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## Posts Tagged '135 Days with Elena'

### [Words From the Left Behind](#)

Monday, January 19th, 2009

It seems lately, everywhere I look, someone has died and left a little bit of themselves behind, in the form of writing, as a gift to the people who loved them.

First, beloved professor Randy Pausch developed pancreatic cancer, and wrote a speech, his last lecture, upon learning the cancer was terminal. An expanded version of the speech was written by Pausch, and co-authored by Wall street Journal reporter Jeffrey Zaslow. It was published under the name [The Last Lecture](#) and became a bestseller.

And then [more recently](#), we heard about [Notes Left Behind: 135 Days with Elena](#), the all too true story of a little girl named Elena Desserich who died of brain cancer at the age of only 6 years. She left hundreds of notes hidden around her family home for her sister and parents to discover after she was gone. She even left a 'Kindergarten Survival Guide' for her little sister.

And now we have [A Journal For Jordan: A Story of Love and Honor](#), written by Dana Canedy, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist whose commonlaw husband, First Sgt, Charles Monroe King, was killed in Iraq in late 2006. King began the journal to his son, whom he met only once, in case he never made it home. In it, he concedes he is not a writer, and apologizes for the messy handwriting and questionable grammar of the book, but his message shines through. Peppered with advice, encouragement and love, the 200 pages will no doubt help Jordan know and understand a part of his father, who died when he was only 7 months old.

As sad as all these stories are, there's something so beautiful and inspiring in them, as well. The person who's going to die realizes that while they have to face something scary and unknown, the people who love them so much will have to carry on, and grieve, and be left with a life that now has a hole in it. With such a loving gesture, they do what they can to soothe that pain and leave a little piece of themselves, their voice, to hang on to.



Tags: [135 Days with Elena](#), [A Jordan for Journal](#), [Dana Canedy](#), [Elena Desserich](#), [Iraq War memoirs](#), [Notes Left Behind](#), [Randy Pausch](#), [The Last Lecture](#)

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