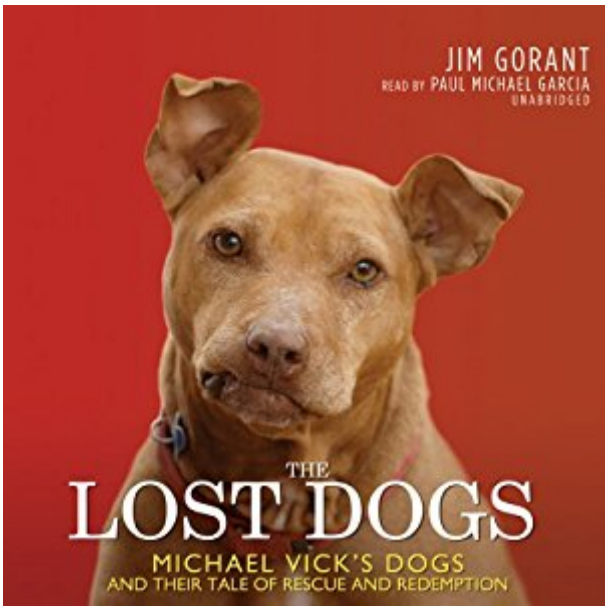
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The Lost Dogs: Michael VickÃ¢â‚¬â„¢s Dogs And Their Tale Of Rescue And Redemption



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Synopsis

This is an inspiring story of survival and our powerful bond with man’s best friend in the aftermath of the nation’s most notorious case of animal cruelty. Animal lovers and sports fans were shocked when the story broke about NFL player Michael Vick’s brutal dogfighting operation. But what became of the dozens of dogs who survived? As acclaimed writer Jim Gorant discovered, their story is the truly newsworthy aspect of this case. Expanding on Gorant’s Sports Illustrated cover story, The Lost Dogs traces the effort to bring Vick to justice and turns the spotlight on these infamous pit bulls, who were saved from euthanasia by an outpouring of public appeals coupled with a court order that Vick pay nearly one million dollars in "restitution" to the dogs. As an ASPCA-led team evaluated each one. They found a few hardened fighters, but many more lovable, friendly creatures desperate for compassion. In The Lost Dogs, we meet these amazing animals, a number of which are now living in loving homes, while some even work in therapy programs. Johnny Justice participates in Paws for Tales, which lets kids get comfortable with reading aloud by reading to dogs; Leo spends three hours a week with cancer patients and troubled teens. At the heart of the stories are the rescue workers who transformed the pups from victims of animal cruelty into healing caregivers themselves, unleashing priceless hope.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Once I started reading this book, I was unable to put it down. The only time I put it down was to walk my two pit bull rescues. I read it in a day, and it sent me through a wide range of emotions. There

