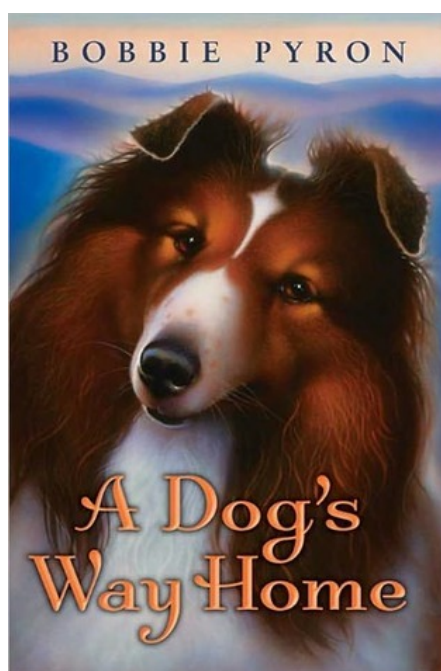




A Dog's Way Home

Bobbie Pyron

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Daddy says, "Most folks got a north star in their life—something that gives their life extra meaning. Mine is music."

Without even thinking, I say, "Mine is Tam."

Abby knows that Tam, her Shetland sheepdog, is her north star, and she's pretty certain she's his, too. But when an accident separates Abby and Tam, it feels as though all the stars have fallen out of the sky and nothing will ever be right again. As the days between them turn to weeks, then months, dangers and changes fill up Abby's and Tam's lives. Will they ever find their way home to each other?

Set in the Blue Ridge Mountains, *A Dog's Way Home* is an unforgettable tale of the many miles, months, and mountains that divide two loyal friends—but that can't possibly keep them apart.

A Dog's Way Home Details

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From Reader Review A Dog's Way Home for online ebook

Anne says

My 11-year old son (whose favorite genre is fantasy) LOVED this book, and predicts that it will win the Newbery. He has noticed that recent winners usually convey strong emotion, and this book does that well. I liked the alternating perspectives of girl and dog, and was drawn into the emotional worlds and dramas of both their lives. Both story lines developed unexpectedly strong and engaging supporting characters (Cheyenne and the coyote in particular). The Blue Ridge mountain setting is captivating (though perhaps I'm biased by my family roots in the mountains of NC!). My hesitations about the Newbery quality of the book are two: the story line is not entirely original -- the author makes homage to (and even mentions in the book) "The Incredible Journey" and "Lassie-Come-Home" -- and the weakness of a few scenes, in particular the end of the book, where the events became less believable or logical. (Where did Abby's parents suddenly appear from? How did the truck make it past the closed barricade?) With a little suspension of disbelief, though, it is a charming read and emotionally satisfying story.

Chrissy says

Funny story about this book - While I was reading, I came to the part where Tam winds up at an animal shelter in North Carolina (FINALLY, right?) The shelter scans for his microchip and discovers that he belongs to Abby Whistler from Harmony Gap. At this point in the book, Abby has moved with her parents to Nashville, but her grandmother still lives in Harmony Gap so she ought to be able to get a message to Abby, right? Except in the very next chapter, we learn that Meemaw has chosen THAT week to pay a visit to Abby and her family in Nashville and consequently cannot answer her phone.

It was at this point that I actually yelled at Meemaw for going on vacation. And my roommate came running because she thought something was actually, legitimately wrong. But all I had to do was hold up the book I was reading and say "THIS BOOK!" and she understood perfectly (my roommate knows me so well).

So, yes - "A Dog's Way Home" - this book made me want to take a few days off and run home to see my dog (well, actually she's my parents' dog, but that creature has been a faithful companion through more than one evening in the ranch house by myself when I lived with my folks). I defy anyone who has owned a dog and loved it not to get emotional at this story. I actually had to read the last page before I started because I cannot handle books where the dog dies at the end - and I found out that Tam does live, so I could read the book. But that doesn't mean that there aren't some really scary moments for the little Sheltie. I did love how the chapters alternated between Abby's POV and Tam's POV - I don't know of many other books that do that (not having read "The Incredible Journey" or "Old Yeller" - I know, I'm a bad librarian).

There is more to this than Tam's adventure and Abby feeling separated from her friend - Abby has to learn how to move on with her life when she starts to accept that she may never see Tam again. I love how she reaches out to a new friend in her new home - and that friend turns out not to be such stuck-up snob. Plus this new friend, Cheyenne, is instrumental in finding Tam in the end, so who's happy that she befriended the social outcast?

This is a very enjoyable story and I highly recommend it to anyone who loves dogs or who loves stories about dogs.

Brooke says

I really enjoyed this book because of how this dog does everything to find his owners after the crash he was hidden when knocked out and this story broke my heart. How he finally found his family.

