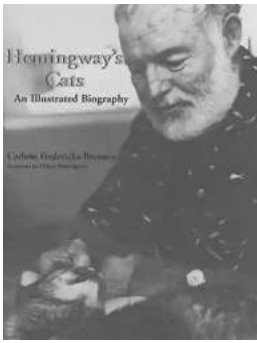


The Fascinating Story of Hemingway Cats: An Illustrated Biography



Ernest Hemingway, the legendary American writer, was not only known for his captivating literature but also for his love of cats. Hemingway was particularly fond of polydactyl cats, also known as Hemingway Cats, due to their unique genetic trait of having extra toes on their paws.

In this illustrated biography, we delve into the intriguing history and background of the Hemingway Cats, exploring their connection to the famed author and their ongoing presence in today's society.



Hemingway's Cats: An Illustrated Biography

by Sarah Ashford (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 10419 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 219 pages



The Origins of the Hemingway Cats

The Hemingway Cats can trace their roots back to a simple gift. In the 1930s, Captain Stanley Dexter, a ship's captain and a friend of Hemingway, presented him with a polydactyl cat named Snowball. Snowball quickly became a beloved companion, and her unique physical trait captured Hemingway's interest.

As Hemingway's infatuation with polydactyl cats grew, so did the number of felines at his home. At his residence in Key West, Florida, he provided a sanctuary for these extraordinary cats, allowing them to roam freely in an environment that nurtured their natural instincts.



The Legend of the Six-Toed Cats

Legend has it that the original polydactyl cat, Snowball, had descendants who carried on the genetic trait of extra toes. Over the years, the cats residing at Hemingway's home began to multiply, and more and more of them possessed this intriguing feature.

The unique six-toed cats became synonymous with Hemingway's house in Key West, creating a distinctive charm that still attracts visitors today. Tourists often flock to the property to catch a glimpse of these enchanting felines, who now provide a living link to the literary icon's legacy.

