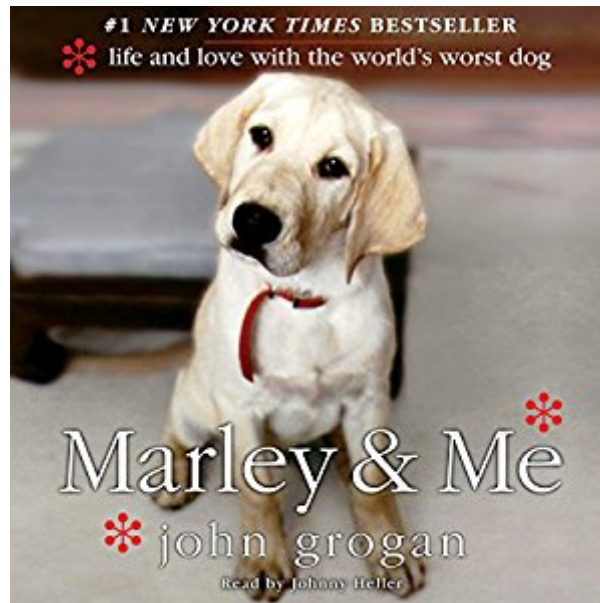


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Marley & Me: Life And Love With The World's Worst Dog



Synopsis

John and Jenny were just beginning their life together. They were young and in love, with a perfect little house and not a care in the world. Then they brought home Marley, a wriggly yellow furball of a puppy. Life would never be the same. Marley quickly grew into a barreling, 97-pound streamroller of a Labrador retriever. He crashed through screen doors, gouged through drywall, and stole women's undergarments. Obedience school did no good - Marley was expelled. And yet his heart was pure. Just as Marley joyfully refused any limits on his behavior, his love and loyalty were boundless, too. A dog like no other, Marley remained steadfast, a model of devotion, even when his family was at its wits' end. Unconditional love, they would learn, comes in many forms.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is not such a horrible book, as many would like you to believe. Sure, it isn't a jaw-dropping epic or an amazingly sappy story, but it is a good read that you can enjoy. I think I feel bad for the people who criticize John and his wife for how they treated Marley. First, it wasn't that horrible. In fact, Marley had it pretty good. A lot of people are failing to place the story in its proper time frame. Marley was born in the early 1990s--a time when positive training, counter conditioning, and clicker training were just beginning to take root and was not easily available to the public. Most people never even heard of such things---even very good vets. Dominance and Alpha theory were the rule of the day, and the choker chain was a common accessory for most dogs. I recall my own dog wearing one of those things, though I was a timid person who hated them and never actually used

them. True, that didn't excuse several things that Mr. Grogan thought or did. He wasn't the best person in the world...but then again, he didn't hide it either. I give him brownie points for that. Most people try to make themselves seem better than they were, but the author laid himself out pretty honestly. How many people would write down that they actually found a sadistic pleasure in choking their dog during training class? He even put it in a negative light, showing that he was well aware that this was not a good thing. But anyone who has had a problem dog understands this feeling. It happens--frustration, anger, uncertainty can build up like that. A lot of people condemn the title of the book: Life and Love with the world's Worst dog. Hyperbole is often frowned upon, true, however---he addresses this at the end. Again, he brings to light something anyone with a problem of any kind knows: that feeling of being the only one. He even foreshadowed this when he described his first dog training class. All the other dogs were well mannered and lined up exactly as they should, while Marley ran rampant and drooled over everything. For years, he never met or knew of any dogs that behaved like Marley: until he wrote Marley's life down. Then he realized that he wasn't alone, that he didn't have the *worst* dog. While he jokingly refers to the Bad Dog Club and all its members, he also writes a very telling line: "My new friends in the Secret Brotherhood of Dysfunctional Dog Owners." It is a subtle admittance that he now realizes that, yes, he was not the best of owners and he failed on many accounts--some of which he had no way of really dealing with at the time. John Grogan did everything he could with the tools he had. I dislike his seeking the cheapest, shadiest dog training school (parking lot?) but I honestly don't recall dog training classes being anything more than in someone's house or rented community center at the time (I was a teen then, and didn't look so I can't say for sure). I'm divided on his ill-timed vacation, too. I mean, there was no way he could have predicted what would happen. Even the vet didn't know when or where, only that it was a possibility. He made sure to put Marley in the best care with the people that loved him and wanted the best for him, and when he came back: the dog was mostly fine! Most likely, it was the excitement of seeing his family again that did it, but who knows? Having lost a few pets of my own over my lifetime, and knowing that our own lives go on, I can't really condemn him for it or blast him for such a horrible choice because...he really couldn't have known. It was very possible that Marley would have gone on for another couple of years, or would have passed at any moment. What stands out in this book is that John Grogan truly loved Marley. His family really cared for him, and they did the best they could. I think the reason why this book is so popular is because it resonates with the average person: the ones who don't or didn't know that they could have helped their dog overcome their phobia, could have taught him to properly direct his energy--that it was possible to have the "good dog" he wanted with a lot of hard work. At the time, there was no "hard

