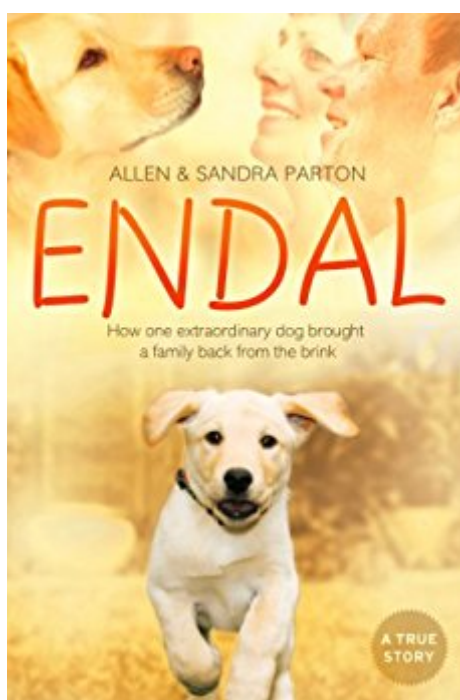


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Endal: How One Extraordinary Dog Brought A Family Back From The Brink



Synopsis

The remarkable story of Endal, voted "Dog of the Millennium", and how, through his remarkable skills, companionship and unstinting devotion, he gave Allen Parton a reason to live again. Allen Parton was seriously injured while serving in the Gulf War. He lost the use of both of his legs, plus all memories of his children and much of his marriage. He was left unable to walk, talk or write - isolated in his own world. After five years of intensive therapy and rehab, he was still angry, bitter and unable to talk. Until a chance encounter with a Labrador puppy - Endal - who had failed his training as an assistance dog on health grounds. They 'adopted' each other, and Endal became Allen's reason to communicate with the outside world, to come to terms with his injuries, and to want to live again. Not content with learning over 200 commands to help Allen complete everyday tasks like getting dressed and going out to the shops in his wheelchair, Endal gave Allen the ability to start living again, and to become a husband and father again in his own special way. This is the incredible story of Allen, his wife Sandra, and his family. And, of course, Endal.

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Customer Reviews

This is an incredibly moving book about true events centering on one amazing woman, her family and one of the most special dog I have ever read about. Allan Parton was in the Royal Navy and while being driven to the home of some Ex Patriots in another country which the Navy required their service men to do when the opportunity arose, the four wheeled vehicle over turned and Allen received some sort of internal head trauma which was not very evident at the time of the accident. He was taken back to the ship and after a good bit of time went by, someone took notice that there was something drastically wrong with him. This was in 1991 so I imagine there wasn't as much about head injuries as there is now. He was passed around quite bit before he was sent home to England. He had completely lost his memories and only could remember what he used to do which was working with missile development but he had lost so much in the way of words, he couldn't communicate well. He didn't remember his wife, nor his two children. I have to say, after reading this book, I am thankful I live in the good ole USA.. They certainly didn't do well for him and would send him home to his wife on the weekends who had NO way to cope with a man so badly handicapped. I never saw where the Navy helped out much at all. Sad but there are six years here where his wife and kids are trying to do the best they can and Allen is despondent and miserable and takes it out on everyone. That is the only part I think they should have shortened up a bit. It does however, show one just how bad it could be so when Sandra get's involved with what she calls "dog walking" to help to work with young puppies that are going to be used for the helping of the disabled, the real story begins. This part of the story is very fascinating. How they find and pick the puppies they think will work out. The criteria is large and delicate! When the story starts to revolve around Allen and Endal, it is full bodied and interesting . How Endal gets Allen to finally ,after 7 long years, become more like the man his wife Sandra remembers is extremely moving. One of the things that Allan lost with the brain injury was being able to have much in the way of emotion besides anger and frustration, Endal shows him what love is. Allan leans to understand the concept and his emotions open up a little at a time. The hard part is believing that such a dog exists. Endal does things that make you think he is a human in a dog body but with none of the human's less loved attributes. There is an instance when the dog is brought in to help a child that lost her father and has not spoken a word since. She won't look at him (Endal) but in order to get her attention, he starts to mimic everything she does. She turns her head left, Endal puts his head left. She lifts her right hand, Endal lifts his right paw. Eventually.. she notices and smiles. He gets through to her but NOBODY taught him that. He did it on his own. How? You say? Me too.. Just to read this book to learn about a dog such as Endal, is worth the time involved no doubt.

Endal is the dog that saved the life of Allen Parton, and probably of his wife too. Wounded in the Gulf, Parton came home disabled and with huge memory losses. Most importantly, he couldn't remember his wife or kids, and when he was released from hospital, she got stuck with a guy who treated her as his nurse at the best, and an extremely unpleasant guy into the bargain, instead of the loving, caring, funny guy who went to the Gulf. What saved their marriage was the care dog Allen eventually got, a very intelligent, highly caring Labrador. Endal is a dog to love, but the story is mainly about Allen and his wife, and Allen's new career as a promoter of the importance of such dogs. The book is written by him, and seen his disabilities, it is not badly written, but a professional writer probably would have done a much more better job. It is probably telling that I could read the inevitable part of Endal's death without a tear, while I'm always hesitating to read dog stories because I hate that part. Still, the subject is interesting, and dog lovers will love and admire Endal, and he is an amazing dog.

It was so so much more! Anyone who knows someone who has suffered a TBI (traumatic brain injury), especially a spouse, parent, friend or child know how difficult it can be for the injured and for the family. This book pulls no punches ; it uniquely relates each stage of recovery over more than 15 years, back and forth from first Allen's viewpoint, and then from Sandra's. Being the spouse of a TBI survivor, I found this account not only riveting but gut-wrenchingly real. About when you wonder how Sandra can go on, wonder IF she will have the wherewithal to continue holding her family together, and whether Allen can find some way to make his life worth living ... they discover the world of canine assistance dogs - and Endal, a very special Labrador retriever. The in-depth story of meeting and training Endal and this dog's unique ability to do what is needed to make everyday life easier for paraplegic Allen was uplifting. The additional insight into the world of canine assistance dogs fascinating. I cried, I occasionally laughed ... and I rooted for this ordinary couple as they accomplished together extraordinary things. Wow. I would recommend this book as an excellent read to anyone. I WILL recommend it to anyone with an interest in service dogs or any connection to someone with a traumatic brain injury. The reality of Allen's words hit me hard as he relates his feelings from the time he woke up in hospital throughout YEARS of pain, denial, anger, fear, determination, despair, of giving up, and finally finding a way to fight back from the brink with the help of his very own canine partner. I don't mean to in any way detract from the near impossible task Allen's wife accomplished during those years - Allen would have been lost without her. But for them, the missing link was the service dog - and thank God they found this organization when they

did. Endal was indeed a special dog, and once the book got to that point, it was a truly enjoyable read. Heart-wrenching and compelling throughout. Thank you, Allen and Sandra, for sharing your struggles and your successes.

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