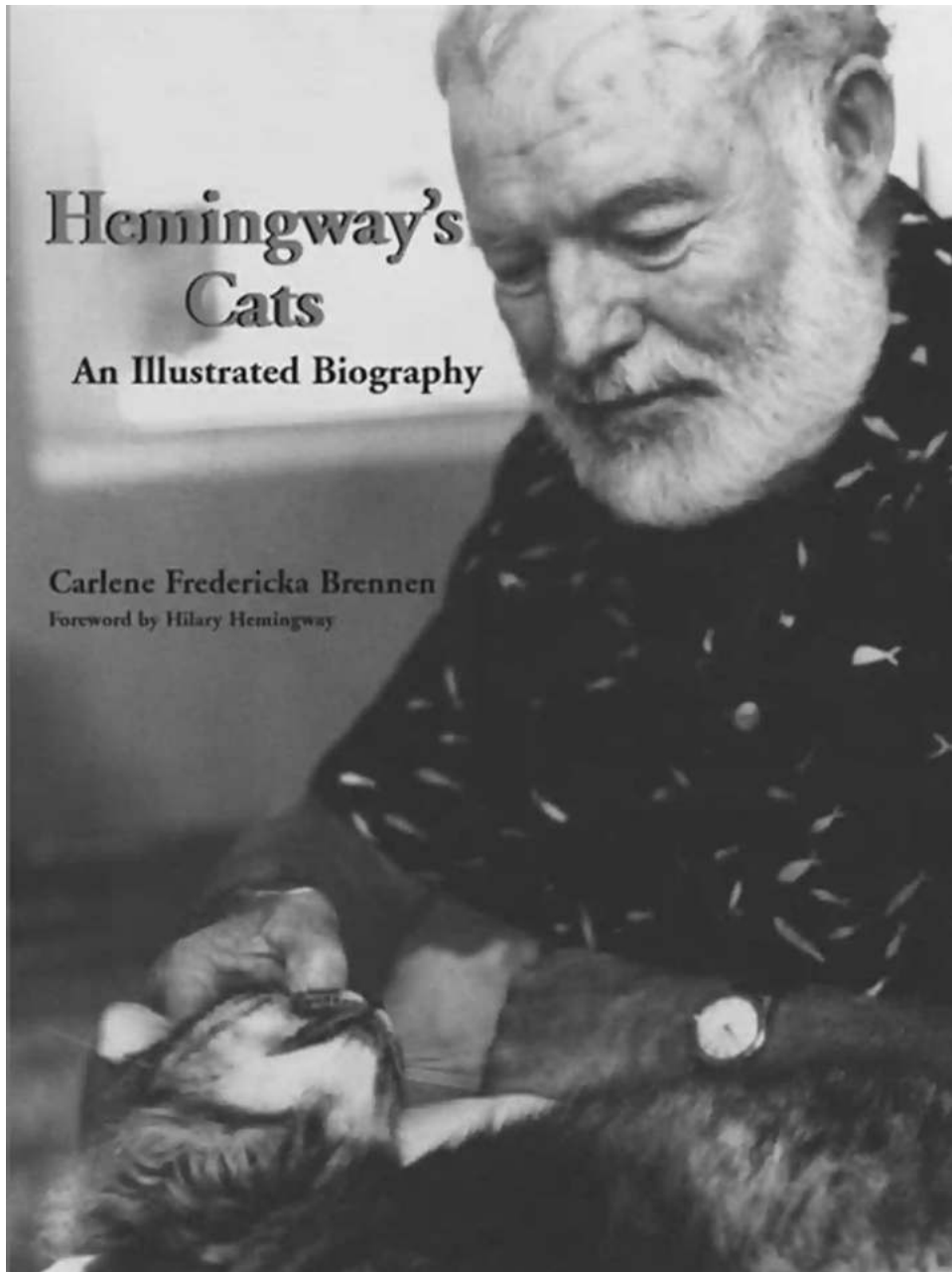
Hemingway Cats: A Feline Haven

Aside from their physical trait, the Hemingway Cats also gained recognition for their exceptional personalities and the loving environment they inhabited. Hemingway believed that cats brought luck and warmth to a home, and he ensured his feline companions had the best possible care.

Today, the house in Key West continues to serve as a sanctuary for the descendants of the original Hemingway Cats. Visitors can explore the iconic property, marvel at the architecture, and revel in the joy of interacting with these extraordinary felines.

The Hemingway Cats' Influence on Pop Culture

Throughout the years, the Hemingway Cats have made their mark on popular culture. Their presence in Hemingway's novels, such as "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," added depth and symbolism to the stories. The cats became a symbol of independence, individuality, and simplicity.



The intriguing history of the Hemingway Cats has also inspired numerous works of art, including paintings, sculptures, and photographs. Artists from around the world have captured the charm and uniqueness of these felines, perpetuating their allure in various art forms.

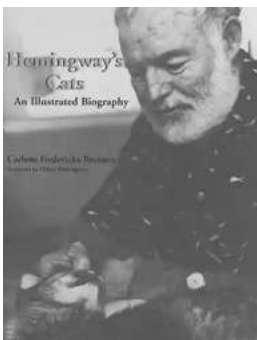
Preserving the Legacy of the Hemingway Cats

Recognizing the cultural significance of these cats, efforts have been made to protect and preserve the Hemingway Cats' unique genetic trait. The Hemingway Home and Museum, which now operates in the author's former residence, actively supports the well-being of the cats and educates visitors about their history.

By maintaining a controlled breeding program and ensuring proper healthcare, the museum aims to secure the future of the Hemingway Cats, allowing future generations to appreciate the connection between these fascinating felines and one of the greatest literary figures in history.

The Hemingway Cats, also known as polydactyl cats, have an extraordinary history closely tied to the legendary writer Ernest Hemingway. From a simple gift to an iconic symbol, these exceptional felines continue to captivate and inspire people around the world.

Whether it's their distinctive physical feature of extra toes or their enchanting personalities, the Hemingway Cats embody a spirit of independence and resilience. Their presence in Hemingway's life and literature has left an indelible mark on his legacy and the world of cat enthusiasts.



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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:

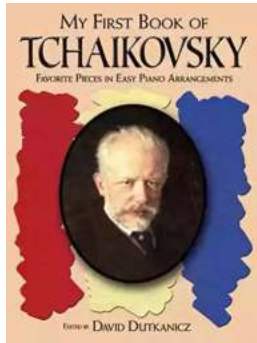
"One cat just leads to another... The place is so damned big it doesn't really seem as though there were many cats until you see them all moving like a mass migration at feeding time."

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.



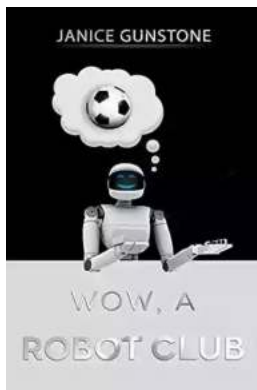
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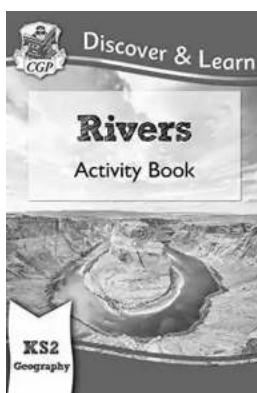
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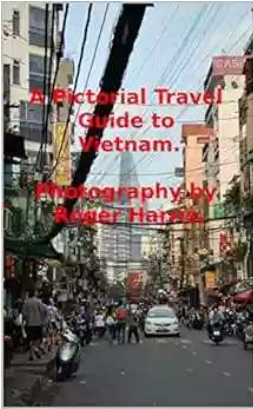
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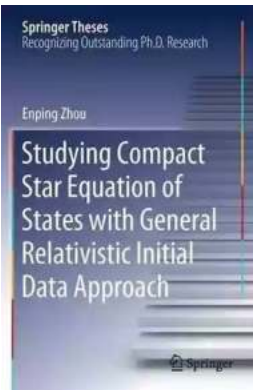
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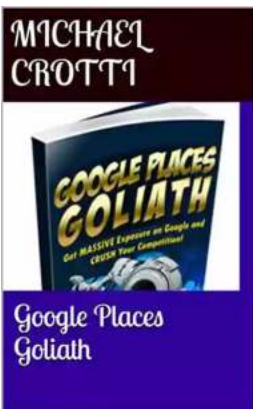
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