Marianne Mitchell says

Don't you just love the cover on this book? The adorable Shetland sheepdog 'fetches' the reader and takes you on a wild adventure. On their way home from a dog agility show, Abby and her mother are in an accident. Tam and his crate are thrown from the bed of the pickup. As Abby recovers, she is determined to find Tam, even though the odds are not good. Told in alternating voices of the girl and the dog (it really works!) the reader is taken on an incredible journey of survival and adventure. Keep a hanky on hand at the end!

Augie Staudacher says

I really had a rough time continuing to read this at the beginning. It was going just as I predicted, the girl gets in an accident, the dog gets lost and can't find the way home, but for some reason he has a certain reason he needs to get home. As the story goes on I had to set it down because it was boring but then it hit a good spot. All the sudden the book was really good and it got a lot better. This book showed the bond between human and dog, but also showing many important concepts on friendship and of course the "don't judge a book by the cover" for the moral lesson.

Bannag says

It was an amazing book about a girl and her best friend and companion, her dog, get seperated during a terrible accident, and that they both have such a strong bond, that nothing, not even when they are 10,000 miles away from each other, can break it. It shows the loyalty of friends, and that friendship and love always wins.

Emily Ann says

Awwwww. My poor little fragile animal-lover heart just broke into a million pieces

Heidi says

I found myself really enjoying this book. I was afraid at first that it would be kind of slow, but it wasn't at all. At least, I didn't find it so. The story moves quickly from the time that Abby and Tam get separated. The

alternating accounts (Abby and Tam) could have slowed the story down, but it didn't. I found myself anxious to find out what would happen next in the story. Tam's predicament tugged at my heartstrings and I found myself cheering him on in his struggle. There is one part of the story that I connected to especially well. I won't mention what that was in order to avoid spoiling the story for future readers. Just know that something similar happened to one of my family's pet cats when I was younger, it resulted in us having to put Sparky to sleep. At this point in the story I wanted to jump into it and give someone a piece of my mind. To me this is always the best sign of a book that passes just good and jumps to great, a book that makes the reader care so much about the characters that they seem real. The writing is excellent, but secondary to the story, also a sign of a great book. The gorgeous cover helps too, there is something very appealing about shelties that the cover shows beautifully. I highly recommend this story for all those who enjoy a story about survival, hope, love, and sacrifice.

Hannah says

I bought this book a few years ago as well, and a few months ago, I decided to read all of the books on my shelf that I have not read yet, and this was one of them. This is about a sheltie that gets lost on a highway after a car crash, and the dog's owner tries to find him. This has the POV of both the girl and the dog, and the chapters are short, since it is for kids. This is a heartbreaking story of a girl trying to find her missing dog, and I loved it! Some parts were quite frustrating, like the many things that got in the way of the dog finding his way home. Anyway, I love this book, and would definitely recommend it to younger readers.

Raul Gallardo says

A Dog's Way Home by Bobbie Pyron is a book about a girl named Abby who has a dog named Tam who got lost in a car accident. I really like this book because it switches perspectives from the dog Tam to Abby each chapter although Tam doesn't talk. It is also amazing how close they were to each other all the time. I really recommend this book to anyone who would like a book that wants to make you keep reading.

Alison says

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE BOOK:

Abby and her Shetland sheepdog, Tam, spend hours every day practicing for agility training trials and simply enjoying one another's company. That all changes the day Abby and her Mom have an accident on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Heading home to NC from a competition in Virginia, their pick-up truck travels headlong into a tree, sending Tam's crate tumbling down a mountainside. Tam manages to free himself from the crate before he's drowned in a mountain stream, but in the course of that he's carried far away from the accident scene – too far for anyone to find him.

What begins is a 400-mile journey for Tam, whose deep devotion to "his girl" finds him traveling for months through rough territory and many painful encounters with other animals, other people, and terrible winter weather. Abby, meanwhile, endures the hardships of a life with little family income, a father doggedly pursuing his musician dreams, a mother struggling to help all of them, a new house/school/town, and a terrible grief over the dog she lost – a dog she believes is still alive and trying to reach her.

The story alternates between Abby's perspective (in the first person) and Tam's (in the third), giving the reader a full picture of how both are trying desperately to find their way back to one another. While Abby wonders about Tam, she and her parents move to Nashville, where she is surprised to find a new friend in a seemingly rough-edged girl whose father is a wealthy and famous country music star. This diversion away from the central plot adds depth to the story and brings some nice friendship components to the plot. Meanwhile, Abby's feelings of desperation and singular sense of purpose to find Tam are achingly believable.

WHAT I THOUGHT ABOUT IT:

I thought this book was wonderful. It's engaging, heart-warming, moving and an absolute "must read" for young animal lovers. I was completely absorbed by the story and very much taken with Abby and Tam – both of whom are characters kids will relate to, like, and find themselves rooting for. I think this is one of the most kid-friendly books I've read all year, but it's certain to please a LOT of adults too!

