



## Clarion Review

Autobiography & Memoir

### **Saving the Kids: A Grandmother's Story**

Rebecca Diamond

iUniverse

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Four Stars (out of Five)

What happens when a family splinters apart? This is the main question posed in Rebecca Diamond's emotionally moving memoir *Saving the Kids: A Grandmother's Story*. Diamond writes about a two-year period where she saw her daughter fall victim to an abusive relationship and a drug addiction. To save her grandchildren, Diamond fought for their custody. *Saving the Kids* chronicles her battle to save the children from the people who were supposed to protect them the most: their parents.

The love Rebecca Diamond feels for her family is clear, and the universal quality of her messages will speak to many. The book is part memoir and part journal, and the colloquial sayings and metaphors Diamond uses make her story come alive: her son-in-law's grip on her daughter is "like a barnacle on a hull."

The structure of the text conveys how agonizing this time was for Diamond. The memoir spans from February of 2007 to February of 2009, and each chapter explains the events of a specific month. The sections are full of detail, from the lies that Diamond's daughter tells to the upheaval of the children's lives and the sudden arrival of the paternal grandparents.

Though the events of the story are underpinned by emotion, too much of the narrative is told in a block-like, summary style instead of through fully developed scenes or even short flashbacks. Unfortunately, those details can read almost like laundry lists. Dialogue would have gone a long way toward bringing this memoir to life. As it is, the only real voice is Diamond's. And instead of closing the epilogue with an update on her son-in-law, Sean, a more meaningful ending would have touched on the true heart and soul of this story: the children.

Although the book covers everything from custody issues to drug abuse, it is not all doom and gloom. It offers its share of hope. The simple messages are that wounds heal with time, and that bad situations—the bonds between mother and daughter, the development of the

children, and the emotional stability of the narrator—can be improved.

Diamond's courage in saving her grandchildren from their parents' downward spiral is inspiring. By the end of the memoir, the reader can feel each of Diamond's victories and tragedies. In the midst of a storm, this grandmother's love provides a beacon of light.

*Lisa Bower*