In Paris's Pere-Lachaise cemetery lie the bones of many renowned departed. It is also home to a large number of stray cats. Now, what if by some strange twist of fate, the souls of the famous were reborn in the cats with their personalities intact? There's Maria Callas, a wilful and imperious diva, wailing late into the night. Earthy, bawdy chanteuse Edith Piaf is a foul-mouthed washerwoman. Oscar Wilde is hopelessly in love with Jim Morrison who sadly does not return his affections. Frederic Chopin is as melancholic and deeply contemplative as ever, and in honor of the tradition of leaving love letters at his tomb, he is now the cemetery's postmaster general. Last but not least, Marcel Proust is trying to solve the mystery behind some unusual thefts - someone has stolen Rossini's glass eye and Sarah Bernhardt's leg. Told in a series of amusing set pieces and intercepted letters, this is a delicious tale of intrigue, unrequited love, longstanding quarrels, character assassinations, petty spats, and sorcery that builds to a steady climax at the cats annual Christmas pageant.

My Personal Review:
If you love cats, and you love France, and you have an extremely peculiar sense of humor and an appreciation for the absurd, I think you'll love this book. You may even adore it.

Waiting for Gertrude is set in Paris gargantuan Pere Lachaise cemetery, where the souls of some of the notables buried therein have returned to Earth (translated, to use their term) as cats. A befurred Alice B. Toklas (the books narrator) is waiting, and waiting, and waiting for her dear Gertrude Stein to reincarnate (translate) while Oscar Wilde pines and whines and preens hoping to attract the affection of his beloved Jim Morrison (Jamz), a ferocious, kitten-devouring three-testicled tomcat. All the while, quadripped versions of Isadora Duncan and Edith Piaf are making
all kinds of merry hell for the other feline residents of the cemetery who include:

Jean de la Fontaine, the French fabulist returned now as a second-rate tour guide who insists on delivering his lectures in iambic pentameter, and whose poems introduce the various characters and situations;

Modigliani - then as now, a great painter;

Rossini - an aged and quite senile cat who cannot remember he was once a composer;

Collette - a high-class Persian cat of aristocratic ownership who followed a randy tomcat from her wealthy home to the cemetery, and now a noted teacher of yoga;

Chopin - the once-composer and now Per Lachaises Postmaster General, where the cats have learned how to write and do write often;

Sarah Bernhardt - still an actress despite losing a leg;

Marcel Proust - a Private Investigator investigating a series of mysterious thefts taking place over the course of the novel and whose head is often - quite literally - stuck up his nethermost orifice in search of inspiration;

Heloise and Abelard - back on Earth as kittens who are, respectively, a highend caterer and lifestyle consultant and a publicist; and,

Ondine - the only human character, known as the Spay Queen; the cats arch-nemesis and an enthusiastic proponent of feline population control.

Readers who appreciate a novel that is extremely weird but profoundly humorous and satirical will enjoy Waiting for Gertrude. Part romance, part fantasy, and part satire, the reader who enjoys Monty Python and Douglas Adams will be perfect for this insane look at the afterlife.

You simply have to love a book containing a sentence that reads, There never was such a ratter as Sarah Bernhardt! What a fun read!

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Waiting for Gertrude: A Graveyard Gothic by Bill Richardson - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!