



The Dog On The Bed: A Canine Alphabet

Richard Teleky

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Is it surprising that a man with a lifelong affinity for dogs would have been born in the Chinese astrological Year of the Dog? Richard Telekey claims that it is not, and his resulting affection for dogs has led him to years of association with them, including not just dog ownership and friendships with other dog-lovers, but a fondness for reading about dogs and, quite naturally, for writing about dogs.

The Dog on the Bed is an old-fashioned abecedarian, a genre used by writers since the days of Ambrose Bierce in the classic *The Devil's Dictionary*. It can adapt to a writer's favourite subject: M.F.K. Fisher wrote on food, Roland Barthes on romantic love, Ezra Pound on reading, and Richard Telekey is now using it to ponder his favourite subject - dogs. In *The Dog on the Bed* he uses at least one short essay for each letter of the alphabet to ramble through dog facts, dog thoughts, dog lore, philosophy on dogs, and, of course, personal stories and reflections from his own inborn love of dogs.

He explores aspects of the rich, complex, and mysterious human/dog bond and how that bond defines our culture and ourselves as a species. We are human, he says, because of our dogs.

Start at the beginning (Anthropomorphism) and read through to the end (a remembrance of the author's beloved pug, Zoli) or jump in at some point of special interest. There are musings on Children's Dog Books, Excrement, Second Dogs, Veterinarians, Writers, and Yapping. Esoteric, yes, but never less than fascinating. *The Dog on the Bed* is the perfect gift to welcome a puppy into someone's family or to mark the passing of a treasured old friend. Every dog-lover who is also a reader (and are there any who aren't?) will find pleasure in *The Dog on the Bed*.

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