

What Happened Beneath These Facebook Book Ads Surprised Even Their Author

An independent publisher expected to sell books. Instead, thousands of grieving strangers began comforting one another.

SAINT LOUIS, MO, UNITED STATES, July 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- What began as Facebook advertisements for independently published grief books quietly evolved into something their author never intended: places where grieving strangers began remembering loved ones, sharing photographs, and comforting one another through loss.

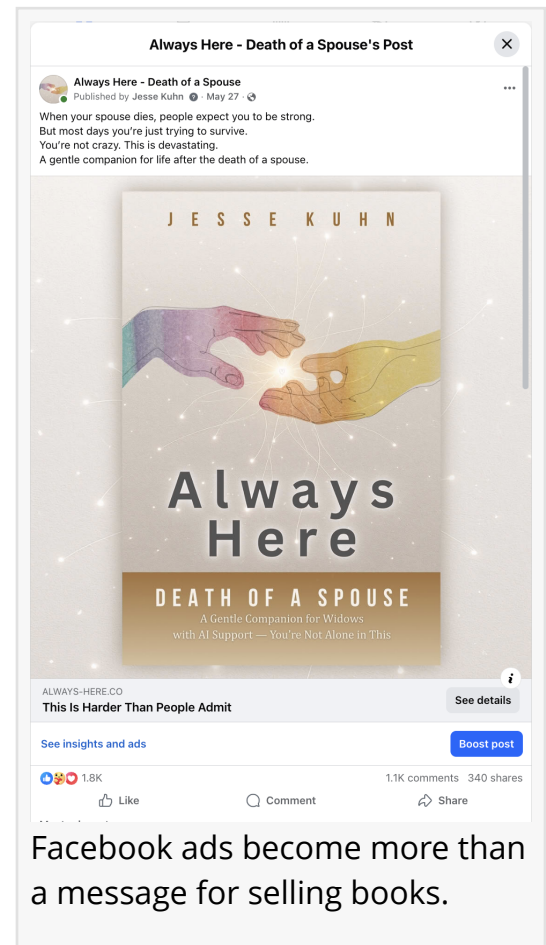
Since January 2026, independent publisher and Certified Grief Educator Jesse Kuhn has invested more than \$25,000 advertising his Always Here grief book series. The seven-title collection has since sold nearly 7,000 copies, while several of the advertisements have accumulated thousands of reactions, more than 2,600 comments, and over 1,200 shares.

The numbers, however, tell only part of the story.

Instead of functioning like typical online advertisements, many of the comment sections gradually became places where people posted photographs of beloved spouses, dogs, cats, and other loved ones. Complete strangers began responding—not to the advertisements themselves—but to each other's stories.

"I expected to sell books," Kuhn said. "I didn't expect people to begin comforting each other."

One advertisement promoting Death of a Spouse has generated more than 1,100 comments, while advertisements for When a Dog Dies and When a Cat Dies have collectively inspired more than 1,000 additional conversations. Many of the discussions continue without any involvement from Kuhn himself.



"What surprised me first were the photographs," he said. "People weren't simply saying they were grieving. They were introducing us to someone they loved."

As more people shared their stories, others began recognizing pieces of their own.