This book would be a terrific choice for book groups, and teachers will find numerous ways to use it in a classroom. Students could draw "story maps" like Abby does, plotting the book's major events on a map, along with the dates when those events happened. They could plot Tam's progress, too, calculate his speed of travel, and make predictions about when and where he's likely to arrive next. Also on the topic of making predictions, kids will no doubt want to talk about how Abby and her grandmother both believe that they can "see" Tam via dreams or an ESP-like ability they refer to as "the Sight." Agility training is another topic young readers will want to learn more about, and it's a great topic to explore in the context of encouraging fitness – both for people and their pets. Homeschoolers will like learning that Abby (who is very bright) was homeschooled until just two years prior to the events in this story.

One more note: A similar construction (alternating perspectives, first & third person narration) and common themes (rural life, friendship between kids from different socio-economic groups) makes this book an interesting one to pair with Faith, Hope, and Ivy June by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor.

Crystalpixel says

this book moved me into a reading slump because i cant leave behind Abby and Tam right away to read a diffrent book! this book has touched me and i dont think I'll find a book to top it just yet

Bri Ahearn says

All Abby needs in life is Tam, her beloved Shetland sheepdog. When the two are doing agility training, Abby doesn't have to even speak to give cues to Tam, their relationship is that strong. But when Abby's family is in a car accident, Tam's crate is thrown from the truck and the two are separated by the Blue Ridge Mountains. Abby needs Tam and Tam needs Abby, and they'll stop at nothing to find each other.

I tend to classify dog books in my own way. There are books that are about dogs and then are dog books. The latter seem to me to focus on the wonderful bond dog owners have with their animals and where the dog character is as good as real to a reader, as thoroughly imagined as any dog I might own. A Dog's Way Home falls in that category.

This stirring and thrilling read is the perfect descendant of classic dog stories like Lad, Lassie Come Home, and The Incredible Journey. At its core is a simple story: The love of a dog and his master. I loved Abby, her spunk and good nature were so endearing, but the chapters featuring Tam's point of view were my favorite part of this book. Each chapter's simple prose deepened the story, including this passage below – which caused me to cry even typing it!

“He did not know that between him and the girl lay miles of rhododendron and mountain laurel so thick a person couldn't push through it. He could not know that it would take hours to work his way back upstream.

All he knew was she was calling. For all his years he could remember, this voice was his world, his compass. And when the person he loves most in the world calls, a dog can do nothing but go.” Chapter 6, A Dog's Way Home.

A Dog's Way Home is full of passages like the above. Oh this little dog goes through such peril! He's befriended and helped along the way but each chapter you're wondering what's next for this sweet dog? And Abby herself grows as she grows accustomed to a new school and makes new friends. It's perfect for middle readers (and adult readers) with just the right amount of peril, family drama, friendship issues, nature, and more.

One of the covers for Lassie Come Home

Bobbie Pyron's novel left me sobbing after I read it in a single sitting and I was very tempted to peek at the last chapter to see how it ended. I remembered my first dog, a darling little Daschund mix named Skittle. I adored that little dog and also went through a big Lassie phase as a kid, watching hours of the tv show (and movies). A Dog's Way Home speaks to the child in me with its adventure and the adult in me with its heart.

Be sure to notice the cover art. Isn't it wonderful? It reminds me of one of the original covers for Lassie Come Home. ‘

I'm calling it..this book will be nominated for a Newberry.

Doret says

11yr old Abby and her dog Tam are Dog Agility champions. After another win in Virginia, there's car accident on the way home to Harmony Gap, NC. Tam's cage which was in the back of the truck was thrown over during the accident. Now Abby is trying to find Tam and he's trying to find his way home. The chapters alternate between the two.

Once Tam was lost it was his story I was most interested in. One thing I loved about Tam, he wasn't an extraordinary or overly smart dog. He was simply a regular Sheltie, following his instincts to get home. Sometimes I read dog stories and wonder, how does this dog know so much.* I never got that feeling with Tam. His journey was very long and I was caught up in it and my heart when out to him many times.

I was so caught up in Tam's story, but its to the author's credit that I never once considered skipping Abby's story. As much as I wanted to know what was happening to Tam, Abby part still held me. Pyron gave equal amount of time to both stories. Somewhere along way I was more invested in Abby's. The story spanned

months, Abby's life wasn't put on hold. She still had to navigate middle school and make friends. The author also took the time to develop the characters around Abby. I really enjoyed the dad's love of music . I loved getting an unexpected taste of country music scene in Nashville.

Though it always came back to Tam and Abby. When I started reading, I didn't think it was going to have an Old Yeller ending (it wasn't) and I still got choked up. There's one at the line at the end that will stay with me for a very long time. A Dog's Way Home was a pleasure to read and I loved losing myself in it. A must read for anyone who loves dog stories.

Kassie says

This was a good story, thought it could be used for Rappin' Readers, but they don't like sad stories, so will just recommend it to the few who like to read about dogs.....
