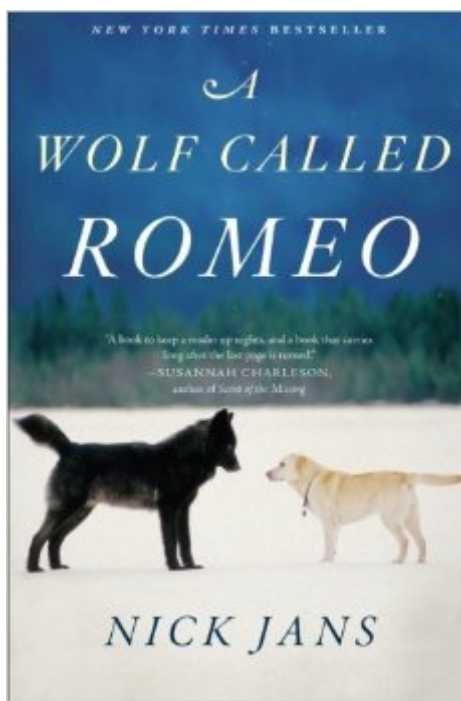


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A Wolf Called Romeo



Synopsis

“Jans is an exceptional storyteller” no nature writer can top him in terms of sheer emotional force. • “New York Times” A Wolf Called Romeo is the true story of the exceptional black wolf who spent seven years interacting with the people and dogs of Juneau, Alaska, living on the edges of their community, engaging in an improbable, awe-inspiring interspecies dance, and bringing the wild into sharp focus. • When Romeo first appeared, author Nick Jans and the other citizens of Juneau were wary, but as Romeo began to tag along with cross-country skiers on their daily jaunts, play fetch alongside local dogs, or simply lie near Nick and nap under the sun on a quiet afternoon, Nick and the rest of Juneau came to accept Romeo, and he them. Part memoir, part moving animal narrative, part foray into the mystique, lore, science, and history of the wolf, A Wolf Called Romeo is a book no animal lover should miss. • “Beautifully written, A Wolf Called Romeo is a thoughtful and moving story about one of nature’s most evocative animals.” Patricia McConnell, author of The Other End of the Leash • “Jans is a perfect narrator for this story. He’s deeply knowledgeable about the Alaskan wilderness and he evokes its harsh beauties in powerful and poetic prose . . . A tingling reminder of the basic bond that occasionally spans the space between two species.” Christian Science Monitor • NICK JANS is an award-winning writer, photographer, and author of numerous books, including The Grizzly Maze. He is a contributing editor to Alaska magazine and has written for a variety of publications, including Rolling Stone and the Christian Science Monitor.

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Nature Writing & Essays

Customer Reviews

I ordered this book as a member of the Vine program. This story is a treasure. It's a gift, a unique and wonderful journey. My favorite, all-time man-dog book is Merle's Door: Lessons from a Free-thinking Dog by Ted Kerasote. Enter Nick Jans with his book entitled A Wolf Called Romeo. This is unequivocally THE BEST man-wild animal book I have EVER read. PERIOD. Jans uses his life experience as an author, naturalist, experienced outdoorsman, investigative journalist and photographer to weave a wonderful story. The essence of the book (for me) is characterized in the following excerpt: "Running a Darwinian gauntlet that demanded constant adaptation and complex responses, with scant margin for error, he had accomplished what few large predators ever had, or will: he lived near, even among, thousands of humans over most of his life" "not just a shadowed presence or camp follower,, but as an independent, socially interactive creature whose territory overlapped our own" "without the benefit of a large-scale preserve. Through this time among us, he remained his own gatekeeper, his comings and goings defining the ever-shifting boundary between worlds, rendering our own surveys and markers meaningless." (excerpt from page 185). Like I said - THE BEST man-wild animal book I have EVER read. PERIOD. This book should be required reading for wildlife biology students and practitioners everywhere!!! When it comes to understanding the wolf (I hike in northeastern Oregon - Eagle Cap Wilderness - where wolves are now becoming re-established) hikers, civilians, researchers, ranchers, naturalists and environmentalists would ALL be well-served by consuming this work. BUY IT! READ IT! LEARN FROM IT!

This is a beautifully written and deeply moving story of not only a wolf but of the huge community of Juneau, Alaska who fell into an intimate relationship with one of man's most formidable enemies, the Alaskan Wolf. The fact that the author, Nick Jans has been involved with all the trappings having to do with the animals of that area plus hunted for several years with the Inupiaq Eskimo subsistence hunters, gives him way more than the normal understanding of game in the area and predators in general. He had hunted wolves often and had learned much about their habits while doing so. Here is a man who knows of what he was seeing or photographing or writing about. Into this man's heart (along with a lot of the people of Juneau), came an incredible animal of huge size and beauty and youth to make the people who came into contact with him, enter into a fantasy of Disney proportion. Much bigger than the average wolf, pretty much black all over (Somewhat unusual in and of itself) with a coat of glorious fulness, enter in Romeo. So named because of his relationships to other dogs. He was beyond understanding and over the years, he

broke all the written and unwritten rules involving wild canines and their ancestral brothers, man's best friend, the dog. Not only did he become playful with the dogs of Juneau but allowed a much more cautious relationship to develop with their human owners. The narrative encompasses many people who had a close relationship with the animal and Jans writes how careful they all tried to be to keep this special creature safe from those who felt the only good wolf was a dead one. It is in their favor that he was in the area many years, always coming back each winter to his own stomping grounds.

In late 2003, a large black wolf began appearing around Mendenhall Glacier on the outskirts of Juneau, Alaska. He was tolerant of humans and loved to hang out and play with dogs, sometimes carrying small ones in his mouth (and maybe he killed a couple though he generally released them). Author Nick Jans lived in the area, and along with many other people, spent the next six years observing these fascinating interactions. Much as I would feel in those circumstances, Jans felt incredibly fortunate about his own good fortune but also protective and fearful of what might happen to the wolf as a result of spending so much time around humans. The book relates many anecdotes about events involving Romeo, and also explores the deep schism in attitudes toward wolves which I'm very familiar with from living in northern Minnesota and Yellowstone. On the first page of the book, Jans describes the wolf running towards him after they'd had a few experiences with each other. "I'd seen my share of wolves over the years, some point-blank close, and hadn't quite shifted into panic mode. But anyone who claims he wouldn't get an adrenaline jolt from a running wolf coming straight in, with no weapon and no place to run . . . is either brain-dead or lying." I've stood face to face with a captive wolf's paws on my shoulders, and know well how extremely rare it is for a wolf to attack a human (another subject Jans discusses in the book).

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