

Review: Loving Zelda

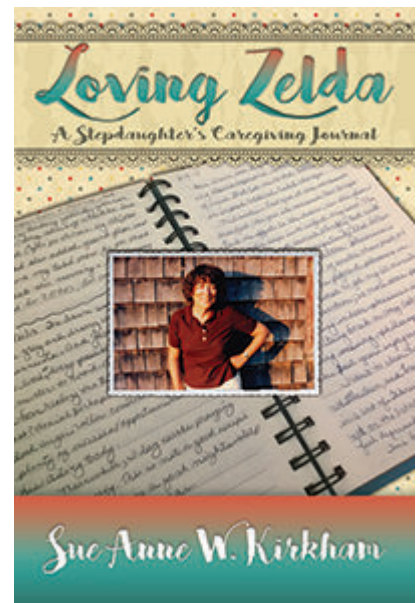
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Loving Zelda—A Stepdaughter's Caregiving Journal

By Sue Anne Kirkham (Carpenter's Son Publishing)

The topic of caring for aged parents had my interest. Yet I became fully engaged by the colorful stringing together of words by a new author.

Loving Zelda is Sue Anne Kirkham's memoir of a season spent helping her physically declining father and her dementia-burdened stepmother in need of day-to-day assistance. Besides offering a subtle biblical perspective on her experience, Kirkham shows and tells with a bit of brilliance.



I gushed over her storytelling agility—the way a master chef combines ingredients in a way most cooks cannot. What could have been mundane accounts of shuttling parents to their appointments or preparing their meals has been enriched by details.

While honoring the memory of her stepmother, Kirkham describes the many frustrations that come with dementia. When Zelda makes soup: “Into

the pot go doggie-bag barbecued ribs and chicken bouillon, cubed chicken breast, rice, and cream of mushroom soup. As she stands at the stove stirring the muddy concoction, I see the Campbell's lid bobbing around with the other ingredients."

Scenes constructed sufficiently for readers to envision, such as articles of clothing strewn about the living room, are enlivened by the author's witty assessment of any given situation. She writes, "It's as if the furniture got frisky last night and decided to play 'dress up' while everyone was sleeping."

At 284 pages, *Loving Zelda* shines throughout.

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