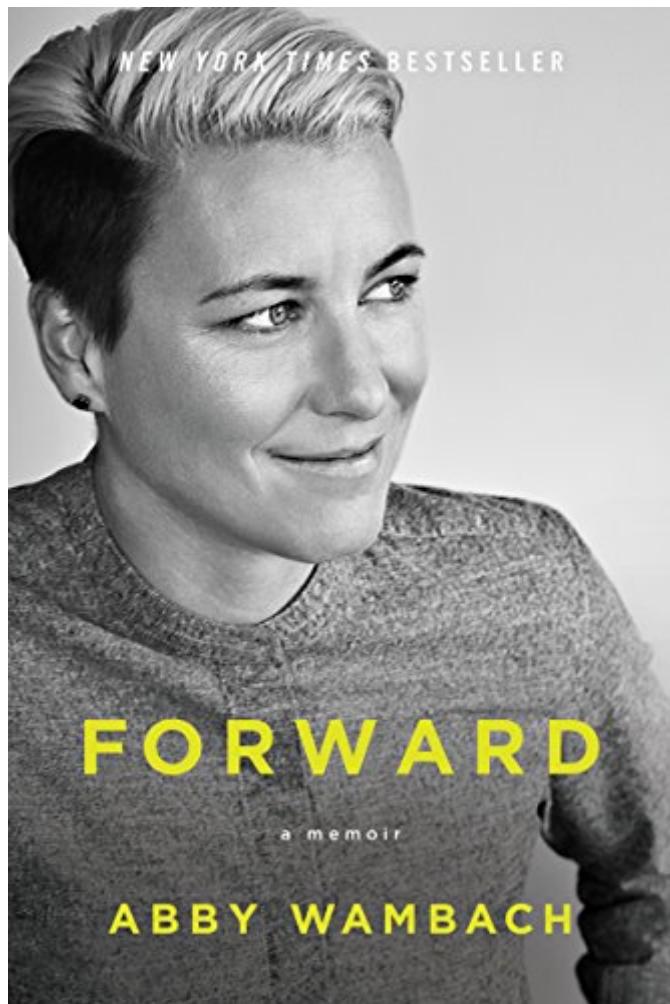


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# Forward: A Memoir



## Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER "Lucid and wrenching...Forward puts [Wambach's] achievement in context with painful and beautiful candor." —NPR "Forward is the powerful story of an athlete who has inspired girls all over the world to believe in themselves." —Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook COO, New York Times Bestselling author of *Lean In* "This is the best memoir I've read by an athlete since Andre Agassi's *Open*." —Adam Grant, Wharton professor and New York Times bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take* Abby Wambach has always pushed the limits of what is possible. At age seven she was put on the boys' soccer team. At age thirty-five she would become the highest goal scorer male or female in the history of soccer, capturing the nation's heart with her team's 2015 World Cup Championship. Called an inspiration and "badass" by President Obama, Abby has become a fierce advocate for women's rights and equal opportunity, pushing to translate the success of her team to the real world. As she reveals in this searching memoir, Abby's professional success often masked her inner struggle to reconcile the various parts of herself: ferocious competitor, daughter, leader, wife. With stunning candor, Abby shares her inspiring and often brutal journey from girl in Rochester, New York, to world-class athlete. Far more than a sports memoir, *Forward* is a gripping tale of resilience and redemption—and a reminder that heroism is, above all, about embracing life's challenges with fearlessness and heart.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An Excerpt from FORWARD by Abby Wambach I am five years old, my legs pinwheeling across a soccer field, guiding the ball with my tiny cleats. My mouth is dry from catching the wind. I have only played the game a few times, but it already feels familiar, a task my body knows how to execute without much effort or direction, as though I&#039;d been moving this way since the womb. The ball seems to be magnetically attached to my feet as I push past and through my opponents, looking for my mother in the stands, watching her watch me. When I am on the field I am her sole focus; I imagine myself as something so shiny and special sheÃƒÂ¢Ã  ¬Ã  ¸s unable to look away. Afterward she hugs me and tells me she&#039;s proudÃƒÂ¢Ã  ¬Ã  ¸ of my effort, my ability, my dedication. Silently I replay her words and will her to repeat them. Then she hesitates, curls her hands over my shoulders, and lowers herself to my level. "Abby," she says, "you scored a lot of goals today. Don&#039;t you think it&#039;s important that your teammates become part of it?" I look up at her, confused, and ask, "Isn&#039;t the whole point to score goals?" She thinks on that for a moment and admits, "It is." "Well, I am the best one to do that. So if that&#039;s the whole point, I donÃƒÂ¢Ã  ¬Ã  ¸t see the problem." She laughs, trapped by my innocent logic, and I&#039;m not able to articulate my next thought: If you weren&#039;t there to witness it, I wouldn&#039;t care about scoring at all. My six siblings and I are raised on competition. Tales of diligence and fortitude and success are passed down like cherished heirlooms. We hear about my great-grandfather, who bought a wooden stand, piled it high with colorful pyramids of fruit, and waved down each wagon passing through upstate New York. My grandfather improved upon the idea, trading in the wooden stand for a building and twenty-two acres of land, branding the business Wambach Farms. When he died he left everything to his only child, my father, who, upon his high school graduation, began working at the store seven days a week and has barely stopped since. My father pauses long enough for dinner, coming home at 6 p.m. sharp before heading straight back to the store. His nightly presence at the table is one of the official family rules, a list curated and lengthened by my mother over the years. Another rule is the mandatory head count, instituted after my brother Pat was accidentally left home alone, Macaulay Culkin style, during an outing to a

