



The Last Dog on Earth

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Every dog has its day...

And for Lineker, a happy go lucky mongrel from Peckham, the day the world ends is his: finally a chance to prove to his owner just how loyal he can be.

Reg, an agoraphobic writer with an obsession for nineties football, plans to wait out the impending doom in his second floor flat, hiding himself away from the riots outside.

But when an abandoned orphan shows up in the stairwell of their building, Reg and Lineker must brave the outside in order to save not only the child, but themselves...

The Last Dog on Earth Details

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From Reader Review The Last Dog on Earth for online ebook

Heather Duff says

I always worry when I come across a book that involves my favourite animal, the dog. I worry because if the dog dies it really can make me hate the rest of the book. I know that is a bit daft but that is how I roll.

The dog in this book is, well how can I describe this adorable hound? - foul mouthed springs to mind. I know dogs can't talk but the dog in this book has his say, he doesn't talk out loud per se but his thoughts are put to paper and his thoughts and actions are full of expletives, like it would make a sailor blush.

Lineker, our four legged friend (yes he is named for the footballer and crisp seller) lives with Reg, an agoraphobic in a flat in London. They have a good life together but the world outside is changing and not for the better.

Rioting, violence, the world is about to come to an abrupt nasty halt and Reg finds that his safe haven might not be so safe after all.

A young girl shows up on his doorstep, orphaned, scared and lonely. Against everything Reg decides to brave the outside and try and get the girl to wherever safety lies, what he finds outside is very different to the world he remembers.

This is an enjoyable read, the near future setting is quite close to the bone, the kind of future if the world keeps going the way it is, well I hope it never happens. My favourite part of the book though was Lineker, the world through his eyes, the smells (quite graphic) and his colourful language were a breath of fresh air. Now I find myself looking at my sweet innocent dog wondering if she is swearing at me!

This is a great quirky read full of humour and the horrors of a world gone to hell.

Thanks to Del Rey for providing me with a copy in exchange for an honest review.

Úna Kavanagh says

I can't look at my dog Rosie ?? the same! Is she swearing at me all the time like Lineker ??? I'm atrocious for swearing and being vulgar myself, so in fairness, if she does, it's no one's fault only my own ????????. I am personally not offended or judgemental of swearing, so I didn't mind Lineker's "colourful as a rainbow ?" language, but I can see why people might not like the language used by him and have issues with it. My dog's life revolves around eating, shitting ? and sleeping ?? too. And walking! ?

I enjoyed the split narrative between the two main characters, but I loved looking at the world ??? through loyal, loveable Lineker's eyes ? and his foul, potty ? mouthedness. Comical, funny dog! He was probably the most interesting out of the two main characters for me. His take on things is definitely funnier anyway!

It was an enjoyable, entertaining read for me, quirky and funny, but sad and poignant too with a lot of depth to it. Poor old Reg, a difficult character to like (but by design, I think, an anti-hero type character), so

damaged by the outside world, he rereats from everything and everyone, the only lifeline being his doggy (I could do this easily in an apocalyptic world, I think !!!!) It is also a pretty bleak look at humanity in a world gone to shite ?!

I like any book ? or film ? that deals with a post apocalyptic world and the way our crazy ?? world is at the moment with politics, religion, wars, power in the wrong hands ?, etc., it's not all that far fetched, worse case scenario, that society could collapse around us! It has before and could again. Humanity sucks sometimes, like in this book ?! But the human and animal spirit of survival will always be strong ? ? ? ? . I like a book with a dark and a light ? side. The book might have ended a little quickly though.

Paul says

In a weird moment of book related synchronicity, I finished one book that has a dog as a character only to immediately start another that also features a dog front and centre. The Last Dog on Earth, the latest from Adrian J Walker, is exactly what it promises to be; the tale of one man, his dog and the end of the world.

Lineker is most loyal mutt you are ever likely to meet. He will do anything for his human companion, Reg. He implicitly trusts the man he shares his life with. In fact, I'd go further, he idolises Reg. Lineker thinks humans are so consistently amazing in everything that we do, so how can Reg be anything other than perfect? It turns out dogs are far cleverer than we give them credit for. In their own unique way, our four legged friends are a philosophical bunch. They understand most things; their brains are like sponges when it comes to input.