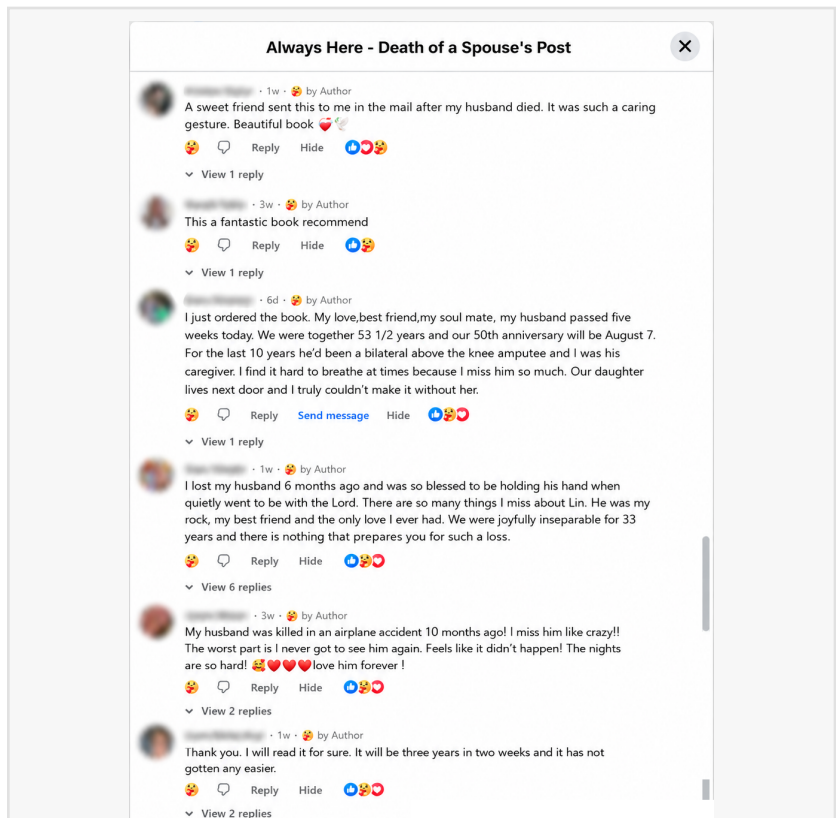
Someone whose Labrador had died would comfort another person grieving the same breed. Pet owners who had faced the same diagnosis or difficult end-of-life decision exchanged words of understanding. Widows and widowers described similar experiences of sudden loss, terminal illness, or the loneliness that followed after everyone else returned to everyday life.

The advertisements were never intended to become support groups.

"I would've created a private Facebook group if that had been the goal," Kuhn said. "These were simply book advertisements."

Instead, he believes they became something more approachable for many people navigating the earliest days of grief.

"Someone who has just experienced a significant loss often doesn't know where grief resources exist," he said. "Even if they do, they may not be ready to join a support group. Leaving one comment beneath a post can feel much more manageable than joining an entire support group."



Strangers turn an advertisements comment section into a living memorial for their loved ones.



The Always Here Grief Companion Series includes seven books written for specific kinds of loss, including the death of a spouse, companion animals, intimate relationships, disenfranchised grief, and widowed parents raising young children.

Kuhn says he now dedicates several days each week to reading and acknowledging comments, but he frequently discovers that others have already responded before he arrives.

"My schedule doesn't allow me to be there every moment," he said. "What continually moves me is seeing complete strangers who've never met begin witnessing each other's pain. They're recognizing something familiar in another person's story and simply saying, 'Me too. I understand.'"

In more than six months of advertising, Kuhn says he has only needed to remove one or two unrelated comments—a stark contrast to the hostility often associated with social media comment sections.

He has also noticed readers returning weeks or even months after purchasing one of the books to find the same advertisement where they first discovered the series, simply to leave a note thanking him or sharing how the book helped them through a difficult season.

Others share the advertisements with their own friends and family, using the words in the posts to express feelings they struggle to articulate themselves.

"We so desperately don't want the world to forget the people we loved," Kuhn said. "One of the hardest parts of grief is when people slowly stop saying their name. When someone shares a photograph and tells their story, they're quietly saying, 'This relationship mattered.'"

For Kuhn, the experience has become one of the most meaningful parts of the project.

After losing his wife in 2022, he spent eight months writing seven grief books while raising his young daughters. It was a departure from the disciplined entrepreneurial approach that had guided his previous businesses.

"I've spent most of my career validating markets before building products," he said. "This was the first time I built something simply because I wished it had existed for me. I had no idea whether it would become a sustainable business."

Looking back, he says the books may have been only the beginning.

"The mission has always been to help people feel a little less alone," Kuhn said. "What I never imagined was that people would begin doing that for each other before they ever opened one of the books."

About the Always Here Series

The Always Here series is a collection of independently published grief support books created by widowed father and Certified Grief Educator Jesse Kuhn. The seven-book series covers the death

of a spouse, companion animals, relationship loss, disenfranchised grief, and widowed parenting through a combination of lived experience and practical support.

Book series link: <https://always-here.co/>

Media Assets

High-resolution cover images, author photo, and promotional materials are available for download here: https://jessekuhn.com/Always-Here_Media-Kit_July-2026

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