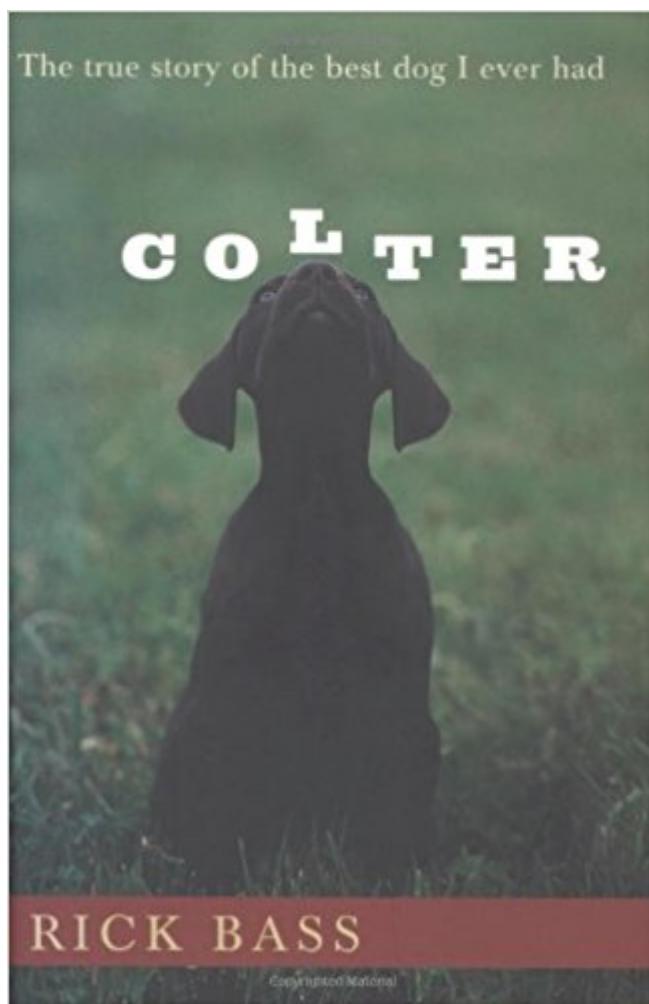


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# Colter: The True Story Of The Best Dog I Ever Had



## **Synopsis**

Colter was the runt of the litter, and Rick Bass took him only because nobody else would. Soon, though, Bass realized he had a raging genius on his hands, and he raided his daughters' college fund to send Colter to the best schools. Colter could be a champion, Rick was told, but he'd have to be broken, slowed down. Rick "could no more imagine a slowing-down Colter than a slow-motion bolt of lightning in the sky," and instead of breaking Colter he followed him. Colter led him into new territory, an unexplored land where he felt more alive, more intimately connected to the world, than he'd ever been before. In the course of telling us Colter's story, Rick Bass also tells us of his childhood fascination with snapping turtles and dirt, and of the other animals - including people - that have shaped his life. *COLTER* is an interspecies love story that vividly captures the relationship between humans and dogs. Like all of Bass's work, it is passionate, poetic, and original.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"How we fall into grace. You can't work or earn your way into it. You just fall. It lies below, it lies beyond. It comes to you, unbidden," writes novelist and essayist Bass (*Where the Sea Used to Be*, etc.) of the arrival of his "goofy little knot-headed" genius of a pointing dog. As they roam the remote western Montana valley where Bass lives, and hunt the golden autumn plains in the eastern part of the state, Colter unfailingly ushers Bass into "an unexplored land" where the two become "as alive as we have ever been: our senses so sharp and whittled alive that we could barely stand it." Their prolonged hours of "wanting only one thing, a bird, wanting it so effortlessly and purely that [we]