The sad truth of the matter is that Reg is a bit of a mess. The world outside his tiny flat has gone to hell, but he is almost entirely oblivious. A personal trauma has left him all but broken and he copes with this by choosing to be alone. He wants nothing more than to avoid all human contact. As long as it is just Lineker and him, Reg is ok. I always find myself fascinated when an author captures those minute details that define a character. Even the simplest gesture or turn of phrase can speak volumes. Reg is very precise and his dismay whenever that precision is questioned or ignored feels palpable. It is just another well realised example of the coping mechanisms he has developed in order to survive.

At the heart of The Last Dog on Earth is the dynamic that exists between Lineker and Reg. The story is told from each of their perspectives as alternate chapters feature their point of view. We get to see how both interpret events differently. Lineker is all boundless enthusiasm and excitement (he is a dog after all) while Reg is introspective almost paranoid. I particularly love the way the character of Lineker comes across. I know we'll never know exactly how our pets think, and I fully appreciate that we anthropomorphise their actions, but there is a part of me that hopes the way Lineker thinks is exactly what goes through the minds of all dogs.

I have a special place in my heart when it comes to the end of the world. Rather than focusing on a huge apocalyptic event, The Last Dog in the World looks at societal collapse due to the rise of the political extremism. What with the current state of affairs in the UK and elsewhere, it makes some of the content feel eerily plausible. Snippets of the unpleasant rhetoric spouted by the story's villains sounds like it could be coming right out the mouths of our politicians. I never expected a book about one man and his dog to be quite so topical.

Scattered throughout the narrative there are genuinely emotive moments. Reg and Lineker both slowly

change as they leave the safety of their quiet little life. I'm always impressed when fiction manages to be so affecting. Reg's history is also explored, and the reasons he is the way he is are ultimately revealed. You get a real sense of what makes this forlorn shadow of a man tick. In all honesty, faced with the things he has had to face, I don't imagine I would have fared any better. Sometimes we can be so damaged by the outside world the only option, when it comes to self-preservation, is to retreat from everything and everyone. The only lifeline Reg has in his life is his dog. Watching how he desperately clings to that single connection is riveting.

The Last Dog on Earth caught me completely unaware. I had no expectations going in as I've not read any of Adrian J Walker's other work. I was impressed. The story was great, the characters are memorable and there is plenty of insight into the nature of humanity and how we view ourselves and others.

Christopher Williams says

Another post-apocalyptic romp told through the eyes of a man (Reg) and his dog (Lineker). Reg seems to identify people by names from the England 1990 World Cup team.

This is post nuclear war scenario and, again, as in the *End of the World Running Club*, Reg and his dog go through a journey on which they meet lots of characters and have lots of adventures and the sad story of Reg's past is also revealed.

I do enjoy this sort of book which would loosely be identified as science fiction. Did not think as well written as the *End of the World Running Club* but enjoyable.

Sarah Potter says

The Last Dog on Earth by Adrian J Walker is a post-apocalyptic set in 2021. "Hell!" I hear you say. "That's not far in the future." As you know, things can escalate very fast, especially when it comes to politics. People become hot under the collar, extreme in their views and, in the worst-case scenario, society could collapse.

This story is told from two different viewpoints: a mongrel dog named Lineker and his owner, Reginald Hardy.

Lineker swears a lot, and some readers may not approve of this, but I thought it worked well and added rather than detracted from my enjoyment of the story. Obviously nobody knows exactly what it's like inside a dog's brain, but if a dog of Lineker's personality were to use human words, then he would use the f-word and the c-word without compunction, in particular with regard to cats, squirrels, foxes, and disagreeable humans. Even though he relates his insights and his plot narration in the English language, I would not class this as an anthropomorphic exercise. He is always very much an authentic dog of huge personality. Also, I felt that the author obviously knows his dogs well; he includes a great deal of interesting background information about their relationship with humans from the earliest times, when wild dogs first became domesticated.

Reginald worked as an electrician before the apocalypse, which comes in useful for fixing his recalcitrant generator, as well it equipping him with a skill that post-apocalyptic society can use. The trouble is, he's a loner who can't abide any sort of physical contact with other humans, even a quick handshake; thus, the fact that majority of people have left London and that he has the immediate neighbourhood all to himself, is a

total boon, and he's not in a hurry to leave it, until a starving orphan girl turns up on his doorstep, refuses to leave, and then asks for his help with something that involves him having to leave his flat. Lineker and the girl bond straightaway, and so it's two against one when it comes to the final decision about this.

