The Best Dog in the World – Essays on Love

Edited by Alice Hoffman

A Book Review by Nancy Kvorka

"I have come to realize there is not necessarily one best dog in the world, but, if we're fortunate, many best dogs, who each enrich our lives in different ways." Alice Hoffman

Alice Hoffman might say the best dog in the world is a German Shepherd Dog. It is fitting that the first essay I read in this book was about a German Shepherd Dog that she bought from a breeder in the city where I live. His name was Houdini and he lived to be 15 years old. He moved across the country with her and went everywhere with her. As she puts it, he was the heart she was missing.

Dottie is the next dog I read about that is profiled by Emily Henry. I picked this one as I have read her books. Ms. Henry speaks profoundly about the loss and pain she felt when she lost Dottie. Dottie was a rescue that no one else wanted. She found her way into Ms. Henry's heart and life. Her essay started with her saying the dog dies in the end because readers always want to know that. She ends by saying: "The dog dies at the end and it breaks your heart, and you wouldn't change anything. Not one moment." This is true for most of us that have lived with and loved dogs.

My last essay to discuss is by Roxane Gay. Ms. Gay "is an American writer, professor, editor, and social commentator" (Wikipedia). I can relate to Ms. Gay's essay as I too was nipped by a dog when I was a child. For the longest time I could not be by dogs. I had friends at one time that had dogs they had to put in another room when I visited. Then I did a complete turnaround much like Ms. Gay did and for the same reason. Her essay is also excellent in that it seems like you are talking with her rather than reading her article.

This is a delightful book for any dog lover and highly recommended. There are a total of 14 essays by different authors and an introduction and afterword by Ms. Hoffman.