



All the Dogs of My Life

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From Bijou, her very first dog, to Chunkie and Knobbie, her favourite, and last, canine companions, Elizabeth von Arnim takes us through the complex journey of her life. From her Pomeranian idyll (encapsulated in her first novel, *Elizabeth and Her German Garden*) to less happy days in London following the death of her first husband; from the solitude of her Swiss mountain hideaway, to World War I and a disastrous second marriage, her dogs (or lack of) were always vital to her. Through them, Elizabeth von Arnim offers observations on life and society.

All the Dogs of My Life Details

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From Reader Review All the Dogs of My Life for online ebook

Deborah says

If you love dogs, don't miss this.
Unsentimental, inventive, witty and touching.
A biography written through the dogs the author had.
I've read this several times and it's always brilliant.

BA says

A favorite.

Caren says

After reading "Elizabeth and Her German Garden", I wanted to find out a bit more about the author. This book isn't strictly an autobiography, since she sticks pretty closely to accounts of the dogs who had shared her life, still there are enough tidbits about her to make you wish for a more thorough book about the rest of her life. While she did seem to love her dogs, I was bothered by the callous attitude toward a few of them, most notably the dog who was neutered, grew fat, and seemed to lose his charm for her. I ask you: what is wrong with a fat, loving dog? I was dismayed when she had him put down at three years old. That doesn't make her much of a dog lover in my book. I had to remind myself that she lived in a different time period when I suppose people were more pragmatic about their pets. Much of the book recounts the time she lived in a Swiss chalet with the guests who came and went. Just as in "Elizabeth and Her German Garden", you get the impression the author really preferred a solitude that mostly eluded her. The many old, black and white photos of herself with her dogs really added to my enjoyment of the book. If you are really, really interested in the author, you may enjoy this book, but if you just want a book about a dog lover, this is not the book.

Roberta says

Elizabeth von Arnim scrisse questa narrazione sui suoi 14 cani dieci settimane dopo aver dovuto far sopprimere il suo ultimo, e io la sto leggendo ventiquattro settimane dopo aver perso il secondo cane della mia vita, sempre per un brutto male. Ho sparso lacrime qua e là durante la lettura, pensando al destino delle varie bestiole. E' un periodo emotivo per me, questo, basta un nonnulla per farmi sgorgare le lacrime. Per quanto sia evidente l'amore della gentildonna per i suoi compagni animali, non sono però riuscita a giustificare alcune delle sue condotte nei loro riguardi. In primis non sono riuscita a capire come abbia fatto ad andar via dalla Svizzera per 5 anni lasciandosi indietro Coco, quello che per sua ammissione è stato forse il cane più amato. Certo in Inghilterra vigeva l'obbligo di quarantena, ma così come anni dopo portò con sé l'amato Coco. In qualche modo ci sarebbe certamente riuscita. Colpa della guerra? Del secondo marito accennato e poco spiegato in questa non-autobiografia? Mah... concediamo a Frau von Arnim il beneficio del dubbio.

Ma non trovo alcuna giustificazione al suo comportamento col povero Pinscher, soppresso a soli tre anni perché dopo la castrazione era diventato un cane pigro, ciccone e interessato solo al cibo, e per questo non voleva portarlo con sé e gli altri cani in Provenza. Questa è stata una scelta egoista e criminale. Comunque a prescindere dal mio giudizio su quest'azione riprovevole, il libro mi è piaciuto, e mi ha lasciato la voglia di leggere altri lavori di quest'autrice.

Suzanna says

"I subsisted, so to speak, on cats."

Luminous, literary, and funny. I'm not sure why more people aren't reading Elizabeth von Arnim. Her books are among my favorites, and this is the closest thing she ever wrote to a true memoir. One life, fourteen dogs, with spaces in between for children, husbands, and cats.

Arlene Allen says

I have fallen wildly in love with Von Arnim's writing this year; her stories are warm, witty, sweet and yet profoundly insightful. In her personal life, Elizabeth suffered greatly; even though she chooses not to call this an autobiography, but a biography of her canine companions, and does not touch for long on her tremendous personal loses, she was no luckier with her dogs than she was in other aspects of her life. This had moments of such intense sadness that I had to put it down for days at a time. Surely the writer of such marvelous - and under-read, and under-appreciated- stories deserved so much better.

