



The Grace of Dogs: A Boy, a Black Lab, and a Father's Search for the Canine Soul

Dr. Andrew Root

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In the bestselling tradition of *Inside of a Dog* and *Marley & Me*, a smart, illuminating, and entertaining read on why the dog-human relationship is unique--and possibly even "spiritual."

Dr. Andrew Root's search for the canine soul began the day his eight-year-old son led the family in a moving Christian ritual at the burial service for Kirby, their beloved Golden Retriever. In the coming weeks, Root found himself wondering: What was this thing we'd experienced with this animal? Why did the loss hurt so poignantly? Why did his son's act seem so right in its sacramental feel?

In *The Grace of Dogs*, Root draws on biology, history, theology, cognitive ethology (the study of animal minds), and paleontology to trace how in our mutual evolution, humans and dogs who have so often helped each other to become more fully ourselves. Root explores questions like: Do dogs have souls? Is it accurate to say that dogs "love" us? What do psychology and physiology say about why we react to dogs in the way that we do? *The Grace of Dogs* paints a vivid picture of how, beyond sentimentality, the dog-human connection can legitimately be described as "spiritual"--as existing not for the sake of gain, but for the unselfish desire to be with and for the other, and to remind us that we are persons worthy of love and able to share love. In this book for any parent whose kids have asked if they'll see Fido in Heaven, or who has looked their beloved dog in the face and wondered what's going on in there, Dr. Root delivers an illuminating and heartfelt read that will change how we understand man's best friend.

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