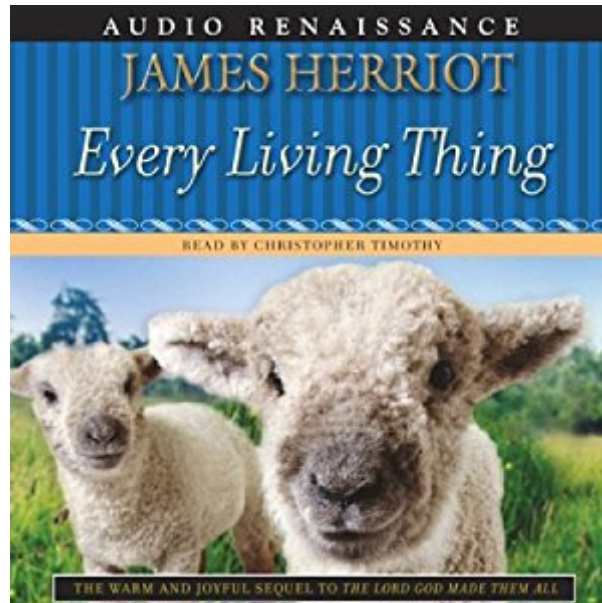


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Every Living Thing: The Complete Audio Collection



Synopsis

The author of *All Creatures Great and Small* offers readers a collection of new memoirs, describing the family and friends--human and animal--who share his life on the Yorkshire dales. (Biography).

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The late Alf Wight aka James Herriot left a legacy of books that excites readers to this day (and I presume will do so for decades more.) His gentle, self-deprecating style of humor and the portraits of the Yorkshire Dales farmers and country people are amusing and interesting. The four books, named after a hymn "All Creatures Great and Small" are joined by this fifth volume with similar stories. James (as Alf called himself) now has his own practice in Skeldale House, is married with two kids. The stories are very similar to the first four, with goof-ups, miracles, and funny tales. Somehow, these stories are not quite as hilarious as the first set, possibly because Mr. Herriot had written up most of the good stuff, or to represent the seriousness of raising two kids and having his own practice and being a settled man rather than a raw youth just out on his own. Nonetheless, if you lapped up all the "Creature" books, as I did, and you mourn the loss of Dr. Wight, who passed away in the 90's, then you will want to read these stories and vicariously enjoy more of the daily life of a country vet.

James Herriot has an easy-going and warm writing style that is incredibly suited to his stories. He chronicles the animals and people he helps as an active veterinarian in Yorkshire, England. As such,

the stories are usually more about the people and their attachment to their pets and livestock than they are about the animals themselves. Although the time period is not explicitly mentioned and he jumps around in time a great deal, this book seems to cover the period right after his preceding book (*The Lord God Made Them All*), the late 50s and early 60s. Herriot's children are now 6-10 years old and play an increasing role in his practice. He also includes a touching series of stories about his and his wife's attempts to tame some farm cats. *Every Living Thing* was Herriot's final full-length original book, and it is an excellent end to an excellent series.