Squeak2017 says

An enchanting book but I would have preferred a more substantial assessment of her life and philosophy. Historical events such as WW1 and key life events such as her ill-fated marriage to Lord Russell happen offstage with only fleeting references to great grief or approaching doom. It's as if she was grateful to pass over them in a determined attempt to produce a lighthearted read, but I can't help but feel it was an opportunity missed

Bunny says

Von Arnim at her best. A lovely book almost an autobiography - I'd love to read a full autobiography - told through the times surrounding the dogs she owned, how she felt about them, what happened to them, and all of the friends, lovers and houses that they encountered. Highly recommended.

Antonio GF says

Me ha encantado!!!

beesp says

Se amate i cani, dovreste fare il possibile per leggere questo libro.

È la storia della vita di una donna che non poteva fare a meno di condividerla con i suoi cani. È la storia orgogliosa e piena d'affetto e di coraggio, combinazione che sola si addice ai cani, di una successione di bestioline irrequiete e allegre, appesantite dagli anni e dal cibo, tutte con una loro personalità e dei loro desideri. È il racconto ironico di un'esistenza, un'esistenza che solo chi vive con un animale può comprendere a pieno. È la consapevolezza di non essere gli unici animali dotati di intelligenza sul pianeta; quella intelligenza ingenua e priva di finzioni dei cani, che li rendono dei compagni onesti e leali (anche quando sono terribili e maleducati), per cui tanto risultano essere irresistibili.

La compagnia data da un animale è incommensurabile. I cani riempiono la vita, le danno uno scopo e una direzione quando tutto il resto sembra insensato. Un cane è una responsabilità, ma è anche un onore.

Questo romanzo è assolutamente adorabile, ironico, leggero. Elizabeth Von ARNIM ha scritto un piccolo tesoro, che spero di riuscire a conservare nella mia memoria per sempre.

Kelly says

Spoiler Alert!!! All the dogs die! :(

classic reverie says

There is something so deliciously wonderful in Elizabeth von Arnim's writing that catches the essence of an individual and a being in tune with nature. Having read all three Elizabeth books, is what made me a fan but "The Enchanted April" just was icing on the reading so called cake. In "All The Dogs of My Life", all the elements that were present in the Elizabeth series which are humorous, trying to have peace when visitors are at your heels and the beauty of nature with also her recollections about her dogs. She states several times in her book that this is not an autobiography but it is in reality, it was in a sense because besides telling about the dogs, we learn more about her to make this declaration seems wrong. I have many favorite authors but if it were possible to meet one in the celestial, I would choose Elizabeth, hands down because her spirit is my spirit.

Celia Kaltenbach-crotteau says

While wandering through a used bookstore in a university town, I discovered this book, and more by Elizabeth Von Armin, on a low dusty shelf and bought several to try. I started with this memoir/autobiography, to learn more about this writer I had never heard of. She writes with a polished style that is both self-deprecating and witty and, at times, oddly forlorn. Intrigued by what she didn't say as well as what she did, I did some online research and discovered that Elizabeth Von Armin was a well-known and respected writer in her day who has fallen into obscurity. Several critics/scholars think she is ripe for a comeback, but who knows for sure? Anyway, I am about to start her most famous book, Elizabeth and Her

German Garden, which actually is briefly mentioned in Downton Abbey, during the time when it would have been a run away best seller. Just as Virginia Woolf was "rediscovered" by feminist scholars, perhaps this writer will be as well. Somehow, though, I can't see anyone outside academia really reading and enjoying her writing.

Vera Maharani says

It was so hard to get this book; I felt like crying when I was finally able to place an order.

My charming friend Elizabeth von Arnim does not disappoint. She insisted that this book was about her dogs so she would not elaborate the details of her own life, but honestly I don't mind if she did.

Teresa says

I love this woman's style of writing.
