



The Greatest: My Own Story

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In his own words, the heavyweight champion of the world pulls no punches as he chronicles the battles he faced in and out of the ring in this fascinating memoir edited by Nobel Prize-winning novelist, Toni Morrison.

Growing up in the South, surrounded by racial bigotry and discrimination, Ali fought not just for a living, but also for respect and rewards far more precious than money or glory. He was named Sportsman of the Century by Sports Illustrated and the BBC. Ali redefined what it meant to be an athlete by giving hope to millions around the world and inspiring us all to fight for what is important to us.

This is a multifaceted portrait of Muhammad Ali only he could render: sports legend; unapologetic anti-war advocate; outrageous showman and gracious goodwill ambassador; fighter, lover, poet, and provocateur; an irresistible force to be reckoned with.

Who better to tell the tale than the man who went the distance living it?

The Greatest: My Own Story Details

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Author : Richard Durham , Muhammad Ali

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From Reader Review The Greatest: My Own Story for online ebook

Steven Kent says

I read this book when it first came out and believed every word of it. Years later, Ali acknowledged that others dictated some of the stories in it for political and promotional reasons, and that the stories were simply untrue.

The book is readable enough and some of the insights seem genuine enough. Later books, especially *King of the World*, by David Remnick, do Ali and the reader more justice.

Carl Smith-owens says

1999

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Wsm says

There was a time when Muhammad Ali was one of the most recognizable figures on the planet. He may not have been the greatest boxer, he did lose several fights, but he was the best at marketing himself. He began life as Cassius Clay and as an upstart, knocked out Sonny Liston to become the heavy weight champion of the world. He also won an Olympic gold. Refusing to fight in Vietnam, he was stripped of his title and threw his Olympic gold medal in a river. Later, he regained the title and had some memorable fights against Joe Frazier, Ken Norton and George Foreman. He lost it again against Leon Spinks when he was well past his prime. Ali's story is dramatic enough, but the man was always too full of himself. The book was published long before the man who once "danced like a butterfly and stung like a bee" became a shadow of himself as Parkinson's disease ravaged him.

Chad says

So much of this is gold. The mindset stuff, the philosophy of winning and losing, the work that goes into being the champ, the raw power of the writing itself. The audio book is mint.

There's plenty of bullshit too, but totally worth it.

Chris Gager says

My copy was a gift and was a paperback. Given as "joke" gift in the late 1970's. I won't explain. Did I ever read it? I can only say maybe but it was on my shelf for a while anyway. My 900th book added to the "read" list. Date read is a guess...

Khurram says

Truly the greatest and definitely the Peoples Champion. This is one those books where you get so much more than you thought. I have always heard of Muhammad Ali the great boxer and fighter, but really that is all I really knew about him his classic wars made him legendary, but what really struck me now are his principles. Many people call him stubborn and cocky, but this was really honor and confidence. If Muhammad Ali got an idea in his head he would do it. If he believed something was wrong they was nobody or nothing anyone could do to make him do it. the great thing about him is he did what he thought was right and (like a leader leading by example) people followed him. Yes many people did not agree with him and they has their own reason for that but how can anyone not admire a man who sticks to his principle.

The book starts out surprisingly with Muhammad Ali being taken back to his dressing room after one of his few defeats. His hater are going wild, his fan and the people who love him are in shock. The book is not done in chronological order, it tends to shift between time periods of his life depending on the point he is making. This book is more about Ali's greatest battles outside the ring. If you are reading this for Boxing analysis of his own fights, the two main fights describes this way are his first fight with Smoking Joe Frazier, and his fight with Joe Foreman towards the end of the book.