Every Living Thing portrays James Herriot as a simple man who impacts numerous people through his lifestyle and vigor for existence. The vast majority of people hold that veterinarians enjoy relatively easy lives, but for dedicated workers like Mr. Herriot, existence does not always mean comfort. From treating diseased animals to total devotion to his family, James Herriot demonstrates himself as an example of an individual who truly cherishes every living thing. The autobiography exemplifies caring for every living thing as its main theme. All humanity is obligated to be responsible for creation because mankind possesses dominion over the animals to rule and to care for them as lesser but valuable creatures. Mr. Herriot desires to share his fondness of animals and his values in understanding simple people, their work, and their relationship with their animals. James Herriot esteems his family and friends, enjoys arduous work, and treasures the natural beauty of all creation. He is convinced that humans possess an intimate relationship with animals both in work and in pleasure. Mr. Herriot does not comprehend people who mistreat animals and he deems them as lacking in proper sentiment. He despises those in veterinary practice who do not consider the customer's and animal's welfare but are controlled by self-interest and avarice. In first person glimpses through Mr. Herriot's eyes, the reader witnesses the dignity of man and his dependence upon animals. Mr. Herriot generally agrees with the other veterinarians in his field of work since the profession comprises of services tendered for the welfare of people and animals. Herriot performs his heroic labors because he understands that people value their pets as friends and companions. Veterinarians in practice for lucrative gain are not genuinely concerned for animals since their motives are perverted. This book will have a consequential impact because humans are intimately related with their animals in that they are affected both physically and emotionally. The book's persuasiveness on the importance of every living thing makes it a timeless contribution, not to the treatment of disease but to the inherent value of animals. Mr. Herriot writes the book based on his own personal experiences as a veterinarian. He polishes his memories to create humorous yet moralistic vignettes. Each story contains its own theme about living in harmony

with every living being. The author questions veterinarians to examine the moral obligation they fulfill through their job. They must devote themselves sacrificially to their customers and aid them in their distresses. He also appeals to all humanity to respect animals because the animals are entrusted to humans to maintain and care for their needs. The publication is well composed because of its vivid description of life as a Yorkshire Dalesman. Colloquial language of the Yorkshire farmers is utilized to portray the common man and his relationships. The book embodies eloquence because of the manner James Herriot evidences his passionate love for animals. The author describes his relationship with his cat, ". . . she on the wall, touching noses with me, gazing into my eyes, drinking me in as though she thought I was rather wonderful and couldn't get enough of me. . ." (374). A man's intimate relationship with his pets is demonstrated by vividly expressive, graceful, and fluent personal gestures. The short vignettes are each complete with humor, morals, and character sketches. All people who delight in understanding animals will find this book accessible and enlightening. It persuades the reader to care for every living thing through ardor and wit. The first person point of view causes the book to be personal and simple in relating to everyday circumstances. The earthy nature of the book describes the incomprehensible joy of spending night and day working on stubborn, slovenly animals. The method used to tie in the theme with the title of the book highlights its greatest strength. Man's effective dominion over every living thing is evidenced in every chapter. The only weakness is attributed to the similarity that many of his stories acquire since the subject matter remains constant and only the details differ. In the end, the details are not retained but the impression the story produces poignantly remains. The book teaches the reader about the dedication to life through the continuous rigor of veterinary practice, the appalling diseases they cure, and the excessive amount of time they devote to assist animals. Mr. Herriot quotes from the Bible in his dedication, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." James Herriot's passion to fulfill this command consumes his entire existence. All humanity should become infected with this love of life that highlights the dignity of every living thing.

I have read each of James Herriot's books many times (including this one) and still enjoy them every time I read them! This book is one of my favorite books of the series, and is highly recommended by me. If you have read the other books you will love this one just as much if not more! If you have not read any of the other books, this book would also be a good one to start off with. After reading it I can assure you that you will want to read all the others. NOTE: I also have all

five of these books on audio tape (by Christopher Timothy) and would recommend these as well! It is great to listen to them while you do hobbies since you can actually do two things at the same time, and Christopher Timothy (who played James Herriot in the BBC series) really brings the characters to life, using different voices and accents.

As gifted a story teller as he is a veterinarian, James Herriot has the rare ability to bring out every emotion known to the human race with a single magical flick of his pen. Every Living Thing is without a doubt one of the crowning achievements of a master, and is possessed by a single, true trait that is difficult to find in many commercial books- every single tale is told straight from the heart. You will never fail to laugh at the hilarious tales and cry at the most poignant moments. If you're an animal lover, or even just have a passing interest in animals, this is a book you will hold on to and re-read until the end of your days. Kudos, James Herriot, you are very much missed.

I love this book! If you love animals and good writing you will love it too. The stories about Calum's badger and dogs will make you laugh and this book is perfect to curl up by the fire with.

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