

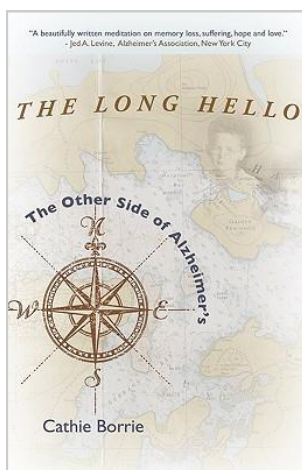


Resource Review: “The Long Hello” and “Falling Season”

By: Kendra Jones

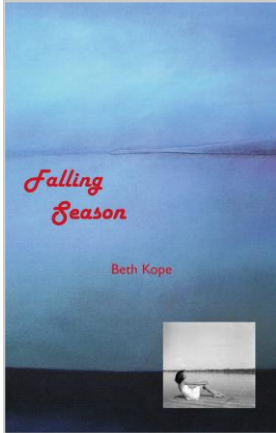
Caregiving for a loved one who has dementia can be an overwhelming experience. Cathie Borrie of Vancouver and Beth Kope of Victoria were both long-term caregivers for their mothers who had dementia. These women turned to writing as a way of dealing with their emotions surrounding their caregiving experiences. The result is two beautiful books, “The Long Hello” by Cathie Borrie and “Falling Season” by Beth Kope. Each book is unique - Cathie’s book is poetic prose while Beth’s book is poetry - and each book provides an emotionally honest account of the evolving relationship between mother and daughter as they take on new care partnering roles.

In “The Long Hello”, Cathie uses short, film-like vignettes to tell the story of her mother’s early life and later life with Alzheimer’s disease. Cathie captures the poetry in her mother’s words and demonstrates her mother’s personhood even through the later stages of the disease. Despite her feelings of despair, it is evident that Cathie saw the time spent with her mother as a gift.



Beth Kope captures her anger, despair, guilt - and overwhelming love for her mother - in the poems of “Falling Season”. She uses vivid imagery to illustrate her mother’s experiences

and her own struggle in coming to terms with her mother's disease. Beth artfully arranges the words on the page to give readers short, poignant glimpses into her thoughts and feelings.



These books serve as a reminder to caregivers that others have experienced and courageously come to terms with their emotions surrounding caregiving for a loved one with dementia. They show that it is possible to find moments of creativity, beauty and joy amidst the stress and sorrow of dementia.

Both Cathie and Beth have found a more positive way of dealing with difficult situations and it is hoped that these books will help caregivers to find insight, hope, and a new way of looking at persons experiencing dementia.