Yes it take courage to step in the ring and fight someone else. However it take even more courage to say you are not going to fight. A lot of this book is devoted to Ali's reason for not joining the War in Vietnam. His choice to become a Muslim and upholding his beliefs. This caused Ali to be a pivotal figure in American, Islamic, and Black history. His aunt said it best

"they ain't never going to give you another total shot. You are not a Black man they can't control, but a Black Muslim"

imagine the courage of Black people standing up for their rights in the south the home of the KKK, now all the Islam phobia that is ripe in the world today. Now think of a Black Muslim not only surviving in this environment but thriving in it and refusing to be a puppet even as the world champion, he was not an "uncle Tom" he was a man that dictated the terms. He never shied away from a battle or fight in every arena hell he even fought for his right not to fight. If you are a fan of this great fighter you will finish this book with a new respect for him. Those who are not converted by his story there is not hope for they will just carry on hating.

Chelsea says

I got through 300 pages and decided I just cannot continue. I feel guilty for not finishing it, but I just cannot do it. Once I got to the transcription of the conversation with Joe Fraizer I had to call it quits, it couldn't hold my interest. I have a lot of conflicted feelings about not finishing the book, but it might take me weeks more and I would resent reading it.

His story seems like it is very interesting, although after reading reviews it sounds like some of it may have been fictionalized, if what they say is accurate. However, the way it is told couldn't hold my attention to the end, it seemed to move a bit slow for me.

Ahmed Rashad says

[illegible]

Sunny says

One of the best books I have read on boxing. I must admit though it slows down in the middle, understandably as Ali talks about his 3 year hiatus from boxing and gets fairly political which I didn't find enormously interesting as that's been fairly well documented. The bits and insights about boxing are incredible. It really starts to pick up in the last 7 chapters when Ali talks about his comeback fights against Quarry, Frazier and of course Foreman. The rumble in the jungle fight especially is well documented and Ali talks about his training regime and what sets him apart which for any aspiring boxer (me?) was like reading gold and VERY inspirational. The best section of the book is a short 2 page letter from former heavy/light heavyweight champion of the world Archie Moore (for those that don't know of him – he WON 185 fights and had 131 knockouts) To put that into perspective – Ali only won 56 fights and had 37 knockouts. Anyway, Archie Moore writes Ali a letter ('Ali was his former student) before his fight with Foreman basically telling him that he will get killed – he's being very serious. This from a former trainer to a lesser man would have been devastating to hear but Ali knew that Moore was in the Foreman camp so must have taken it with a pinch of salt. What Ali went on to do was incredibly brave in the ring and outside it. There is also a shocking but incredible chapter about a black person getting castrated by a group of whites who meets Ali and has an enormous effect on him before one of his fights. If you are a (aspiring) boxer this book is a must.

Arthur Buchkovich says

I very much enjoyed this book. Not only did it give me the insights into Ali's thought processes both in and out of the ring, but I was also surprised at the insights offered on the "race war". It was nice to get a new perspective on the situation in those days and it definitely challenged some of my own preconceived notions.

Iman Ben chaibah says

I mourn his death even more now

Wendell Cooper says

I read this one a very long time ago and recently pulled it out again. Let me preface by saying I have watched almost all of his pro fights, including the Cassius Clay period. So I wasn't surprised by anything in the book. I don't think hardcore boxing fans will find much new info here.

However, if you don't understand the significance of Ali in history then this is a good book. The period covers his loss of the title, not in the ring, but by the courts. The book includes his losses to Frazier and Norton, and his victory over Foreman which won the heavy weight crown for the second time.

You may not find everything you want here though. After back to back losses Ali avenged his fights with the only two pros who had beaten him. Ali was aging, yet the competition was getting younger and tougher. However, these two comeback fights get very little mention. The book races forward to the Foreman fight I suppose to keep the book from being too long.

There is another Ali book out there. I think it's called ALI RETROSPECTIVE. That would make a great companion to this book.

Abe says

I won this book from Goodreads. I loved this book. That is not to say that The Greatest is the greatest book but it brought me back to my youth. I grew up watching Ali and he was one of the most remarkable figures of our time or any time. To relive his life through his eyes was a great read for me.

Saqib Khan says

If you're feeling down in the dumps, this is the perfect pill for you. I almost started jogging for miles inspired by it. And that's just skimming the surface. Shows you the hatred the whites had for the black back in the day poignantly.
