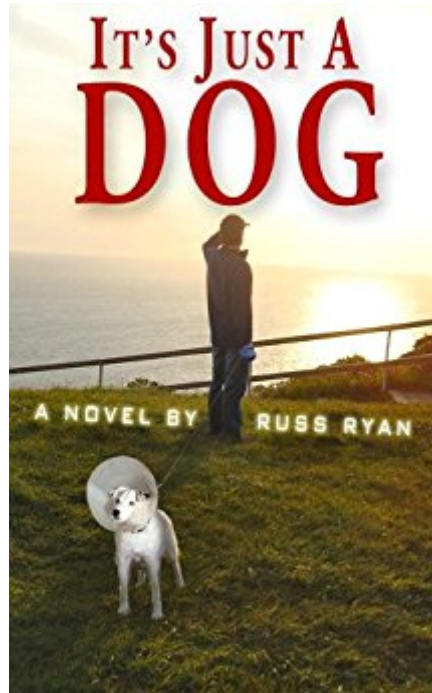




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It's Just A Dog



Synopsis

KINDLE BESTSELLER! What if your dog died and then came back as a ghost—that could talk? Would you welcome him back with open arms, or run away scared to death? This is the premise of *IT'S JUST A DOG*, a humorous, heartwarming new novel about love, pet loss, and one man's ghost dog who rises up yapping from the grave as a talking dog. Charlie Keefe is not just your typical dog lover—he's a world famous dog painter, a.k.a. "The Picasso of Pooch Portraits." Unfortunately, Charlie's beloved muse, Pete, his lovable Jack Russell terrier, has just died. And he's totally grief-stricken by the loss of his furry best friend. So, after months of suffering over his dearly departed soulmate and wondering if he ever made it to The Rainbow Bridge, Charlie reluctantly agrees to foster a new puppy—a cute Cavalier King Charles named Brownie from the local animal shelter. Soon after, Charlie is surprised to find himself falling head over heels with this new puppy girl, his "Rebound Dog," as he calls her—as well as being romantically attracted to Janelle Jordan, the head hound at the dog rescue. But then complications arise when the ghost of his old dog, Pete, mysteriously reappears one night and comes back to haunt him and the new puppy setting off a bizarre chain of events that throw Charlie's life, career, and entire belief system into chaos! If you like funny dog movies and have enjoyed such classic dog books as *Old Yeller*, *The Art of Racing in the Rain*, *Marley and Me*, and *A Dog's Purpose*, then you are bound to find a place in your heart for *IT'S JUST A DOG*. *It's Just A Dog* is for anyone who has ever lost a pet and learned to love again. Regardless of whether you're a fan of literary fiction, women's fiction, or just yearn for an old-fashioned love story with humor, you will find something to smile about in this laugh out loud romantic comedy -- an Kindle Bestseller! *A portion of the proceeds have been donated to Muttville Senior Dog Rescue (in San Francisco, California), a rescue which believes that every dog deserves a happy ending. Listen to what all the big dogs are barking about after reading *It's Just A Dog*: "If you read just one dead dog book this year, make this the one!" "Old Yeller" "IT'S JUST A DOG" is not just for dogs. It's for people, too!" "Scooby Doo" "If books could kill..." "Cujo" "Do yourself a favor and take a bite out of this dog novel. Literally. I wish it had more pages. I ate it up in less than an hour!" "McGruff the Crime Dog" "Is this dog heaven? Nah, it's just fiction. But I'll take it." "Lassie" "This sweet, catchy novel was like music to my ears!" "Nipper the RCA Dog" "Genuinely heartfelt and inspiring. An

American original. Now where's that cold beer you promised me? Benji "Awww shucks, I loved it. And I can't even read! Pete the Pup from 'Our Gang' (a.k.a. The Little Rascals) "It's a gas! Walter the Farting Dog "If I was granted three wishes, I'd wish that everybody take the time to read this uplifting, humorous Kindle book "After Shakespeare and all the great Elizabethan poets, of course." - Wishbone "I prefer the movie." - Uggie from The Artist

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Customer Reviews

Russ Ryan doesn't come to this novel without background or credentials: he has written screenplays with the Hollywood producers of AMERICAN PIE, FINAL DESTINATION, and FIREFLIES IN THE GARDEN and his own REPLI-KATE and he has probably absorbed more Hollywood history than most through his sidebar hobby blog meansheets.com that focuses on the art of movie posters going far back in time. From all of this exposure to dealing with dialogue, hearing movie ideas played out in the resource room, and staring at ideas that pop out from the

