



Hemingway's Cats: An Illustrated Biography

Carlene Brennen

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Ernest Hemingway always had cats as companions, from the ones he adored as a child in Illinois and Michigan, to the more than 30 he had as an adult in Paris, Key West, Cuba, and Idaho. All are chronicled and most are pictured here, along with revelations of how they fit into the many twists and turns of his life and loves. In 1943 Ernest Hemingway, living in the Finca in Cuba with his third wife and eleven cats, wrote to his first wife:

One cat just leads to another... The place is so damned big it doesn't really seem as though there were many cats until you see them all moving like a mass migration at feeding time.

He called the cats "purr factories" and "love sponges" who soaked up love in return for comfort and companionship. He gave each a name that suited its character, including F. Puss, Fatso, Friendless, Feather Kitty, Princessa, Furhouse, Uncle Woofer, and his last cat in Idaho, Big Boy Peterson. you'll also meet his nine dogs, a cow, and a young great horned owl that he rescued not long before his death. Hemingway's Cats reveals a softer side to the writer's character than is usually portrayed by the macho image of the hunter and fisherman. He sought the cats' comfort in times of loneliness and stress, and he featured some of them in his writings, particularly in A Moveable Feast, Islands in the Stream, The Garden of Eden, and True at First Light?all written late in his life and as close to autobiography as he came.



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