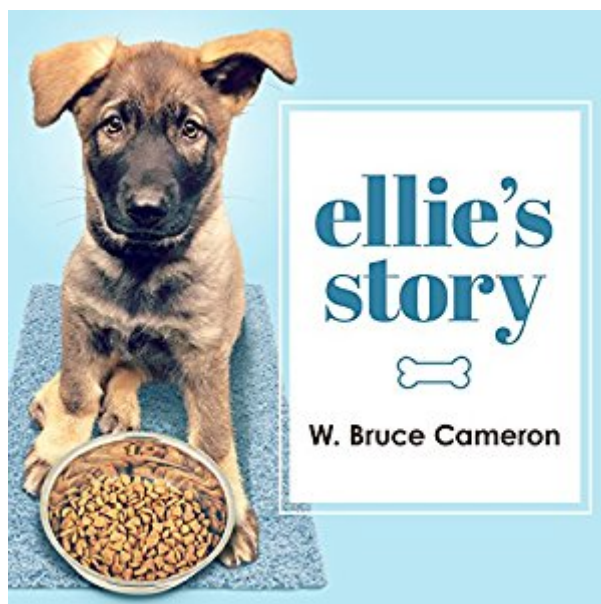


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# Ellie's Story: A Dog's Purpose Novel



## Synopsis

Ellie is a very special dog with a very important purpose. From puppyhood, Ellie has been trained as a search-and-rescue dog. She can track down a lost child in a forest or an injured victim under a fallen building. She finds people. She saves them. It's what she was meant to do. But Ellie must do more. Her handlers - widowed Jakob, lonely Maya - need her, too. People can be lost in many ways, and to do the job she was born to do, Ellie needs to find a way to save the people she loves best. Adapted from the beloved New York Times best-selling novel *A Dog's Purpose*, *Ellie's Story* is an inspiring tale for young animal lovers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*Ellie's Story* is a fictional tale about a German Shepard who becomes a highly trained and efficient search and rescue dog. It's told through her perspective, although she relates conversations and scenes between adults. She starts off as a puppy with purpose (feeling like the leader of her siblings), goes to live and train with Jakob, part of an elite search and rescue team. He gets hurt on duty and she gets transferred to Maya, who is a cop trying to train for search and rescue. Maya has a hard time with the training, but pushes herself in part to do right by Ellie. There are a lot of positive themes: Ellie remains focused on her task even where there are other distracting things; Maya works hard to get into shape; there are supportive relationships; Ellie restrains some of her desires such as chasing the cats that live with her; For younger kids, there may be some elements that create some unease. (Spoilers ahead) Jakob gets shot and Ellie feels like she failed him. He doesn't die, but she doesn't know that for a long time. In the same story theme a young girl has been

abducted from her parents by a man Ellie senses is "very bad." A kid drowns in Ellie's dream. Another kid almost drowns. Ellie gets hurt during a search and rescue trying to save someone. Another spoiler that is important for parents to know is that Ellie does not die at the end. Many books told about a dog's life or through the dog's perspective end up at the end of the dog's life, which can be difficult for some emotional kids. This book ends on a happy note. The one odd thing that might be a throwback to the original book (this is an adaptation for kids) is that Ellie dreams of a kid named Ethan that drowns.

This book aimed at early readers tells the story of Ellie, a German Shepherd. Ellie had leadership abilities early on and was trained to be a search and rescue dog. Being a dog, she is presumed to have no attitude. She just wants to be helpful by serving people in harrowing situations such as lost children or people who are trapped. Her first trainer is Jakob, a no nonsense widower who isn't playful at all. That's o.k. With Ellie because she is purpose driven and they work together as a team. When Jakob is hurt she goes to live with Maya a cop. Maya is in a frustrating romantic relationship but Maya's family are fun people and playful, too. The story eventually reunites Ellie with Jakob. Ellie knows that Jakob is unhappy. She also thinks she can help Maya. Ellie sets out to help both of them because that's what Ellie does, she helps people. The story is told in Ellie's voice and the reader gets a sense of what a dog's life is like. From the perceptions of what is observed in a car ride to the experiences of locating lost people or finding people in danger, you get the sense that being helpful in Ellie's case goes way beyond being man's best friend. Ellie in my mind is more like TV's Lassie, an uber heroine in the canine world who lives a purpose driven life who is completely selfless about the great things she does. There are many things that recommend this book to emerging readers. While the target group is grades 3-6 based on reading ability, this is ideally written for grades 3-4 based on subject matter. However, it can stretch upwards depending on the reader. Most everyone loves dogs based on my experience. Ellie is a sweetheart of a dog. This book is educational as it provides information about rescue dogs and what they can do.

I have to admit I was a sucker for this book, even as I realized it's a bit manipulative. Writing from the dog's perspective makes all the emotions more salient, so this book is a real tear-jerker. Nonetheless (or, perhaps, therefore), the book is a very powerful way to connect with search-and-rescue dogs and understand what they do and how they do it. The book opens with Ellie as a puppy, just beginning to get a sense and understanding of her world. Just as she gets used to life with her mother and siblings, she's brought out into a much larger world. She meets a bigger,

older male dog whom she instinctively understands to be her father. She gets to explore the outside world. And then she meets Jakob. Jakob immediately picks up on Ellie's unusual intelligence and likely aptitude to be a search-and-rescue dog, so he picks her over her siblings. And Ellie finds herself venturing into yet another new world. Riding in the back of a truck, learning the layout and rules of Jakob's apartment. Getting a feel for the distant, isolated, hurting man himself. The joy of going out with Jakob and working. At first, of course, her work is all play, games such as Find Wally, followed by tug-of-war and maybe a treat. But then one day she has to find a different person, and she starts to get the idea that work isn't all fun and games. But Ellie is good at what she does and takes pride in her ability to help find lost people. But the day they go to find the missing girl, Ellie knows something is different. Jakob is more tense than usual. The scent disappears, and Ellie thinks maybe she's not such a good dog after all. But then she tries to find in a different way in the front seat of the truck.

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