were parts of the book that were very difficult to get through but necessary to understand the monsters that were eventually prosecuted. I do think the book was fair. Vick is a monster, and sorry...he's going to look like a monster even if you are just telling the story from an unbiased point of view. It shows his clear lack of remorse, not from commentary but from Vick's actions following his guilty plea (specifically his court ordered monetary payment for the rehabilitation of the dogs).It was fascinating to learn about the legal hoops that law enforcement officers were forced to jump through in the county of Surry. I was unaware of the local politics which leaned toward letting football players display open sociopathic behavior without any threat of arrest. These investigators risked their careers; they are true heroes, and it is nice to know that these tough guys have such a soft spot for our canine best friends. It was also uplifting to hear of a U.S. attorney that cares about animal cruelty. While Vick's gang was a perfect storm of monsters, the investigators, attorneys, veterinarians, legal representatives and rescue organizations that came together afterward were a perfect storm of the best of mankind.This book does make me wonder about the NFL in general. Why do we continue to reward criminal behavior with loyal fans? As football season starts, I see college kids walking around with new Vick jerseys. I try to understand that Eagles fans are a loyal breed, but do they have to wear Vick jerseys? I used to think that the Eagles organization should be ashamed of themselves, but now I blame the entire NFL organization. Vick made absolutely no effort to redeem himself following his sentence, and they rewarded him by welcoming him back. That's the negative and it is the part of this story that leads me to sometimes feel anger and disgust...on to the positive...and yes, there is a positive side to this story.One of the reasons I felt good after reading this book is that I found myself addicted to reading about the progress these dogs made outside the confines of the prison of a monster. I still am unable to think of Jonny Justice or Leo without laughing, and I'm unable to think of Sweet Jasmine without shedding a tear. At the same time I shed a tear for Sweet Jasmine, I'm so content to know that she found kindness and love in this world.One of the biggest surprises I found after reading this book was the feeling I had this morning. I walked my dogs down to the beach where I live in San Diego as I do every morning, and I thought that I would look down on them as they waited for their treats and think about how lucky they are to have a "sucker" like me as their human. Instead, I thought about how lucky I am to have them. This book left me with a peaceful feeling that there are others like me out there who devote a good chunk of their lives to enriching the lives of this sweet, goofy and loyal breed.I can't forget to point out that Jim Gorant is another new hero for me. He actually took the time to document this case, and he "gets it". There are portions of the book where he peeks into the mind of what a dog must feel, and it is touching. He also enlightens us on where the money goes with

rescue organizations, and he shines a light on organizations that wanted nothing to do with saving these dogs; they just wanted a sound bite on CNN (I'm talking to you PETA!!!). Gorant is just an excellent writer; his descriptions of these dogs and their goofy behavior hit close to home with me. So Bravo Mr. Gorant. Excellent job.

Jim Gorant has written a brilliant tribute to the courageous Vick dogs and the kind and generous people who helped them. At all times even handed, Jim Gorant's skill as a writer and journalist shines throughout the text. He shows us which people did their best to prevent justice for the dogs and which fought to make it happen. The dedication of the dogs' advocates is inspiring and will, hopefully, motivate more people to take up the gauntlet to defend other pit bulls rescued from dog fighting kennels.The thing that struck me the most, however, was the resiliance of the dogs. Coming first from a "home" devoid of any form of socialization and stimulation, transferred to shelters where they languished for months in often equally barren environments, many of the dogs went on to earn their Canine Good Citizen and/or therapy dog certificates and a couple even passed the American Temperament Testing Society test. I know from personal experience that this test requires a dog to have a very sound temperament to pass.I agree 100% that Michael Vick's deeds are dispicable and the National Football League needs to take a long, hard look at its values, but in many ways the very survival and success of the dogs has transcended Michael Vick and make any successes he has on the football field irrelevant and shallow in comparison. By overcoming their fears and learning to live life as loving and well loved dogs, the pitties are the winners in every way.There is one section of the book that haunts me. Gorant writes: "One experienced law officer estimates that 80 percent of the dogs, even those raised in a professional fighting operation, won't even scratch. That is, they won't even cross the line and engage the other dog." (pg. 19) If this is even remotely true, this makes pit bulls more of a victim that ever. That this breed, profoundly friendly to people, can have a reputation as vicious killers when the vast majority of them want nothing to do with bloodshed is a travesty.

I had put off reading this book for quite awhile- I knew it was going to upset me. I consider myself a pit bull enthusiast and the abuse this breed endures disgusts me. I had bought this book because I wanted to learn more about the Vick case & because Donna Reynolds suggested it again and again on the BAD RAP blog. Although the first part of the book is hard to get through (the section outlining the abuse and the often infuriating legal proceedings)- the rest of the book is worth the emotional turmoil. Parts two and three take you through the trials and tribulations of the dogs as they transition

into being happy healthy dogs. The book as a whole is so unexpectedly uplifting. It proves again just how resilient this breed is and how amazing rescuers are! I knew a fair amount about BAD RAP's involvement but I enjoyed hearing all the other people's perspectives and the hard work that went into doing right by these incredible pups.

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