleage**'s novel ***I Wish I Had A Red Dress*** (William Morrow, $24), a solid follow-up to her joyous Oprah Book Club hit of 1998, *What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day*. Cleage shifts the focus from African-American, HIV positive wonder woman Ava Johnson to her older sister, Joyce Mitchell, and writes with delightful spirit and spiky humor without ever slipping into melodrama.

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