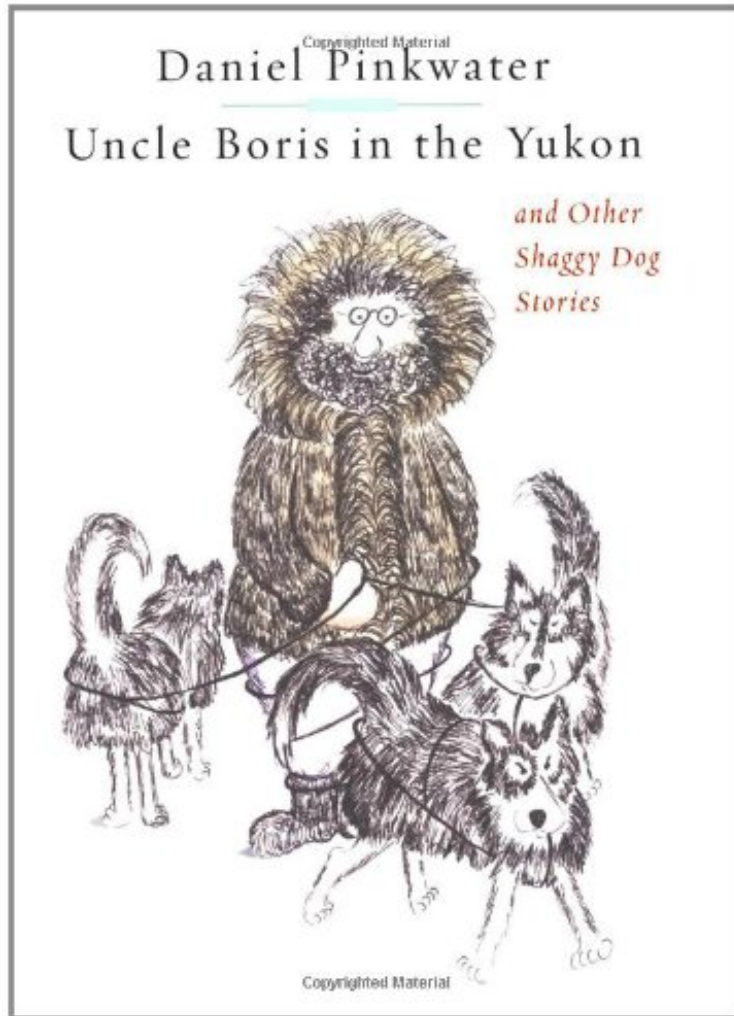


[Download] Uncle Boris in the Yukon and Other Shaggy Dog Stories

## Uncle Boris in the Yukon and Other Shaggy Dog Stories

*Daniel Pinkwater*

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**Daniel Pinkwater : Uncle Boris in the Yukon and Other Shaggy Dog Stories** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Uncle Boris in the Yukon and Other Shaggy Dog Stories:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Humane and humorous, heartfelt stories about a loving couple and their petsBy PhredBottom Line: I liked Uncle Boris in the Yukon: and Other Shaggy Dog Stories. This is a book for dog lovers. The animals he tells about rarely begin as the one most people would tolerate or learn to handle. With the Pinkwaters they had good homes, good lives and were mourned in their passing. The book is neither maudlin nor mawkish. Throughout there is a twinkle and a sense of pleasure shared by human and dog. Each gets their turn to laugh at the other.^\_^;^\_^;^\_^;^\_^;Daniel Pinkwater is the author of many children's and young adult books. He was a failed sculptor and painter who fell into writing. He is also a man with a gentle self-effacing sense of humor that

carries into the books and essays he has written targeted for adults. For many years he presented his material on National Public Radio. I suspect that much of the material in *Uncle Boris in the Yukon: and Other Shaggy Dog Stories* had been presented, if not in this form as part of his radio broadcasts. The term Shaggy Dog Story was coined to describe very long jokes wherein the punch line was incidental. The joke was that the teller had taken you in with an overly long set up and almost no payoff. The listener had let themselves be had. Pinkwater is capable of such stem winders, but that is not how he means the term. This book is dedicated to many of the dogs, with some mention of a few other pets that Daniel and his wife had the honor to share their lives. Between them they had lived with some unlikely animals, they are somewhat unlikely people- but between them, human and animal were bonds of respect and admiration, all remembered here with charm and wit. The opening tells of how Pinkwater's father and uncles came to America. They came as continental gangsters only to be out classed by American gangsters. They each built new lives. Daniel's father would make it somewhat big in the scrap clothing business and this preoccupation made for a lonely life for the son. As a child he would wish for a dog that would be his dog and the closest he would come was from the stories of his uncle, Boris, who claimed that his Alaskan sled dog spoke to him in Yiddish. From this slow beginning we eventually get to Pinkwater the pet owner, husband and even dog trainer. He and his wife Jill published *Superpuppy: How to Choose, Raise, and Train the Best Possible Dog for You* still in print; an award winning book for the new pet owner. 19 of 20 people found the following review helpful. Dogs from the Pinkwater Perspective By Sue Hamilton, The Fan Hitch Former professional dog trainer, author, humorist, and commentator on National Public Radio, Daniel Pinkwater introduces the tale of his Uncle Boris, a small time hoodlum from Warsaw, Poland, as a jumping off point about the author's life-long relationship with dogs. According to Pinkwater, Uncle Boris left Europe to pan for gold in the Yukon. During those long stretches away from civilization, Uncle Boris' only companions were his team of malamutes, especially his lead dog Jake, with whom he would carry on two-way conversations in Yiddish. Unsuccessful in his hunt for gold, and later a talking dog act, Boris ends up settling in Brooklyn, New York. A life long dog fancier, "making a profitable side line of faking and selling purebreds", he brings to his brother a sort of Pekingese. When the newborn Daniel arrives on the scene, Bobby, appoints himself the infant's guardian, protecting him from being eaten during that period of his life when Pinkwater described himself as resembling a meatloaf. According to Pinkwater, Bobby "and the other dogs, taught me what I needed to know about becoming a human being." *Uncle Boris in the Yukon and Other Shaggy Dog Stories* is devoted to the accounts, both hilarious and poignant, of Pinkwater's journey to and through adulthood, and the critters that have shared and shaped his life and outlook: the dogs he and wife Jill have owned, among them three Alaskan malamutes and an Akita cross, as well as the hundreds they encountered as professional obedience instructors; also Matilda the Wolf and an Inuit Sled Dog named Puggiq, described as the happiest being ever encountered. Currently the Pinkwaters share their home with Maxine, an aging Labrador retriever and Lulu, a five year old Inuit Sled Dog. Delightfully illustrated by Jill Pinkwater, *Uncle Boris in the Yukon and Other Shaggy Dog Stories* is more than just pleasurable reading. Those of us who are "doggie" in general and have northern breeds in particular will appreciate Pinkwater's keen, if slightly embellished, perception and understanding about dogs, and will surely recognize similarities with some of our own four-legged companions. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I found this initially at a book store, started ... By mulberry I found this initially at a book store, started reading in the middle and was compelled to finish it before I bought it and left. The beginning is not quite as compelling, still I wanted to give it to every dog lover I know.