come the closest [we] will ever come to a shared language" are a blessing. But always, for Bass, there is the undertow of paradox: of living for the hunt but being a comically rotten marksman; of being a hunter yet an environmentalist; of his tendency to love with "a passion so intense it borders on gluttony," inevitably followed by the crushing numbness that marks the loss of what he loves. Bass's exhaustless appetite for natural beauty and his propensity for "bragging on" his dog occasionally lead to exuberant repetition ("It was just so damn great to be out in such open country with my dogs"), but more often result in luminously transcendent passages on the education and sorrowful loss of a brilliant and mischievous chocolate brown pointer that will transfix anyone who has ever loved a dog. (June) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This delightful book is really a love story about the special bond and level of understanding that can exist between a man and his dog. It is also a story that celebrates nature, describing life in the Montana woods and the thrill of hunting in the never-ending fields at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. In his latest book, nature writer Bass (*The Sky, the Stars, the Wilderness*) tells the story of life with a very special hunting dog. Colter is the runt of the litter, and Bass ends up buying the pup because no one else wants him. But as he grows, Colter's instinct takes over, and his passion for hunting is unequalled. The dog's abilities are so outstanding that Bass, admittedly a poor shot, feels guilty when he misses a bird because he feels that he is letting his dog down. His enthusiasm is contagious and somewhat amusing: Bass loves to hunt, but does not particularly care whether he shoots anything; it is the thrill of watching his dog work that he finds exciting. Recommended for public libraries.-DDeborah Emerson, Monroe Community Coll., Rochester, NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is a book about bird hunting and the author's partnership with a very special pointing dog. Being a non-hunter detracted not one bit from my appreciation of this exploration of the depths of the human-canine relationship. In fact, I have never encountered it done with such empathic insight. Rick Bass writes about emotions; his deep feelings for all living things, from turtles to ecosystems. But the focus is upon his intense love of dogs and of the intimate partnering with a dog that draws him to bird hunting. He confesses ambivalence about shooting birds, and does so mainly to reward Colter. He does quite a credible job of conveying to the reader the dog's side of the experience as well. If you love dogs of any breed, this is a "must read".

So much to love about his lyrical, writerly skill, Colter, and the love of a dog and his owner. That we

just have resign ourselves to the fact that the dog's killer remains unknown left a vengeful feeling that I doubt I will ever get over. Our new Australian Shepherd puppy is likely going to be leaving the warmth of his mother's uterus in the next 48 hours provides a renewal of good feelings though.

Let me start by saying I abhor hunting. Truly. I was almost put off by Mr. Bass's prologue because I don't want to read about "glee killings." This book has changed my mind. Mr. Bass has such a balanced approach to hunting, and to live, that I was intrigued. The writing is beautiful. He could almost - but not quite - pen menus and have me hooked. I am looking to read something else, anything else, by this author.

This is a brilliant study of the humility that comes from working with a truly gifted companion animal. Rick Bass does a wonderful job of combining his deep connection with the natural world with an even more profound bond with his dog Colter. Fantastic read!

I picked up this book for two reasons. 1) a friend has been haranguing me to read one of his books for years and 2) I just lost one of the greatest dogs you could ever meet. I was really disappointed in the book. Truly, it has some really high points... operatic in the way things resonate-- in the best sense of the word. But he fails to keep the story in that wonderfully alive and deeply magic place. The place where I imagine a story about life with a great dog would have to take place. In a strange way it almost seems like there's not really enough story there. Or maybe the wonders of chasing through the mists after his fabulous Colter are just too gossamer to live on the page. While I believe Rick Bass has received immense praise for his ability to depict scenes so vividly I didn't find that to be true. There was something missing. The soul of the story when it came through was breathtaking but most of the time it wasn't there. I was just working my way through prose that wasn't very compelling and a story that was rather thin. I was awkwardly aware of the author and unable to find the continuous true thread of life in the story. My condolences for the loss of his beloved dog.

Although I am not a hunter, the writing was so captivating, I almost felt like one...almost. Made me want to get a dog again.

I read this in a day. Was swept up in Bass' descriptions of the bird hunt country and the evocative descriptions of the man/dog relationship in the process. I am not a fan of hunting--of any sort--but the descriptions of the genius of Colter (along with the goofiness) gave me a taste of the pull of the

hunt. But it's the man/dog relationship that Bass describes so well.

This is a wonderful story about the dog/human bond. More than that it shows our bond with nature and the joy we experience from it. The authors writing style is so expressive you can feel the emotion and be there with them. This book expresses what hunting is to a majority of people. It's more about being in one with nature and each other than the target.

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