



The Great Grisby: Two Thousand Years of Literary, Royal, Philosophical, and Artistic Dog Lovers and Their Exceptional Animals

Mikita Brottman

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A scholar, psychoanalyst, and cultural critic explores the multifaceted role dogs play in our world in this charming bestiary of dogs from literature, lore, and life.

While gradually unveiling her eight-year love affair with her French bulldog, Grisby, Mikita Brottman ruminates on the singular bond between dogs and humans. Why do prevailing attitudes warn us against loving our pet “too much”? Is her relationship with Grisby nourishing or dysfunctional, commonplace or unique? Challenging the assumption that there’s something repressed and neurotic about those deeply connected to a dog, she turns her keen eye on the many ways in which dog is the mirror of man.

The Great Grisby is organized into twenty-six alphabetically arranged chapters, each devoted to a particular human-canine union drawn from history, art, philosophy, or literature. Here is Picasso’s dachshund Lump; Freud’s chow Yofi; Bill Sikes’s mutt Bull’s Eye in *Oliver Twist*; and Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s spaniel Flush, whose biography was penned by Virginia Woolf. There are royal dogs, like Prince Albert’s greyhound Eos, and dogs cherished by authors, like Thomas Hardy’s fox terrier, Wessex. Brottman’s own beloved Grisby serves as an envoy for sniffing out these remarkable companions.

Quirky and delightful, and peppered with incisive personal reflections and black-and-white sketches portraying a different dog and its owner drawn by the enormously talented Davina “Psamophis” Falcão, *The Great Grisby* reveals how much dogs have to teach us about empathy, happiness, love—and what it means to be human.



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