great art of movie posters, he has come up with a very original and very wonderful first novel that should boost his career in the business (someone will doubtless option this book for a movie!) and provide hours of entertainment - and solace - to dog lovers, especially those who have gone through the loss of their `man's best friend. Ryan is a dog widower times two, sadly. In a very casual conversational manner we meet a young artist who has a history as a child of losing a pet dog Starsky who was euthanized without much explanation. Jump to present time in Malibu, California and after our down and out artist (who goes by the name of Charlie Keefe) is dumped by his live-in girlfriend, he decides to go to the animal shelter and get a dog. And there is Pete - a mutt, but a Jack Russell Terrier who in a very brief time works his way into Charlie's heart and life. Charlie begins to paint dogs (sort of a `Thomas Kinkade knock-off imagery' of his main model Pete) and with Charlie's artist rep Donny's help the business becomes lucrative - The Picasso of Pooch Portraits - and Charlie and Pete become famous globetrotters. But of course Pete ages and while Charlie is on an exhibition trip to Paris, Pete dies and Donny cremates him. Charlie is completely devastated, unable to function and in the deepest level of grieving for Pete. Charlie meets bouncy Janelle who is committed to finding foster homes for orphaned or unwanted dogs and after the two strike up a `friendship' Charlie finally adopts Brownie, a Cavalier King Charles female, whose every cell speaks love and affection. Charlie and Brownie and Janelle bond and though Charlie retains the core of his heart for his deceased Pete, he loves Brownie, too. Business starts to thrive again, and all is moving forward until Pete returns as a talking ghost dog - during a bed tumble featuring Charlie and Janelle. And from that point life becomes "complicated": Pete is a mouthy sass of a ghost, only Charlie can see him, and every one thinks Charlie has lost it. The rest of the story is a path that leads through a new relationship between Charlie and Pete, a disruption with Janelle and her transient paramour Milo, a new kind of painting that features Pete as a heavenly creature (a genre that fails to attract Charlie Keefe's following) and a couple of car crashes and a temporary loss of Brownie - and to tell more would take away from the very fine ending of this story. Where Russ Ryan takes us in this extremely impressive debut novel is not only into the realm of comedic writing, but also into that arena of gaining and losing a dog, the effect that dogs have on our lives, and the profound tragedy of becoming a dog widower. He can touch our hearts and compassion as competently as he can weave a fantasy story of the return of talking ghost dogs and never for a moment does he lose us. This is very fine writing from a very talented and generous artist: he is donating a portion of the proceeds to Muttville Senior Dog Rescue. Buy this book for your own healing, for your entertainment, and for all the Petes out there! Grady Harp, May 13

Even knowing the dog dies does not necessarily put me off a book. I felt Mr. Ryan's pain when he was not there in Pete's last hours. And dogs past haunt my memories and bring tears at the thought of a name. I am one of those dog rescuing fanatics that lost dogs find. Crossing the Rainbow Bridge is my life goal, whether Mr. Ryan believes it exists or not. This was a good book. At times I wanted to shake his character and shout at him "You selfish wretch! There is no honor in losing a dog and giving up on that kind of love forever!". In one month last year, my 5 old dogs, 16-20 years old, all rescues, all the center of my universe, died. My love did not. Over the next year we rescued 2 puppy mill dogs and two strays with no prospects, and none was a breed or mix we'd had before. He finally realized that while his heart was broken, there was another dog who could push the bits back together without plastering over the memories of Pete. He touched me where I live, in the eyes of a loving dog. Three Jack Russells have graced my life. Pete was a fine representative of those great dogs.

Once I started this book, I read it straight through...tears and all. Although some found "Ghost Pete" obnoxious, I found him to be smart and comical. The book starts with a middle-aged man losing his dog of 13 years. It's at this point, I cried through several chapters. Books rarely make me cry, heck, it takes a LOT to make me cry! But, this is so well written and so close to home, it was impossible to keep my eyes dry! Our hero is an artist who's devastated when his beloved Jack Russel Terrier dies and he's forced to come to terms with this fact. The characters are believable and definitely not the current influx of two dimensional characters found in so many books these days. The people he comes into contact with say and do some of the real and sometimes thoughtless things a lot of people do when one loses a beloved pet. I.e. "So, are you going to get another dog?" One of my favorite "least favorite" comments people often say. As if his dog was a broken vase or torn sock. His success comes from paintings he's done of his dog and sell for thousands around the world. When Pete dies, he can't paint, he can barely breathe. Anyone whose lost a long-time pet, in his case, 13 years, knows the grief associated with losing such a love. One particularly moving comment (I shared on Twitter) was: "Don't cry because you lost him, smile because you had him" It took me years to stop grieving over a very special black cat, named Amy, who was more like a dog than a cat. She got me through cancer and always waited for me at the door when I came home from work. Seven years later, she's still a loss, although I resolved the typical "NO MORE PETS, IT'S NOT WORTH THE GRIEF". But I married into two and a starving kitten arrived almost two years later and he's a joy! People start thinking he's nuts, because in his small town, everybody, knows every thing about every body! When word gets out about Pete showing up, four months after his death, it stays

a secret for about nine seconds. Thanks to his Art Manager. Although only he can see or hear Pete, the other animals can too and makes a believer out of several. The book doesn't focus too much on the antics of Ghost Pete, it's just enough to give this book an added flavor. Basically, it's definitely the meat of this book. The rest is realistic, sometimes quite funny and an excellent read. I highly recommend this book for anyone who loves animals, and will also show that the love of a pet, any pet, is worth the grief...even if it doesn't seem to at the time of their passing.

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