FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Juvenile Fiction

Reading with Dad
Richard Jorgensen
Warren Hanson, illustrator
Waldman House Press
978-0-931674-41-9
(August 31, 2000)

A photograph is often the catalyst for recalling some childhood memory, and for the narrator of this book, it sets the stage for a lifetime of memories. In it, she is pictured sitting on her father's lap as he reads aloud to her from The Cat in the Hat.

This powerful ritual of sharing stories becomes the comforting foundation of the narrator's childhood, and follows her through adolescence and into adulthood. In simple rhyming verse, the development of the reader is seen with the father always in the background as an engaging and involved presence. There is a cyclical quality to Reading with Dad, as the girl grows up and reads to her own children (with Dad rocking and nodding in the background).

As an adult, she reads to her own father when he is bedridden. Although the mother is absent from the story, there is the sense that this is a child who is surrounded not only by quality literature, but also by love and affection. Hanson's illustrations are a curious mixture —line drawings partly filled with color, almost as though they are old Polaroid photographs coming into focus. Especially touching is one showing the girl at about age ten, reading with her father by flashlight on the porch swing, as an antidote for insomnia. The book has a clean and pleasing design. At the edge of each right hand page is a little flip-book movie, appropriately enough, of a book with turning pages. For all who have experienced the power of sharing books with those they love, Jorgensen's Reading with Dad will touch a chord.

Leigh Forrest