What follows is an adventure to end all adventures, triggering a rollercoaster of emotions. I found myself laughing, near to tears, my stomach in knots, breathless with anticipation, and, most important of all, I really cared for the three main characters. As for the baddies, they were spit-worthy and you wanted the worst for them. At the same time, you could understand their motivation, however twisted it might seem.

A highly recommended read, except for the anti-swearing brigade of course!

Andrew says

The audio book was recommended to me by a friend. A very enjoyable listen from two great narrators, set in the aftermath of London devastated by bombs. The back and forth monologues from Reg (sorry...Reginald) and his dog, Lineker - yes, the dog talks, at least to us - will keep you hooked, regardless of who is talking. In fact Lineker is probably the more interesting of the two main characters, the author really does somehow get inside the head of a dog.

Bark says

Barb's fault!

David says

In three pages, I completely loved Lineker. I have rarely enjoyed a character so quickly. Reg's actions made me feel angry towards him as he does the wrong thing and I willed him to do the right thing. I yelled aloud at one point: it's excellent writing. It's a brilliant first third that made me laugh, cry and smile, with three great characters and only the unnecessary bad language to irritate me.

Then we're off on a mission, which is where the cracks start appearing. The more detail added to the world, the more the novel loses focus. Reg's past pops up out of nowhere in far too much detail. Lineker's side story adds nothing. The whole thing becomes little adventures that don't really come to anything.

Then we suddenly hit 'three months later'. Suddenly, there are new locations and new characters that barely rise above being names on a page. The final third does not feel like a legitimate ending to the story. Instead, it feels more like an overly-ambitious sequel hurriedly tacked on. By the end, I was disappointed at where such awesome characters and the story in general had ended up.

Margo says

This book was truly awful! I bailed at 33% as I couldn't take any more of the dark, post-apocalyptic world that contained not a shred of human decency. And that dog had a foul mouth....

Andover Library says

I have a confession to make - I didn't actually finish this book. The blurb sounded right up my street but unfortunately the authors writing style didn't work for me at all. I hated the style Liniker the dog was written in, the swearing every other work was off-putting and detracted from the flow. I've no problem with swearing in books but it has to add something, this felt like lazy writing as a way to attempt to give a character their own 'voice'.

I just wasn't gripped by this at all which is a shame as it felt like it had great potential.

Gertie says

Still no U.S. ebook, so definitely a bit of a lag behind the U.K. Hoping it's sooner than later, since this keeps coming up as a possible club topic.

Marianne says

The Last Dog on Earth is the second novel by British author, Adrian J. Walker. By 2021 London is virtually empty, the political upheavals having caused most people to vacate. Electrician Reginald Hardy stayed: he prefers his own company, doesn't like to be touched, and is perfectly happy in his little flat, keeping an eye on the surrounding area with his 12x binoculars and following his daily routines. And he has Lineker, his Heinz 57 variety dog, whose company is preferable to that of any person he knows. Lineker is deliriously happy with this arrangement.

But then a truck stops outside Reginald's flat: soldiers (he thought they'd all left) and children. Worse still, another truck turns up with a mob of those purple-clad nasties. Shouted words lead to bullets and people die before the Purples clear off elsewhere, leaving behind an apparently mute seven-year-old girl. Lineker is excited; Reginald is not. Responsibility for another human being is the absolute last thing he wants. Eventually, Reginald has to compromise: he will escort little Aisha in the direction of the soldiers' destination, then get back to his own peaceful life. Lineker is thrilled to partake of adventure, but things don't go quite to Reginald's plan.

Walker employs two narrators: the mild-mannered Reginald and the utterly foul-mouthed (but superbly entertaining) Lineker. It is soon apparent that Reginald has suffered a great loss, and that he is perhaps somewhere on "the spectrum". Lineker, meanwhile, is a wonderfully imagined character, a quite convincing version of "this is what dogs think". As long as they are not too offended by his copious use of the f and c words and his musings on some rather base topics, dog owners (and even those not of that persuasion) will

delight in Lineker.

Walker's version of near-future London is eminently believable, and Lineker's perspective of life is refreshing. Walker gives both his main characters and some of the minor ones insightful thoughts and wise words: "I am not a hero. Altruism does not exist. There are the things a man wants to do and there are the things he must do, and the things he must do must be done because if he does not then the consequences linger. That is really all there is to altruism: the avoidance of bad feeling."

