



# Nubs: The True Story of a Mutt, a Marine & a Miracle

*Brian Dennis , Kirby Larson , Mary Nethery*

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**Nubs: The True Story of a Mutt, a Marine & a Miracle** Brian Dennis , Kirby Larson , Mary Nethery  
*Nubs*, an Iraqi dog of war, never had a home or a person of his own. He was the leader of a pack of wild dogs living off the land and barely surviving. But Nubs's life changed when he met Marine Major *Brian Dennis*. The two formed a fast friendship, made stronger by Dennis's willingness to share his meals, offer a warm place to sleep, and give Nubs the kind of care and attention he had never received before. Nubs became part of Dennis's human "pack" until duty required the Marines to relocate a full 70 miles away - without him. Nubs had no way of knowing that Marines were not allowed to have pets. So began an incredible journey that would take Nubs through a freezing desert, filled with danger to find his friend and would lead Dennis on a mission that would touch the hearts of people all over the world. Nubs and Dennis will remind readers that friendship has the power to cross deserts, continents, and even species.

### Nubs: The True Story of a Mutt, a Marine & a Miracle Details

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## **From Reader Review Nubs: The True Story of a Mutt, a Marine & a Miracle for online ebook**

### **Jan says**

I'm a sucker for animal stories, especially dog stories, and if it's a homeless dog, well that just tugs on my heartstrings even more.

This beautiful story has it all. Homeless, hungry, and frightened dog living with a pack of other homeless dogs in the Iraqi desert finds love, comfort, and safety with Marine Major Brian Dennis and the men under his command. But when they have to move out for Jordan, Nubs (so named by Dennis because his ears had been cut off) is left behind because Marines aren't allowed to have pets. That is one rule that definitely needs to change! Major Dennis hopes that Nubs will be okay and will still be there when they return. And here's why I love dogs so much and have always had at least one, usually two. Even though Nubs is still recovering from an injury to his side due to a dog fight and has trouble walking, he walks the 70 miles to Jordan to be with Major Dennis. That's love and devotion, the only way a dog knows how to be. They will love you for life.

The story has a happy ending. Major Dennis was able to get donations in order to get Nubs flown to the United States. Friends picked him up and took care of him until Major Dennis was able to come home. Now they spend their days hiking and playing on the beach in San Diego. Nubs is finally living the life he deserves, one that I wish all dogs everywhere could have.

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### **Crystal says**

If you are a sucker like me for a feel good story involving a military soldier and one dogs hope for being man's best friend then the story of Nubs is for you. Nubs: The True Story of a Mutt, a Marine & a Miracle is a heartwarming picture book that will remind readers that friendship has the power to cross deserts, continents and even species. Nubs is the leader of a pack of wild dogs living off the land in Iraq and barely surviving until his luck changes and he meets Marine Major Brian Dennis. The pair quickly form a friendship and Nubs doesn't want to leave his side until Brian's team has to pack up and drive over 70 miles from Iraq to Jordan. Nubs tries to follow the humvees but is unable to keep up. Desperate to see his human friend, Nubs travels over 70 miles in the snow to find his friend Brian. Unfortunately dogs are allowed on the base so Brian must find a home for Nubs. Brian has to think quick, so he raises money to get Nubs flown back to the United States and stay with his best friends until he can get there. This story takes you on the journey of one soldier's love for an animal and the companionship an animal can bring into our lives. Many times when we involve animals in read alouds, we instantly get the attention of our students and since this book offers some real life photographs of the journey of Nubs students will immediately become hooked. This would be an excellent read aloud in grades 3-5 and could offer many writing possibilities. An example how I would use this story in class is for students to use examples from the story and explain how Nubs is a smart dog or have the students imagine how they would feel in they were Nubs and give an account from his point of view.

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### **Jamie.C says**

It was so upsetting but cool to say.

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### **Denice Hein says**

1. Darling, Mercy Dog of World War 1 by Alison Hart, 2013.

2. Nubs is a 'war dog' of the 21st century while Darling is a mercy dog in the 20th century. The connect on the canine, their owners/handlers and war. Darling is almost a predecessor to Nub in a way. I think the drawings of Darling will compliment the actual photos of Nubs.