local restaurant. Even manners are a contest. It is widely acknowledged that the Wambach kids are the nicest and best behaved in all of Pittsford, a conservative, suburban community just outside of Rochester. Pittsford is heavily Catholic and affluent, and we not only adhere to but improve on its unspoken code. It is mandated that we will be unfailingly polite to neighbors, strangers, and elders: we will send handwritten thank-you notes; we will hold open doors; we will not mouth off or cuss. We will attend Mass at St. Louis every Sunday, dressed in our finest, and sit erect in the front pew. "That priest up there?" my mom whispers. "He's watching your every move. God is watching, too, so no monkey business." We will behave when my parents go on their annual vacation to Florida, leaving us with our grandparents, occasionally for months at a time since my dad's work was seasonal. We will listen. We will obey.

Incredibly revealing and introspective, this memoir gives you a sense of the perfectly imperfect stellar Abby. I read it all in one sitting, and was impressed by what she chose to share. Loved her before, and since reading her story, love her even more.

I loved and admired Abby for the soccer player that entertained millions. I now respect her for the journey she took to become that player and for the fight she has just begun.

Incredible and thoughtfully written. Proud of her for sharing, opening up and believing in herself and others.

Abby's passion and heart made me a soccer fan during her Olympic Games. I still am. Her book is brutally honest and so well written. This is a courageous woman -she was as a player and is in telling her story- in a way that is relatable. I've felt a lot of what she has - and felt alone because I thought I had to be the only one. Abby is the GOAT as far as I'm concerned. May her retirement bring her peace and love abundantly-so she can spread them both on her way to changing the world.

I was so glad that this was not simply a rehashing of soccer victories and defeats to what felt like a genuine introspective on the various experiences, relationships, personality traits etc... that make up Abby the person rather than just focusing on Abby the soccer player. I felt like Wambach did a nice job acknowledging the advantages her talent gave her while also identifying the darker side of talent that those of us who don't have or never find our extraordinary talent don't think about. I found it

compelling to hear about the traits that Wambach feels made her excel on the field and how they, like almost anything else, can have drawbacks. I was especially interested in the theme of identity throughout the book.

Super human, vulnerable and awesomely real. I could not stop reading, im a bigger fan of wambach than ever before.

I can't say for sure if she did or didn't have a ghost writer but it felt very accessible and honest. If you want a bunch of NWSL or USWNT gossip- this isn't for you.I was impressed with Abby's willingness to tear away all facades and write frankly about her life. Even if you aren't a hardcore soccer fan there are universal truths discussed with honesty and humanity.I read the whole thing in one day.

Read in a day! I LOVE everything USWNT soccer and this just put the icing on the cake. Abby has been an inspiration for years, and now I understand that she is as human as I am. She put an actual face to her name. Soccer is just one part of her. I didn't know I could love her any more than I already did. Great read, hard truths, and a humanizing experience. Well done!!

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