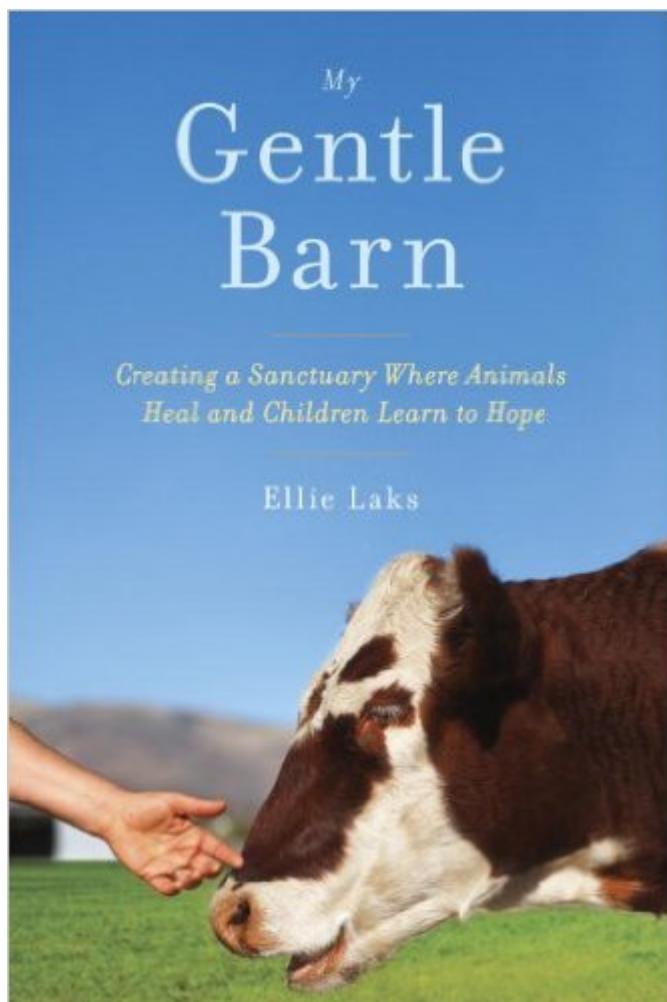


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My Gentle Barn: Creating A Sanctuary Where Animals Heal And Children Learn To Hope



Synopsis

“My Gentle Barn is a wonderful book. You’ll love Ellie Laks and the animals she rescued--and who rescued her back.” Sy Montgomery, The Good Good Pig Founder Ellie Laks started The Gentle Barn after adopting a sick goat from a run-down petting zoo in 1999. Some two hundred animals later (including chickens, horses, pigs, cows, rabbits, emus, and more), The Gentle Barn has become an extraordinary nonprofit that brings together a volunteer staff of community members and at-risk teens to rehabilitate abandoned and/or abused animals. As Ellie teaches the volunteers to care for the animals, they learn a new language of healing that works wonders on the humans as well. My Gentle Barn weaves together the story of how the Barn came to be what it is today with Ellie’s own journey. Filled with heartwarming animal stories and inspiring recoveries, My Gentle Barn is a feel-good account that will delight animal lovers and memoir readers alike.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (190 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #409,198 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #189 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Animal Rights #881 in Books > Parenting & Relationships > Family Relationships > Abuse #2606 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Fauna

Customer Reviews

With boosters like Ellen DeGeneres and Portia di Rossi, this book is obviously not going to be lacking magnificently supportive reviews - and it will deserve them all. Although I am very concerned about animal welfare, and am a "daily clicker" at the Animal Rescue Site as well as a supporter of various wildlife concerns, as it happens I was not acquainted with Ellie's work or the Gentle Barn website and Facebook connections prior to reading this book. Which emphasizes, I guess, that even with all the other publicity, there IS a need for print communications even in this increasingly digital era. Ellie Laks describes the evolution of her amazing animal rescue operation with extreme coherence and - no other word suffices - great gentility. She is honest about her challenges in

overcoming extremely negative experiences, including the perceived rejection of her childhood attempts to heal her own trauma by rescuing injured animals. Yet she is never cruel or vindictive in her descriptions. She emphasizes the "positives" both in her interactions with her parents during childhood and subsequently, and with her first husband. Throughout the narrative, it is clear that she perceives the difficulty of maintaining a balance between one's "call" or "mission" and the needs of family and friends. Her story is full of spiritual and psychological truth, without being in any sense preachy or proselytizing. The descriptions of the harrowing circumstances with the various animal abuse situations, including the petting zoo where Ellie got her first rescue, the goat Mary, and the subsequent "backyard butcher" are harrowing.

From the deeply personal life of a child and her pain to a global network dedicated to saving and healing animal ,children, and at risk teens is a mighty accomplishment; but to forgive and learn and love not only oneself but all of nature in a most amazing dialogue that comes to touch the lives of so many is a miracle. Yes, a miracle particularly as so many stories of abuse of the young and timid fill the shelves and airwaves and make for violent entertainment. The book follows the life a of young girl to adulthood. It does so with consistent compassion and wisdom mixed with beautiful scenes and descriptions of her unique relationship with the natural world. Her love and communion with nature was the first and most primary form of love this woman knew. And Nature never failed her , from the delightful scene of the butterflies, to the solace from her dog when she confronts her mother with the claims of abuse from the male babysitters; there is always some creature to console or delight her. But this is not a one sided journey. It is the telling of a beautiful love story and of healing at a soul level for her and the children she would have and the animals of the Gentle Barn who would become her life's mission. Added to her healing is the healing of the wonderful man she would have as a mate for this journey. Although there is some retelling of abuse stories the author very wisely limits them to the bare essentials. allowing the primary message of joy and love to be the focus with the dark bits there to balance and inform. The book is a clear celebration love and the natural world and how the animal kingdom is being healed along with the children and others through their coming together and the sharing of their stories and paths.

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