3. Nubs is a narrative nonfiction text. There are primary source photos are recreated entries that help sequential story.

4. A Venn Diagram has to be completed about these two great dogs. I think Nubs can be an independent read for 3-5th graders (or higher) without any problem. I think Darling needs to be read aloud for 3-5th just for time sake. Student can complete key words for Nub's story, then comply a list for Darling as it is read. Or they could create a Venn diagram on an electronic device and move key words into different areas as needed, save progress and send to the teacher when completed. Google Draw and Notability App are two options.

\*\*\*Bonus Triple TEXT: Military Dogs by Tammy Gagne, 2014. ( a nonfiction part of a series "Dogs on the Job") This book is more traditional nonfiction, using a true 'table of contents'. It is filled with photos, fact boxes, vocabulary boxes and stories. This would be a great book to have, as well as it's series mates, as a dog unit to show that dogs are so much more than the pets we see every day.

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### **Caroline says**

This book simultaneously broke my heart and restored my faith in humanity. A dog that likely never experienced love or caring first hand becomes attached to an American Marine in war torn Iraq. Despite all odds--war, brutal winter, and hundreds of miles--Nubs followed Brian Dennis and was ultimately rescued and brought to the US where he now lives comfortably with Dennis. A quick, easy read, but one that will undoubtedly make you tear up.

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### **Julie Hafner says**

Dog lover or not, this story will move you! It is a roller coaster ride of emotion. You cheer for the literal underdog, Nubs, as he wanders aimlessly in war torn Iraq and befriends Major Brian Dennis. Their reunions are brief and always end with separation. Until Nubs takes matters into his own "paws" and follows the humvee trucks 70 miles, in bad weather, with little food, in search of his loyal friend Brian. The troops are in awe of Nubs' gritty determination but he can't stay on the base. What's Brian going to do? What will happen to Nubs? This is a page turner that will warm hearts of all ages. A beautiful story of friendship and humanity.

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### **Jason Koivu says**

A slim yet heartwarming story. I'm going to hell for giving this a less than glowing review, but dang it, there

really isn't much to this story of a mistreated dog rescued from the desert by an American soldier. Now, I'm not completely heartless. The ol' tear ducts almost welled up at one point, but honestly there's very little going on here. I'll have to look elsewhere for my upbeat animal tales.

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### **Mon Maryum says**

Imagine how horrible a place the owner keeps you in and how little he feeds you that you have to run 70 miles through the hot deserts and chilly nights (with even more little food and water) to where his owner is just so he doesn't have to deal with the abuse back where he was (the dogs even fought over food). Even his ears were cut off (to make them shorter) because he was to be made a 'war-dog'. Of course now the owner takes care of him. Smart dog.

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### **Cheryl says**

Nubs was a dog who lived in the Iraq dessert just outside a fort near the Syrian border. He led a pack of wild dogs who scrounged for rats and mice to eat, and sometimes they were thrown scraps by the Iraqi soldiers who were stationed at the fort. Nubs had been abused—his ears were cut off and he had never known affection. But when he met Marine Major Brian Dennis, Nubs' life began to change. This beautifully written, story of love, loyalty, kindness and friendship will touch your heart. Photos on each page greatly enhance the story. Major Dennis' letter at the end is very moving. Although it is written for children, this heartwarming tale will appeal to teens and adults as well.

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### **Melki says**

If, like me, you're one of those people who blubber at the sight of those soldiers-reunited-with-their-dogs videos, this tale of a pooch rescued from Iraq, should tug at your heartstrings. The nice layout, plentiful photos, and bright colors will appeal to children, but I'm guessing it's the adult dog lovers who will really eat up this book.

You can visit Nubs on facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NubsTheDog/>

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### **Melissa says**

I heard this story a few years ago and liked it okay. This week my fourth grade students have been learning about Veterans Day and I remembered this book. While the author and main character isn't a "veteran" yet, he is a Marine, so I decided to include this book in our reading this week. My class was fascinated, both the boys and girls. By the end of the reading, a handful of kiddos had tears streaming down their faces. I don't know what the difference was...maybe just the fact that we (as a class) had more background information about the military and what veterans represent, but what a fantastic read!