As the story progresses, the reader gradually learns of the events that had such a profound effect on Reginald, and led to his owning Lineker, who believes for some time that he is the last dog on earth. Walker adds a few other quirky characters to be enjoyed: a topless sunbather and her always-cooking mother; several pet dogs of various breeds; a charitable barge-owner; a wolf who speaks in capitals; and a few nasties who eventually get their just deserts. Funny, sometimes sad and ultimately uplifting, this is a marvellous read.

Chrys says

I was really excited to read this as I loved The End of the World Running Club, but I really didn't enjoy this at all. There were so many great ideas but the lead character wasn't particularly likeable and was quite flat until right at the end. And Lineker? Why the need for such foul language? The way he was written just irritated me from the off.

I just couldn't maintain an interest, I kept putting it down and finding other things to do. I'll still recommend it to people who like the genre, but with a definite "not for me" slant.

Yzabel Ginsberg says

[I received a copy of this book through NetGalley.]

Hmm, bit of a tough one, I don't really know why it took me so long to finish it, because it's not a particularly long book?

The topics are both hopeful (a man who embarks on a journey with his dog, to help a child he doesn't want anything to do with at first, with their relationship developing along the way) and bleak (a maybe not so unbelievable future, unfortunately, considering the current state of affairs in the world, with political parties rising to power and starting to test people to see if they're 'of the right type', rounding up people and putting them in camps ensue...). Probably not the kind of thing I've wanted to read recently, which may explain in part the lull I was in regarding this novel, but the latter theme is interesting nonetheless!

So. Great moments throughout the book. Having both Reg's and Lineker's narratives side to side. The dog's musings about life, what it means to be a dog, how he perceives the world (the smell of fear or grief or happiness, etc.), how he sees us humans and is both awed yet unable to comprehend us. The dire landscape of London, or rather what's left of it, after a series of attacks coupled with the raise to power of the 'Purple' political party. Reg's progress, from agoraphobic to forced out of his cocoon to actually choosing to stay out, and why he retreated so from the world.

However, I still never really connected with the characters in general. At times they'd have reactions that made me pause and wonder how they had survived so long in such a city, because let's be honest, 'fight or flight' is OK, but 'stay where I am, paralysed with fear, while bullets fly around me' is not exactly conducive to long-term survival. I also wished we had had more of the bigger picture, instead of snippets about what happened to the world/London. (I know that wasn't the focus, the point was the characters and their developing relationships, but it still bothered me.)

Although I do tend to agree with Lineker regarding how people who acknowledge how shitty they are, are the ones who may become the kindest, whereas the monsters keep thinking of themselves as being better, and never question themselves. It... makes sense.

Conclusion: As mentioned, possibly it wasn't the right moment for me to read this book. I didn't really enjoy it in spite of finding good, interesting points in it. But I don't even really know why. I'd say, clearly a matter of 'in the eye of the beholder' here, rather than plenty of faults on the novel's part.

Diana says

There are great ideas on this book:

- the main character being an agoraphobic, remembering snippets of his previous life, his inability to be touched... most of them just feed your curiosity and want to keep you reading
- Lineker, the dog: the chapters alternate between Reg's and Lineker's narrative, which offers two sides of a story and also provide feedback on things we won't have otherwise. Also, the chapters narrated by Lineker are more profound, tangling with things like Death, life, human ways to see things and act... while also having some funny parts
- the post-apocalyptic world. Why is London destroyed? What is going on? Why humanity is living in pockets of "civilisation"? What is going on?

As I've said, all these main ideas are great. Then... why the low rating? Because you keep on reading and it seems like most of the time you ain't getting nowhere. Lots of narrative but the story doesn't quite move along, and at some time I completely lost interest in it. Plus, things like Reg keeping the tag on the girl's neck where it says she is a target... is so obvious that even another character points it out at some point. The fact that he keeps leaving his poor dog behind when running for his life. The fact that he seems to thaw a bit to the little girl but he doesn't really evolve in the same way that the story keeps on dragging... He changes locations but doesn't seem like the story offers much in way of little snippets of info to keep you hooked... maybe, IMO, with a bit of a make over this would be a great reading.
