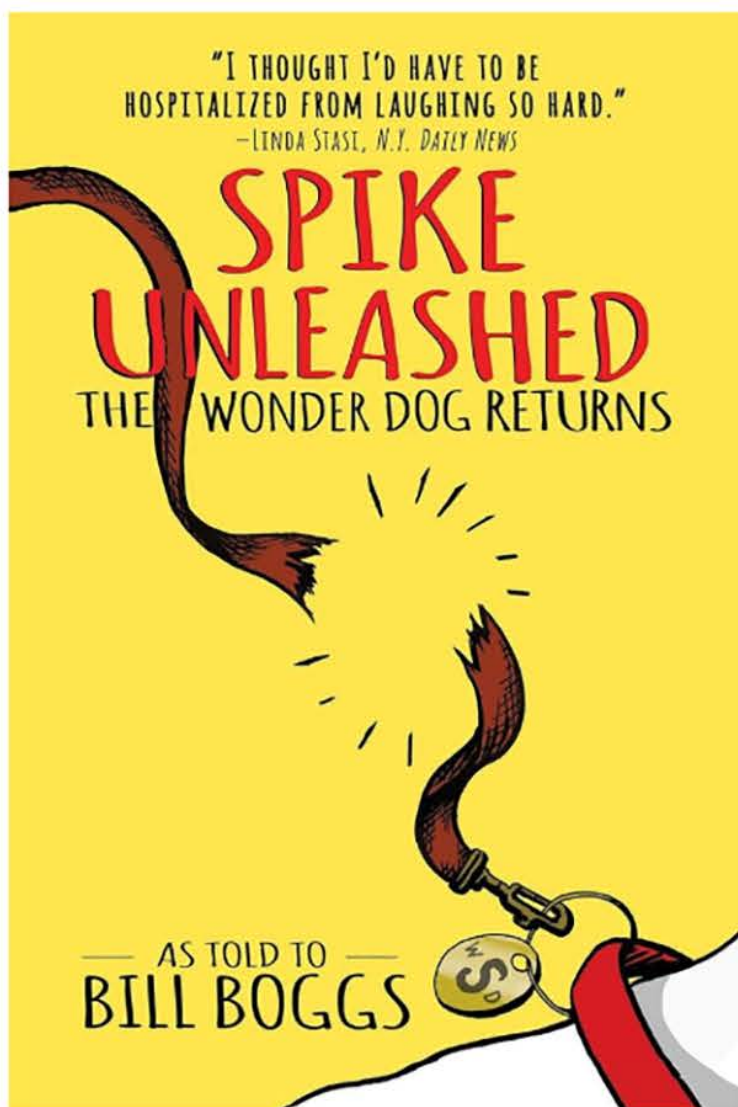


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Back in the summer of 2020, I was introduced to a rather unorthodox pooch by name of Spike in the book *The Adventures of Spike the Wonder Dog*. Celebrity-obsessed and always ready to tell a ribald joke, English Bull Terrier Spike is more Borscht Belt than Rover West Dog Park, and has definitely kept his owner, Bud, on his toes. During the pandemic of 2020, I really needed to laugh and *The Adventures of Spike the Wonder Dog* was the perfectly hilarious literary elixir.

Now the summer of 2024 is drawing to a close, and Spike is back with the release of *Spike Unleashed: The Wonder Dog Returns* as told to Bill Boggs. And believe me, after reading *Spike Unleashed*, this old dog is up to some new tricks, and still very funny.

Spike and his owner, Bud, once again go on a crazy journey and take us on a hilarious ride. We traverse the world of the rich, powerful, and famous (sometimes infamous) of the coasts of the United States. Because his pet parent, Bud, is a talk show host, Spike is able to rub elbows (or paws as it may be) with the A-List, the B-List, and even the Z-list. And being a show off, Spike can't help but drop plenty of celebrity names—Nancy Pelosi, Bill Maher, Gordon Ramsey, and various Kardashians. But then again, the Kardashians would show up to an opening of a tampon.

A lot happens in *Spike Unleashed*. Talk show host Bud makes an attempt to buy the television station that broadcasts his show. However, the bonkers station owner wants Bud to jump through some crazy hoops to make this happen. Bud and Spike also have to avoid a vicious boxer just out of prison. Don't you hate when that happens? I sure do. But the duo also get to hang out with strippers who fawn over Spike like he's made of 100 dollar bills. Spike, of course, laps it up. He loves to be fawned over. And for some reason Bud and Spike also get entangled in a movie starring Prince Harry. Yes, that Prince Harry, the spare.

Spike is also a horny fellow who believes he needs to spread his seed. So he tries to get in some bitch's pants, well, if dogs wore pants. You know what I mean. It's a metaphor. Is Spike successful in producing progeny and continuing the great Spike legacy of chaos, adventures, and debauchery? You have to read *Spike Unleashed* to find out.

*Spike Unleashed: The Wonder Dog Returns* is at turns both silly and satirical. And it spares no snark when to our celebrity culture and its collection salivating, rapacious wannabees and hanger-ons. It also pokes good nature fun at our well-meaning but sometimes confusing "woke" culture.

Through it all, Spike is the top dog, and Bud is his devoted, and sometimes exasperated, owner. *Spike Unleashed: The Wonder Dog Returns* is off the chain with crazy hijinks and a lot of belly laughs.