There have been books about dogs since books began -- manuals on training and raising them, stories featuring dogs, and memoirs seen through the eyes of dogs. Lately, there has been a rash of books that purport to tell us what dogs are thinking, such as the bestselling "What Dogs Are Thinking." This is a book about a Jewish boy and his sled dogs -- also a couple of wolves, a parrot or two...and Pinkwater's uncle...and his father. Daniel Pinkwater, prodigious author of books for children, popular commentator on National Public Radio, and dog trainer to the stars, is unclear about what dogs are thinking. In fact, he appears to be completely baffled by them. He considers himself lucky that his dog does not foul the carpet, bite people, or run in traffic. Unlike every other dog book ever written, this one does not make the reader feel more stupid than the author.

From Publishers Weekly Pinkwater, author of children's books (*The Hoboken Chicken Emergency*; *Lizard Music*) and a commentator on NPR's *All Things Considered*, delivers a witty rumination on his experiences with dogs. Uncle Boris, one of the many colorful and dysfunctional adults of Pinkwater's childhood, gave his parents a Pekingese named Bobby shortly before the author's birth. Uncle Boris made a living selling fake purebreds and assured Pinkwater's father that "a dog lik dis is all deh rage in deh best parts of Brooklyn." Bobby's sole redeeming feature was that he appointed himself the new baby's guardian, thus protecting Pinkwater from his "precivilized" parents. Also featured here are other family pets, such as the asthmatic terrier Bootsie and Pedro the psychotic parrot. After Pinkwater married, he and his wife Jill (who has illustrated a number of Pinkwater's books) began acquiring malamutes; as a result of the training challenges that ensued, they established themselves as experts who taught people "how to better enjoy dogs." They published what they learned in the 1977 book, *Superpuppy*, but even this latest volume contains a

few tricks of the trade. From anecdotes about an aging wolf named Matilda to reflections on how dogs have shown him "a lot about how it's possible to live this life," Pinkwater's light and extremely entertaining read will please animal lovers of all stripes. Drawings by the author. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journals Is it any wonder that an author known for his comic and outrageously imaginative children's books would write about his experiences with man's best friend in an unconventional, albeit engaging, way? Pinkwater here remembers all the dogs that have passed through his life, from the shaggy Pekinese given to his family by Uncle Boris (who supposedly encountered Jack London in the tailor shop that Pinkwater's father once owned in Warsaw) and Stan the Irish setter, acquired without his father's knowledge, to Juno, the Alaskan malamute that Pinkwater bought after he was smitten by the sight of two large sled dogs in Manhattan, and Arnold, the puppy. Pinkwater does not intend this as a how-to-train book; he covered that base in *Superpuppy*, aimed at children, after reading hundreds of training manuals and deciding that much of what had been written about canines had no foundation in reality. The reader must decide how much of this humorous and creative reminiscence is fact and how much is fiction. Sure to be popular where dog books and the author's other works are enjoyed, this is recommended for larger public libraries and young adult collections. Edell M. Schaefer, Brookfield P.L., WI Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Add dog lover and trainer to Pinkwater's list of accomplishments. A children's author, NPR commentator, essayist, and novelist, he now reveals the secret to his success: he learned many of life's most crucial lessons from dogs, in spite of the fact that his early canine experiences were anything but felicitous. Pinkwater begins his mordantly funny and smartly entertaining mix of memoir and fancy with a hilarious account of his Jewish Polish father and his brothers, all cheerful Warsaw thugs, including Boris, who caught Klondike fever and made the long, arduous journey to Alaska, where he forged a profound friendship with a malamute named Jake. Years later, Pinkwater, an aspiring artist, became enamored of the same breed despite a series of disastrous pet skirmishes instigated by his immigrant father's peculiar "love of the grotesque." Moving from surreal boyhood anecdotes set in Chicago and California to charming tales of life in Upstate New York with his animal-crazy wife and their personable dogs, Pinkwater is at once diverting and slyly instructive regarding dogs, love, discipline, and happiness. Donna Seaman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved