

KRISTIN VON KREISLER

author of *THE COMPASSION OF ANIMALS* and *BEAUTY IN THE BEASTS*



the story of the beagle who changed my life

For Bea

Kristin von Kreisler

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For Bea Kristin von Kreisler

A touching and humorous account of the author's fifteen years with her beagle, Bea, a refugee from an animal research laboratory.

Harried by recent upheavals in her life, the last thing Kristin von Kreisler needed was another dog. But when she came upon Bea, a scrawny beagle abandoned by the roadside, she couldn't turn away. Bea became part of her family, and changed it forever.

Disheveled, malnourished, and terrified of human contact, Bea seemed damaged beyond repair. But, gradually, she began to trust von Kreisler. After resisting her touch again and again, the dog one day leaned in and nuzzled her neck. From that moment, Bea began to give love as well as receive it. With the typically unforgettable personality of a beagle, over the next decade and a half she taught von Kreisler the value of living utterly in the present, of meeting each day with a good bark, and of moving forward in life without being dragged down by past grief.

Written with rare eloquence and down-to-earth wit, this memoir of Bea and von Kreisler's fifteen-year love story will charm "beaglers" and touch the heart of anyone who has ever loved a dog.

For Bea Details

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From Reader Review For Bea for online ebook

Chana says

A couple find a disoriented and terrorized beagle wandering the road near their house. When they find a tattooed identification number on the inside of her ear they find out she was a research animal. With a lot of love and patience they heal this beagle of her terror and trauma. The beagle in her turn, helps the couple through difficult times in their lives. I thought the end, with Phoebe Miracle was particularly moving. Love is eternal. I also appreciated all the information about research animals and the anti-vivisection movement that is in the back of the book.

Jeannie says

This was a heart-warming read. I fell in love with Bea, even though she had a horrible start in life, due to the caring and gentle souls of the author and her husband she left this world knowing the smell, touch and feel of love. My heart breaks for any animal trapped in the labs that are still in use today. This book is a voice for the forgotten ones. A must read for anyone who cares for and about animals.

Emily says

I honestly don't remember much about this book, which I read years ago before I was keeping track of things on goodreads. I'm giving it four stars because the one thing I do remember is that Bea was lab animal who suffered. This book got me to start checking product labels for the words "not tested on animals". I still do, and for making such an impact on my way of life, I figure it should get a high rating.

Kit says

This book is by far the most wonderful and heartwarming/breaking tale I have ever read. I laughed, cried, sobbed, laughed...it's amazing!

It's about a family and a Beagle named Bea. Bea escaped (how we'll never know) from a research laboratory and ended up in the arms of the author. Initially the dog was terrified, and stiffened to endure touches, pets, and love from the guardians. After much patience and love we see this terrified, lonely, and sad Beagle come out of her shell and become the best friend anyone could ask for!

Read it!!

Shayne says

this is the book that got me to fall in love with beagles! I loved it so much i actually got two beagles because of this book! LOVE is in every page and i wish i could be like the woman in this book!

Helen says

A truly heartwarming story of the author's first Beagle, an "escapee" from a research lab. Bea was a very difficult dog, who came with a lot of baggage, but once she settled in and learned how to trust, she planted herself firmly in the author and her husband's hearts and life was never the same. The communication between Bea and Kristin was amazing. It really made me think about what these dogs go through and the kind of lives they lead caged up in labs.

Joey says

I wish I had known Bea. She was a wonderful beagle who didn't deserve what happened to her in the early part of her life. I am so glad that the author and her husband rescued Bea and gave her the home she deserved - a home with all the love Bea's big heart could handle. Amazing dog, amazing account of Bea's life in her new Forever Home. Rest in peace, little girl! You will never be forgotten. Your loving spirit will live forever.

Stacy says

I fell in love with this book from the very first page. I believe I finished it in 2 days and would have finished it sooner but life showed up in between. I was connected to this story on every level and it reminded me of all the goodness in the world and possibility of change. I was impressed by the author's ability to share her story authentically and in such a feeling-centered manner that I felt like I knew her. Overall, one of my favorite books!

Shelbie Kellum says

This book was funny, beautifully written, and vastly important. The reader learns not only about Bea and her relationship with the author, but also about overarching life lessons and the cruelty of animal research. As a biology student who has dissected animals in a lab, this makes me regret my decision to do so. I've decided that as I progress through school I will no longer partake in dissections and will demand an alternative instead. This is one of the novels that gave me a new perspective and will stick with me forever. I've already recommended it to my mother and grandmother.

