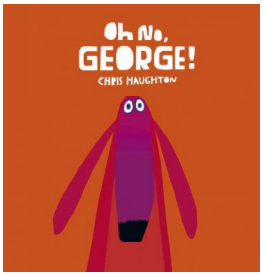
Oh No, George!



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Some of us are cat people and some of us are dog people. I am a cat person. I am not a dog person. That's not to say I don't like dogs. I do. Really. Long ago, I even shared a home with a sweet beagle for a time. It's just that after that experience, I prefer to enjoy other people's dogs in their homes or parks or even at the library where we have some wonderful dogs come in and visit. But even though I am not a dog person, I still appreciate a good dog story, and recently have enjoyed some delightful stories about dogs.

On its surface, the picture book Oh No, George! by Chris Haughton appears to be a very simple story about a dog and how he spends his day at home after his owner leaves the house. But on a deeper level, the story addresses the struggle to resist temptation that we all face at some point. The suspense weighs heavy on the reader as we see George eyeing the cake on the counter. His big round, needy eyes peer out at us from the page as the question floats above his head: "What will George do?"

Maybe I get some sort of vicarious thrill reading about naughty dogs -- knowing that I will not be the one who has to clean up after them! I can savor their antics from a safe distance. Author John Grogan readily admits that his dog Marley is one big bundle of trouble. His novel Marley and Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog is written for adults, but he adapted his personal account of life with Marley in a story for children called Marley: A Dog Like No Other. My children and I listened to the audiobook version of this story and laughed until we cried over the hilarious descriptions of the Marley Mambo -- the wiggling dance Marley would do when he had something in his mouth that he shouldn't -- or his adventures at the Dog Beach, or tobogganing in the back yard.

But there came a point that we cried because as anyone who has lived with a dog knows: your dog is not just a pet, your dog is a member of your family. Grogan very sensitively describes how difficult it is to lose a member of your family, and how life goes on.

Despite hearing about how much trouble and work a dog could be, my children posed the inevitable question: "When can we get a dog, Mom?" And I wonder now: how will I resist the temptation?

Oh, the Thinks You Can Think Dog Oh no, George! Pets Picture Book

Posted by Lisa C. on May 24, 2012

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