

= The Last Dog on Earth =

The Last Dog on Earth is a 2003 young adult novel written by Daniel Ehrenhaft . It follows Logan , a lonely 14 @-@ year @-@ old boy who adopts a dog from an animal shelter and names her Jack . The pair 's relationship is soon threatened by an incurable prion disease spreading across the nation . Infected dogs become unnaturally violent and bloodthirsty , culminating in the deaths of several people . As public fear heightens and the government intervenes to control the outbreak , Logan struggles to reform his life and remain with Jack .

The Last Dog on Earth largely focuses on the impact of disease and both public and governmental panic . Society is ravaged by fear over the epidemic , endangering Logan and Jack despite the two being uninfected . Additionally , the novel presents a coming of age story in which Logan , a troubled youth , matures through his relationship with Jack , his only friend .

Despite 17th Street Productions holding the rights to The Last Dog on Earth , Dell Publishing gained permission to publish it . The company released the novel in hardcover in 2003 and in paperback in 2004 . Throughout 2009 , the book was published on various e @-@ book readers , including the Nook , Kindle , and several Apple Inc. products . The Last Dog on Earth was a winner of the Texas Lone Star Reading List and recognized by YALSA on a 2006 book list for young adults . The novel garnered mixed feedback from critics , who generally felt that the plot held appeal , but that Ehrenhaft tended to rely on coincidence .

= = Plot = =

Logan Moore is a troubled 14 @-@ year @-@ old boy living with his mother Marianne and stepfather Robert in Newburg , Oregon . Logan does not get along well with Robert or his mother , and holds a grudge against his biological father for leaving when he was young . After an incident at a barbecue , Robert decides to purchase a Labrador Retriever in order to teach Logan responsibility . Eager to rebel against his stepfather , Logan convinces his mother to adopt a dog from an animal shelter . He plans to choose an ugly dog and teach it destructive behavior . At the shelter , Logan encounters a young female mutt who immediately takes a liking to him . Logan adopts the dog and names her Jack after Robert 's former dog .

Meanwhile , a new prion disease named Psychotic Outburst Syndrome (or POS) is affecting dogs , causing friendly pets to become violent . Officials struggle to control the disease and immediately terminate any dogs that catch it . Humans soon begin to contract the disease .

Logan quickly bonds with Jack and values her as his only friend . After getting into trouble while attempting to protect her , Logan is sent to boot camp while Jack remains at home . Both he and Jack manage to escape , find each other , and begin traveling together . During their journey , they encounter another dog called White Paws : Jack 's brother who has become infected with POS . White Paws attacks Jack and severely wounds her before dying . Logan worries that Jack may have contracted the disease through contact with White Paws . The pair continue their journey until they reach the town of Dayville . Logan faintly remembers that his biological father lives in the town and decides to find his father and confront him .

While Logan is stealing food from a local shop , Jack is found by three men who , fearing that she may be infected , beat her . Logan is arrested and manages to find his father 's address at the police station before escaping . He returns to find Jack nearly dead and carries her , attempting to find his father 's house , until he faints from exhaustion . He awakens in the house of his biological father , Dr. Craig Westerly , who had found Logan unconscious by his car . Logan learns from Craig that he had not abandoned him and his mother , but that Marianne had divorced him . Logan fears for Jack 's life , afraid that she is infected or will be euthanized . Craig runs tests on the dog and learns that Jack , despite having been in contact with POS , isn 't infected : she is immune .

Craig decides to take Jack to a doctor so that a vaccine can be created . During the meeting , Rudy Stagg , a man infected with POS who had been killing dogs in order to contain the outbreak , stumbles into their room . Rudy ignores pleas to spare Jack and shoots at her , but Logan dives in front of the dog and is shot instead . Logan suffers a collapsed lung and falls into a coma . He

awakens weeks later and learns that Jack is on life support . He says a final goodbye to Jack before her life support is turned off . Jack 's immunity to POS leads to the creation of a vaccine and cure , and Logan is finally able to reconcile with Robert , Craig , and Devon Wallace ? a childhood enemy whose dog died due to POS . The novel 's epilogue , written as a newspaper article , reveals Logan and his family hold a private ceremony to honor Jack .

= = Themes and style = =

Ehrenhaft deals with several themes over the course of *The Last Dog on Earth* . Kirkus Reviews commented on the " backdrop of rising governmental and public panic " that interfere with Jack and Logan ; despite escaping the disease , they are unable to escape the panic . Rachel Seftel , author of a *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* review , also commented on the " mass hysteria " that arose due to POS and noted the novel 's core theme of a troubled youth being taught " valuable lessons until an external force threatens to tear them apart . "

In order to track particular events and plot points related to POS , Ehrenhaft inserts various messages , faxes , and articles throughout the novel .

= = Publication history = =

17th Street Productions , a branch of Alloy Entertainment , holds the rights to *The Last Dog on Earth* . Dell Publishing (a division of the larger publisher Random House) made arrangements with 17th Street to have it released under their name . On February 11 , 2003 , the novel was released in hardcover , and was later reprinted in paperback under Dell 's Yearling book imprint on June 8 , 2004 . In January 2009 , the novel received a Barnes & Noble Nook release in the United States , enabling it to be read on the Nook e @-@ book readers . The listed file size of *The Last Dog on Earth* is 2224 KB for the brand . On January 21 , 2009 , the book was released for the Kindle , Amazon.com 's online e @-@ book reader . Its listed file size is 448 KB . On February 3 , 2010 , *The Last Dog on Earth* was released on Apple Inc . ' s iTunes . It is listed as being compatible with the iPhone , iPod Touch , and iPad . Later , on February 25 , 2009 , the novel was released digitally with EPUB and mobile @-@ specific file types for the Borders Group e @-@ book app .

= = Reception and influence = =

The Last Dog on Earth has been nominated for several awards . The novel was recognized and listed on the Texas Library Association 's 2004 ? 2005 Texas Lone Star Reading List . The book was also a nominee for the 2005 Mark Twain Award and 2007 Minnesota Young Reader Award . *The Last Dog on Earth* was named on " Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults 2006 " , a list created by YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Association) , a division of the American Library Association . The list is conceived by a committee and compiles various novels that hold appeal to teen readers . *The Last Dog on Earth* was included in the " What Ails You ? " category , comprising literature " about how diseases , disorders , and other general health related symptoms affect our lives " . In a 2005 interview , Daniel Ehrenhaft mentioned that a school in Chicago created an extracurricular activity wherein " kids designed games and gadgets " , having been inspired by Logan 's hobby of inventing devices .

The Last Dog on Earth has received mixed reception from critics , who have praised the plot , but criticized the heavy use of coincidences to advance the plot . Kirkus Reviews commented that " happenstance plays a large role in the plot " and thought Ehrenhaft had " a tendency to trot in typecast characters , then summarily drop them " , but wrote that it would appeal to " disaster @-@ tale fans with a taste for the lurid " . Within the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* , Volume 47 , Rachel Seftel reviewed the novel . She felt that *The Last Dog on Earth* 's main strength was the " well @-@ developed and sympathetic protagonist " Logan , but noted that the " memos and several subplots " interspersed between chapters and Ehrenhaft 's " [somewhat] heavy @-@ handed " attempts to foreshadow were drawbacks . Seftel concluded that , despite Ehrenhaft 's " reach at

times [exceeding] his grasp , " The Last Dog on Earth was " an interesting and absorbing variation
" of the slightly conventional " boy @-@ and @-@ his @-@ dog story . "