Sarah says

One of the few books I have actually in paperback and not on an ereader. I've read it twice. For anyone with an animal, the bond expressed between pet and owner in this book is just wonderful. I laughed and cried both times . Unforgettable.

Rosemary Kennedy says

A lovely true story about an abused dog that finds her forever home with an amazing couple (one of whom is the book's author). The love and trust that develops among all of them is heartwarming. Glad I read it.

Kristin English says

With a byline of 'the story of the beagle who changed my life' and a front cover quote of 'her story will touch your heart', I was expecting a heart-warming story of a dog named Bea. What I got was some short anecdotes of Bea interspersed with information better suited for a textbook. Some of this information was interesting, but I definitely did not pick up this book to read ten pages full of beagle history. I certainly didn't read much about life-changing experiences and, as for my heart being touched, I can't say that it was even grazed a bit.

The only significant change Bea seemed to have on her owner was that MAYBE she made her change the focus of her writing? But this 'life-changing' thought came at the same time when the author had fallen and injured her back, so she was pretty much bed/couch-ridden for eight months. I think most people would be pondering life-changing thoughts, beagle as a companion or not. Also, this whole process was shortened to only two pages of the entire book. Based on ratios, that means the author considered the history of beagles as five times more important than her 'life change'??

The last chapter about animal testing seemed like a persuasive essay written by a high school student (maybe an Honors English student, but still...). Seriously. I teach Korean high school students and animal testing was one essay topic some of them wrote about last year and the author of this book wasn't anymore eloquent or persuasive than them.

I love dogs and 99.9% of dogs are great and I'm sure Bea was a wonderful dog, but other than her sad background which we really know nothing about except that she was from a lab and has some sort of trauma, there was nothing unique about her. The author spent more effort and words on her challenge with obesity than anything that made Bea seem worthy of a book.

The book was not BAD, though. It's a very quick read and there are a few sentences that are either funny or written like poetry every chapter, so if, like me, you want to start a new book but you don't want to start something heavy or long, this might be for you -- if you can pick it up for free or cheap.

Vicki says

I read this book a few years ago. What a sad but good book. Little Bea is a beagle that was either dropped off or escaped from a facility where they conduct experiments on animals. She's terrified of everyone and everything. The author finds her running wild and takes her in. Trying to rehab her is near impossible. The dog is terrified of the husband; obviously, the person doing the tests on her was a man. She never becomes a confident and comfortable dog, but there is significant improvement in her and she enjoys her final years in the comfort of a home with people that love her.

Peacegal says

It is an unfortunate truth that the vast majority of animal lovers will never read a book about animal testing. Most people simply will not pick up a book that they perceive will be filled with gloomy statistics and hard-to-read descriptions of cruelty. Thus the populace chooses to remain ignorant on the subject.

For Bea, however, is an entirely different animal: it's not a book about experiments, but rather about a stray dog who somehow escaped a research lab and her journey to recovery in a loving home. Like similar books about dogs rescued after years of confinement in puppy mills, the story really drives home that these animals are not inert matter, but individual personalities in their own right.

The writing style didn't especially speak to me; let's just say it's easy to tell the author is an older lady. To me, her declaration that she doesn't know what the ultimate answer is about animal testing; she'd prefer to let God decide feels like a cop-out. However, her gentle, chatty voice is likely to draw in readers who would normally bypass other books about animal rescue.

This is a title to recommend to animal lovers, particularly those in the senior set—as well as those who would not normally read a book about vivisection. It breaches a sensitive and touchy issue without frightening readers away.

I purchased a copy of *For Bea* for my library.

Lani says

SUPER quick read of the usual 'inspirational dog story' variety. Nowhere near as good as *Marley and Me*, but still heart-warming, etc.

The biggest issue I found with the book was the tendency to overly humanize Bea. The constant mention of long, drawn-out conversations between author and animal were irritating and silly. Dogs are wonderful creatures; much smarter than we give them credit for, but their communication is not as explicit as the author seems to enjoy relating.

I'm not sure whether the slightly preachy epilogue/appendix helped or hurt. Bea was rescued from an animal testing lab, and the author, understandably, had campaigned heavily to minimize the use of animals for testing. The cause is barely mentioned throughout the book, but added to the end with facts and figures. I think it would have been better to have somehow integrated it into the book a bit better - that may have made it stand out from the other similar books. Instead, it seems tagged on and a little hard to swallow all in one chunk.