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## **H.L. Balcomb says**

What does it mean to believe without doubt? Last night, my oldest child pulled out her library book, and we read it before bedtime. The book entitled NUBS is a true story of a Mutt, a Marine, and a Miracle. The mutt, fondly named Nubs since he's ears were cut off as a sign of being a war dog, instantly found a friend in Major Brian Dennis. Here's where the story becomes amazing -- Nubs would not give up on his friendship with the Major even though it meant following him through a treacherous 70-mile trek. And when times became physically and emotionally hard, Nubs still held onto his original beliefs. The end result is a story of hope and proof that miracles do happen through the power to believe....

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## **Krystal Spilger says**

Audience: K-3 grades teachers and students.

Appeal: All animal lovers will enjoy this story. Nubs is a wild dog that follows a marine from Iraq to Jordan in the middle of a war. Due to the fact that soldiers are not allowed to have animals Brian, the marine that takes care of Nubs, sends Nubs to live in the United States with his family. This nonfiction story depicts the loyalty of dogs and the relationship that develops between people and dogs.

(Golden Sower 2012-2013)

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## **Nadine Jones says**

I don't usually review the zillions of picture books I read, but this one literally brought me to tears - my poor kids looking at me wondering what had happened to Mommy?! Then I started crying AND laughing at myself for crying - that really got my kids wondering! The silly thing is, I vetted this book first before reading it, so I KNEW everything turned out all right in the end, but I started crying anyway. I figured I'd get a little choked up while reading, but I didn't think I'd actually break down in tears.

\*\*\* THIS REVIEW CONTAINS SPOILERS! \*\*\* But ... it's a picture book! It'll be just as good even if you know what's coming. Really.

This is a true story about a Marine named Brian Dennis who is stationed in Iraq in 2007, and one of the wild dogs he meets there, whom he christens "Nubs" because his ears have been cut short. Nubs and Brian forge a strong bond, even though they only see each other for a few days at a time as Dennis's group moves through Iraq. When Dennis wakes in the middle of the night for guard duty, Nubs accompanies him every time.

At some point Nubs gets into a dog fight (or maybe a person injures him) and when the Marines return, Nubs is seriously injured, in so much pain that he tries to sleep standing up (this is where the tears really started falling - it doesn't help that Nubs looks a little bit like my own dog - I just can't imagine a loyal, loving dog enduring such hardship!) Eventually, Nubs follows the Marines for 70 miles across Iraq, to the Jordanian border, where they make him a little dog house and he becomes the team mascot of a sort.

It's against the rules for soldiers to keep pets and Dennis is finally told he has four days to move Nubs out "or else." Dennis quickly makes arrangements and raises the money to ship Nubs back to the USA. Happy ending: Dennis returns to San Diego in one piece himself, and Nubs is there to greet him, and they are still happily living together today.

This book is strengthened by the many wonderful pictures of Nubs in Iraq with the soldiers, and Nubs at his new home in San Diego. The tone of the text is perfect. And, of course, it is a true story.

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### **Lydia.walker says**

The Story of Nubs is a nonfiction piece that tells the story of two strangers destined to be together. Nubs, a mangy and injured pack dog, and Major Brian Dennis, a US Marine in the Iraqi desert. You learn the story of their first encounter, of the 30-degree nights, and of the heart wrenching 70-mile trek that Nubs took in tracking Brian across the frozen Iraqi desert. We learn of the pancakes Nubs ate, and the doghouse built for him by his marines. Then, we hear the heartbreaking news that Brian and Nubs are to be separated. Urgently, Brian sends home for money to help him fly Nubs back to the US. We learn about his first vet trip and flight and their eventual reunion. Fletcher's *What A Writer Needs* addresses that writers, and specifically writers of nonfiction, need to have something to say. Major Brian Dennis allows his voice and his heart to be read on these pages. This is depicted in Dennis' strong lead, specificity of his vivid details, and employing the use of emails, maps and photographs. While the reader is experiencing nonfiction, it is a heartfelt story of love between two friends. The love Brian has for Nubs pours from the pages, the pictures, and the story of the 70-mile trek itself. As a teacher of writing, this text would serve as a powerful tool in explaining the importance of writing "from the I" no matter the context. For THIS writing teacher, there would be far too many tears in the reading to use it as a successful tool for anything.

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