work" only sighs of "too bad." I think he knows better now, at least I hope he does. By the time he wrote this book and published it, all the information he could have used began to be more widely available. Perhaps he regrets what he didn't know, or maybe he uses these things with his new dog. This isn't really a book about what not to do. It is more a book about what used to be. In that respect, it is actually pretty accurate.

This is just the kind of hilarious, fun book I like to read, but because I saw the movie, I almost never read books AFTER I've seen the movie. For me it's the other way around: I read the book and see the movie, usually to see how much better the book was. It's been a long time since I saw the movie, so I gave the book a chance, and I'm glad I did! The humor and endless comedy was a blast. Marley destroyed countless pieces of furniture and screen doors. He routinely ate things like parts of their stereo equipment and once, a gold necklace that was a gift from author John Grogan to his wife, Jenny. Grogan then reports in hilarious detail being on poop patrol in his attempt to rescue the expensive necklace from Marley's prodigious defecation offerings to their backyard. Everything about the book is funny or touching. Even the birth of their first child was told in hysterical detail. Marley got kicked out of obedience school the first time for being too incorrigible. When they went back many months later, he did manage to pass and he quickly snatched his diploma from John's hands and ate it. If you've ever shared your life with a dog (even cats like to destroy plants, especially if they're hanging and they can pounce on them from any surface and yank them out of the wall so you come home to dirt and plant shreds scattered across your carpeting. They also like to topple books from shelves and sit on your keyboard while you're on deadline for work), you'll identify with the funny stories of how much work animal companions can be, and how much we miss them when they're gone. If you live in a place that doesn't allow animals, you'll also feel a little better about how simple and unencumbered your life is, but you'll feel a wistful sense of loss, too.

I read this book for a book club and I fell in love with that rascally dog just as Grogan did. It is really hard to know who is master and beast in this book as it seems like the beast was the master of all he reigned. This book is perfect for animal lovers, especially for those who have dogs who may be as rascally as Marley or not. This is a delightful romp through a dog's life. Chewing on shoes and clawing the doors? Yep. Been there and had that. Messy accidents in the house? Oh boy, sounds

like my dog. Man's best friend? Check. This is really a heart-warming story of a man who has a dog who is a big lovable lug that taught the author the lessons of loyalty and enjoying life to the fullest. There is humor injected throughout the book, whether it was at himself or at Marley. It is hard to remain mad at your best friend as I know since my own dog has chewed up my favorite pair of shoes or dragged me running through the minefields to chase a car and so on. I know that there are over a thousand reviews of this book, so I will keep mine short. It is a lovely homage to Grogan's best friend who taught him so much in his short life. It is also a wonderful reminder of what our friends do for us in our own lives. This is a perfect book club book as well as a perfect book to read throughout the summer, lying there next to your own best friend. Be sure to have kleenexes handy though. It is heartwarming and sweet and in spots, so sad. All pet owners know the special kind of grief losing your friend is like. Pick it up and have a delightful romp through the pages! This is perhaps a first book where I actually laughed out loud in places simply because of the humor of the incidents and the joy that Marley brings even to strangers like me. And I couldn't put this book down for the life of me. It was just too irresistible. So, enjoy this furry tale! 5/3/08

I haven't seen the movie. I read a decent review of the book, though. I laughed and cried, and felt a kinship with Marley and his family. What a great wander through this lucky dog's life. I'm so glad I took the time to read this wonderful book.

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