

MEN *WITH* CATS

Intimate Portraits

of Feline Friendship



DAVID WILLIAMS

MEN WITH CATS

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YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A MAN BY HIS CAT

My family of seven always treated our pets as family members. My mother invariably had a pug or two. My father took long trips with our cat Spikey loose in the car. My siblings and I all have our own pets now. They're our emotional support animals—we depend on them just as much as they depend on us. So I learned at an early age that humans form strong bonds with animals, especially the ones they take into their homes.

I started *Men with Cats* in 2009 while I was living in Denver, Colorado. The first guy I photographed was my coworker at a grocery store. He had a big beard, listened to loud music, worked out a lot, and loved his cat. I began finding more and more men whom I would never have suspected to be cat lovers. Since then, I have photographed close to one hundred men with their cats, from artists and actors in Hollywood to a chef in Brooklyn to a car mechanic in Georgia to an opera singer in Oakland. Tattoo artists, mountain men, police officers, punk musicians, bikers—each one has a story about finding and falling in love with his cat. Some are funny, others are poignant, most are surprising. I hope that seeing these portraits and reading these stories will encourage you to rethink stereotypes about gender and personality types. After all, pets don't care how their human companions present themselves to the world. They only care if they receive love and attention (and food!).

I also hope this book inspires you to rescue and adopt pets or donate time or resources to animal welfare groups. I adopted my own cat, Margot, after Hurricane Sandy hit New York City, when shelters were filled to capacity. She has helped me more fully understand the bond that we humans have with our pets. I would do anything for my cat, and I know that every guy in this book would, too.

MAN

DAVID WILLIAMS

CAT

MARGOT







HERE
ALL EMPIRES ARRESTED ALL
UNBUILT ALL HEARTS UNBROKEN

“When we split ways, my ex kept the other cat, and I got Joshua. Now he and I are bonded for life, like penguins.”

MAN
JEREMY

CAT
JOSHUA

“I picked up Chloe outside my precinct six years ago. She was dirty and skinny and followed me to my car when I tried to shoo her away. I didn’t know she was pregnant, but two months later she gave birth on my couch.”

MAN
LOUIS

CATS
FLUFF
CHLOE
PEPPA





“Mook is 18. I’ve lived with her longer than I lived with my parents. I know her so well I can predict her actions, and she gets very few surprises from me. We’re like an old married couple.”

MAN
BENN

CAT
MOOK

“I was indifferent towards cats until we got these kittens. I was immediately enamored of them. I mean, cats are just fur and whiskers, but they make me laugh, the lil’ rascals.”

MAN
ARLIN

CAT
ZIGGY





“I’m the president of Alley Cat Animal Rescue, and I fostered Desmal after a bad house fire. She was burned, neglected, sick, covered in fleas, and she had never been to the vet. When the rescue group followed up with the family, they requested she ‘be killed; they didn’t want her back.’ I quickly adopted her.”

MAN
AL

CAT
DESMAL

“I went out to buy an iPhone
and somehow came back
with two kittens.”

MAN

ALAIN

CATS

CHESTER

(aka Professor
Gobbles-worth)

PONGO

(aka Panda
Bearington-Bear)



“We’re roommates, so when Preston’s boss rescued a litter of barn cats, we decided to check them out. Franklin came right up to us like he was summoned by the cat gods to look after us. Orange Juice was hiding.”

MEN

PRESTON

(left)

CHRISTOPHER

(right)

CATS

FRANKLIN

(left)

ORANGE JUICE

(right)





“I probably like animals more than people. Hopefully I won’t turn into a crazy old cat lady later in life, but I guess there could be worse things.”

MAN

CHRIS

CAT

MJ





“Sampson is a black cat in a metaphysical store, so he’s a celebrity! He has the run of the place, and people come in just to see him. I always say I work for him. He even has his own line of Organic Full Moon Fever Catnip.”

MAN
TIMOTHY

CAT
SAMPSON

“We named her Saisha because she looks so regal. Her name means ‘flower from God’ in Sanskrit. She used to be standoffish, but now she’ll be in your lap as soon as you sit down . . . unless she’s getting her picture taken.”

MAN
MICHAEL

CAT
SAISHA





“The name Lucifer stuck, with the *e* changing to a *u* at the suggestion of punk legend Genesis P. Orridge. (I was photographing him the day I adopted Lucifur.) Pazuzu is the demon from *The Exorcist*.”

MAN
GREG

CAT
LUCIFUR PAZUZU

“Pete sits on a chair in the kitchen to supervise our cooking. We let him check out all the ingredients. Ozzie doesn’t help at all with the cooking, but he can smell pork loin or chicken a mile away, and he helps clean up.”

MAN

ROB

CATS

PETE

OZZIE





“The most difficult thing about owning a cat will be losing him eventually. But who knows? Maybe I’ll die first and he can deal with it.”

