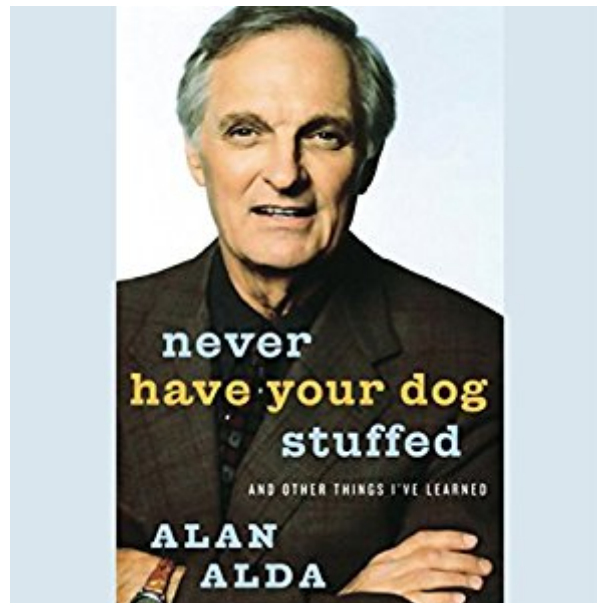




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Never Have Your Dog Stuffed: And Other Things I've Learned



Synopsis

He's one of America's most recognisable and acclaimed actors - a star on "Broadway", an Oscar nominee for "The Aviator", and the only person to ever win Emmys for acting, writing, and directing during his eleven years on MASH. Now Alan Alda has written a memoir as elegant, funny, and affecting as his greatest performances. 'My mother didn't try to stab my father until I was six,' begins Alan Alda's irresistible story. The son of a popular actor and a loving, but mentally ill mother, he spent his early childhood backstage in the erotic and comic world of burlesque and went on after early struggles to achieve extraordinary success in his profession. Yet "Never Have Your Dog Stuffed" is not a memoir of show business ups and downs. It is a moving and funny story of a boy growing into a man who then realizes he has only begun to grow. It is the story of turning points in his life, events that would make him what he is - if only he could survive them. From the moment as a boy when his dead dog is returned from the taxidermist's shop with a hideous expression on his face, and he learns that death can't be undone, to the decades-long effort to find compassion for the mother he lived with but never knew, to his acceptance of his father in him, personally and professionally, he learns the hard way that change, uncertainty and transformation are what life is made of, and the good life is made of welcoming them. "Never Have Your Dog Stuffed", filled with curiosity about nature, good humour and honesty, is the crowning achievement of an actor, author, and director, but surprisingly, it is the story of a life more filled with turbulence and laughter than any he's ever played on the stage or screen.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Smart, self-effacing, determined, loving...it's all there. I knew nothing about his childhood, his handsome and successful father with whom he had a great relationship. Their competitive drive, their help to each other throughout their lives, and just how Alan got started in the first place with drama, and comedy. There was just enough stuff about the entertainment industry to make this interesting without all the name dropping, gossip, and other finger pointing that goes on in so many celebrity books. Nothing that I would label tell-all. I was relieved to come away with the same honorable opinion of him as I have always had...his wife and daughters come first. He is a good human and worthy of all the film accolades, but still, I think it is rare that the man actually stands up well to the "part" he plays. However, Alan does. The book was fun, poignant, and full of life. Some good words to live by as well.

My heart and soul were stuffed by his wonderful book. His ability to elicit immense laughter absent of personal presence was amazing. I burst out laughing on so many occasions! Truly a reflection of improv treasures he possesses, even as a writer. The depths of revelations of his personal life and acting struggles were especially interesting to read about...it was also like a treasure hunt in finding out about how history was made with MASH! Truly acts of God, and the strengths of a wonderful human spirit, were revealed in his work...and especially in finding out that his father was in MASH scenes, something I never knew! Not only is Alan a great actor, but he equally can elicit strong emotion at whim from his reading audience. Such a great artist! Such a great human being! If you want to learn about him, and some other interesting aspects about human behaviors, especially in the acting world, read his book! Thanks Alan...you're the greatest! I'll never get my dog stuffed!

I've always had an affinity for Alan Alda. I grew up watching M*A*S*H and thought his character was funny and believable. I've followed his career since then and have always been impressed. There's a reason he was once voted the most believable actor in the business. I like his work, and what brief interviews I've seen over the years with him have impressed me. I saw this autobiography mentioned on a biography show about him and thought, why not? I was not disappointed. I barely paused to sleep while reading it. Highly recommend to everyone and anyone and hope that others will be as pleasantly surprised by the color, diversity, adversity and sheer intelligence born in this man's life. There was an interview with Loretta Switt in which she says, "there aren't too many Alan Alda's walking around out there." Having read this, and consequently his second book, I'm inclined to agree.

After hearing Alan Alda being interviewed about this book on NPR several months ago, I knew I wanted the audiobook. When I got ready to order it, though, I encountered a dilemma: I could either have it, read by Alda but abridged, or read by someone else in its entirety. In most cases, I would opt for the full version, but with autobiographies, I prefer to hear them read by the author so, after some deliberating I scuffed my toe in the dirt over the content I'd miss, and opted to hear Alan Alda's story as told by Alan Alda, and got the abridged version. It's a great audio-read, and I recommend it to anyone who would like to know more about the man beyond his Hawkeye Pierce persona. He does do more than a passing mention of M*A*S*H, but it seems to have the same weight in this audiobook as it did in his life - a highly significant part of his life, but just that: a part of it. This is a well-written, well-edited, and well-read story of a life that's being well-lived. ...I just wish he could have been persuaded to read the whole thing (the abridgement itself is the only reason I don't give this 5 stars). Nevertheless, if you're considering the audiobook, I still recommend this abridged version, for the pleasure of hearing him tell you, himself, the story of his life.

Unlike others I wasn't expecting a great deal of 'soul baring' and didn't want him to go on for half the book on his M*A*S*H years, so I was pretty happy with all his stories and anecdotes. I am always amazed by people that know what they want to do with their life at an early age and go through heaven and hell to pursue that dream. Maybe I'm not focused enough, or maybe I'm not selfish enough (as others often have to suffer along with you in pursuit of your dream) but Mr Alda certainly knew what he wanted to do with his life and pursued it with gusto. My only complaints with the book are that the flow was not beginning-to-end; the readers sometimes find themselves cast back into the past without any warning and it takes a moment to realize we've gone back in time, and the Chile story, while interesting, went on too long. I understand it was to set up the end of the book and reveal his new outlook on life, so all is 'forgiven'. I feel for Mr. Alda and the downward spiral of his mother - I feel he truly cared about her but found it difficult to be around her (understandably). I'm from a small central IL town and have been to Sullivan, so I know his story about that town are spot-on. Hilarious.

This book was a fast read. It's funny and it's interesting to know the background of one of my favorite TV show stars

Super interesting life story told by the famous Alan Alda

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