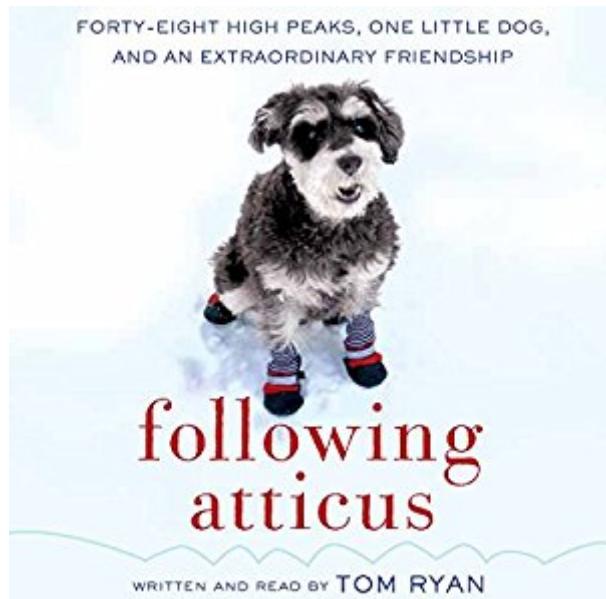


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Following Atticus: Forty-Eight High Peaks, One Little Dog, And An Extraordinary Friendship



Synopsis

A middle-aged, overweight, and acrophobic newspaper editor Tom Ryan and a little dog, Atticus M. Finch, are an unlikely pair of mountaineers, but after a close friend dies of cancer, the two pay tribute to her by attempting to climb all forty-eight of New Hampshire's four-thousand-foot peaks twice in one winter. Tom and Atticus set out on an adventure of a lifetime that takes them across hundreds of miles and deep into an enchanting but dangerous winter wonderland. Little did they know that their most difficult test would lie ahead, after they returned home.... Following Atticus is ultimately a story of transformation: how a five-pound puppy pierced the heart of a tough-as-nails newspaperman, opening his eyes to the world's beauty and its possibilities. An unforgettable saga of adventure, friendship, and the unlikeliest of family, it's an inspiring tale of finding love and discovering your true self.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Following Atticus: Forty-Eight High Peaks, One Little Dog, And An Extraordinary Friendship by Tom Ryan is one of the most delightful books I have read in a long time. Atticus M. Finch, partly named after the hero lawyer in To Kill A Mockingbird, is a Miniature Schnauzer who changes Tom Ryan's world. Tom's life publishing a muckraking newspaper in Newburyport, Massachusetts is only partly fulfilling. Tom loves his work but is lonely and his life has no real direction. Tom's mother died when he was seven, and he is not close to his father and eight siblings. Tom had acquired a Miniature Schnauzer, Max. When Max died, Tom was determined to get another dog of the same breed. Tom

looked at dozens of photos emailed to him from the dog breeder, and he chose Atticus because he was different. Little did he know just how different Atticus would prove to be. One day Tom and Atticus went hiking with three of Tom's brothers in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, where they had spent some vacation time as children. Atticus proved to be a natural born mountain climber. When Atticus reaches the top of a mountain, he would sit and gaze at the stunning scenery around him. The experience was so enjoyable that Tom and Atticus return to the White Mountains on a regular basis. At first, Tom and Atticus start to make a habit of climbing the mountains because they enjoy the tranquility and peacefulness. They also love being together and share a very strong bond, Tom always holding Atticus in his arms after they reach the top of a mountain. When a friend of Tom's dies of cancer, however, Tom decides that they will climb all forty-eight of the four-thousand-foot peaks twice -- in the winter -- to raise money for cancer.

We here in Newburyport (our fair city) have been very fortunate to be featured in three wonderful books recently. The first was Joel Brown's superb murder mystery "Mirror Ball Man," next was Andre Dubus' celebrated "Townie" and next up is Tom Ryan's "Following Atticus." Newburyport residents know Mr. Ryan as the provocative editor of the local political journal "The Undertoad." He was reviled by some and loved by many for his intrepid news reporting and his courageous stands against authority and power. Mr. Ryan and "The Undertoad" were by turns smart, petulant, insightful, caustic, sentimental, enormously funny and ALWAYS worth reading. In the days of "The Undertoad" you truly could not be considered "in the know" about Newburyport if you had not devoured the latest issue. Those of us who got to know Tom Ryan knew he was a fine writer, great storyteller and immensely witty. Much like our local son's Joel and Andre, Tom simply knows how to write. In what I trust will be the first of many books, "Following Atticus" is now available.

Newburyporter's will certainly delight in his characterizations of our fair city and his observations of some of its inhabitants, both named and un-named. "Following Atticus" is best described as a memoir that really reads like a novel. As I got further into the book I would often forget that I knew Tom and much of the story and find myself just enjoying the craft, wit and heart of his storytelling. The core of the book is Tom's relationship with his amazing little dog Atticus and their adventures hiking in the White Mountains, but the story begins to unfold as family elements come into play and you soon realize that what you are really reading is a tale of redemption and discovery.

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