



BOOKS SPOTLIGHT

Hot *Breakfast*

Edwin John Wintle knew his life would never be the same after his 13-year-old niece moved into his Greenwich Village bachelor pad. Two years later, Wintle, who's written about his experience in the just-published *Breakfast With Tiffany: An Uncle's Memoir* (Miramax, \$24.95), is still amazed at how completely his world shifted once he became a surrogate gay parent to an obstreperous teen.



"My life was dumped into a blender, and somebody pressed 'frappé,'" recalls Wintle, who acquired his charge when his sister couldn't handle her daughter any longer. "It was a 24-hour-a-day job, even when we were apart. I'd be at work and I'd get the dreaded call from the school, saying she was in trouble again. I'd spend my lunch hour planning dinner

and looking over her homework. Then I'd come home and there she'd be—and Tiffany has a big presence."

That big presence is all over Wintle's memoir, which chronicles the first turbulent year of their life together. The 40-year-old's experience also dredged up memories of his own years as a skinny gay kid at a private Catholic school. At one point, he even telephoned his mother "to apologize for the time I called her a bitch when I was 13."

Tiffany's presence also motivated Wintle to write, something he'd always wanted to do. "She inspired me," he recalls. "Having someone around the house who was always writing poems and singing brought out a creative side of me I'd lost sight of."

Tiffany has already been optioned for film, and Wintle—a film agent—has added a clause in his niece's contract stipulating that she gets to audition for a part in the movie. "She's been very supportive of the whole project," Wintle boasts. "I thought she would hate the way I wrote about her, but she read the manuscript and liked it." Tiffany's only request? "She asked if I could mention that she really did vacuum on Saturdays sometimes." —Robert L. Pele