MAN

JARED

CAT

DIMITRI

“Lupo likes getting shaved—really. And she does circus tricks. OK!, meanwhile, does sneak attacks. Her motto is ‘If there ain’t blood, it ain’t love.’ I’m actually bleeding right now.”

MAN
NICHOLAS

CATS
LUPO
OK!





“Bates and I hold conversations
in meow. I meow at him, and
he responds in kind. We can go
on and on like that.”

MAN
ERIC

CAT
BATES

“We were at the ASPCA debating between R2D2 and a cat named Wikipedia, and we made the right choice. He goes for walks and plays fetch. He’s basically a dog, just evil instead.”

MAN

BRIAN

CAT

R2D2





“Tutti is named after King Tut—his full name is Tutenkhamen. The little one is named Bunny, but we only ever call him Baby Tutti.”

MAN

NONI

CATS

TUTTI

BUNNY

“Geoffrey is obviously arboreal, and Nigel is terrestrial. Geoffrey is gay; Nigel is straight. Geoffrey loves to cuddle; Nigel loves to play. They love each other and sleep together head to toe, like yin and yang.”

MEN

CHUNG-WAI
NOAM

CATS

GEOFFREY PANGUR GOURMANDIZER
NIGEL WYSTAN MARMALADE





“She’s 12 or 13—an old lady with the spirit of a kitten. Oops, she probably wouldn’t want me telling anyone her age.”

MAN
STEVE

CAT
ZOEY

BIRD: “Gertie was originally my son Max’s cat. Supposedly she followed him home, but more than likely she was carried all the way.”

MAX: “Mona came out of the trash and onto my bed.”

MEN

BIRD

(left)

MAX

(right)

CATS

GERTIE

(left)

MONA

(right)





“I tolerate cats and tell people they annoy me. I shouldn’t tell anyone this, but deep down I like to cuddle a cat in the winter.”

MAN
JEREMY

CAT
MOJO





“I consider myself a cat person,
but I’ve never really known
why. Maybe because I’m a Leo, I
never really believed too much
in that stuff.”

MAN

HALEY

(with Henry)

CAT

PEPPER

“We were fostering kittens, fell in love with River, and couldn’t let her go. She’s an angel. When we make eye contact, we share a deeper inner connection. It’s spiritual.”

MAN
DUSTIN

CAT
RIVER





“Carla and I have a very special relationship. She meets me at the foot of the driveway every day when I come home from work and demands, most vocally, that I pick her up and carry her around on my shoulders.”

MAN

BOB

CAT

CARLA

“Mac visits all the neighbors and has tons of cat friends on our block. People say he’s the cat version of me. Luna can defy gravity by leaping to the highest places in the house. And Nilla is so athletic and nimble that we think of her as a mix of cat, monkey, kangaroo, dog, and ferret.”

MAN
KEVIN

CATS
MAC
LUNA
NILLA





“A couple times a year, Bob gets a full body shave to stop her fur from matting. She gets a pom-pom tail and little fur booties around her ankles. It’s like getting a new cat again every time.”

MAN
ANDREW

CAT
BOB PAISLEY

“Cats don’t keep the same hours people do, so if they want to start running around the house like freaks at 2 a.m., they will. Other than that, they’re *waaaaay* easier than dogs.”

MAN
ANDY

CAT
UGGO

(aka Captain Crusty
Uggo Bum the First)





“My cats were born in a Chrysler Sebring at a used car lot, and their mother abandoned them. Now they follow me everywhere I go.”

MAN
ALEX

CAT
ALEX

“If you’re familiar with the story of Andromeda and the sea monster, you know that Perseus saves Andromeda’s life. Since I found this cat on the street on a dark and rainy night, it follows that I am Perseus in the modern-day cat version of the story. And who doesn’t want to be Perseus?”

MAN
LAURENCE

CAT
LADY ANDROMEDA





“Sam loves to help out
after a shower. She’ll
rub against our wet legs
and licks like she’s
trying to dry us off.”

MAN

JEFF

CAT

SAMANTHA

**WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART
OF CAT OWNERSHIP?**

“All the fur.”

CHAD WITH NEWTON



“The cat throwing up at 4 a.m. It’s
never at, like, two in the afternoon.”

ROSS WITH JABSCO





“Determining which cat food to get.”

MICHAEL WITH SADIE



“Nothing. Cats are perfect companions.”

MATT WITH TRIXIE

“It’s a constant struggle to be sure I have an endless supply of lint rollers. With the amount of hair that Sprinkles sheds, I’m seriously surprised there’s any of him left.”

MAN

DUSTIN

CAT

SPRINKLES





“My teenage sons wanted to name her Foxy, after Megan Fox, but that’s a ridiculous name for a cat. Daisy is *much* better.”

MAN

DAVE

(center, with Walker
and Creighton)

CAT

DAISY

“A friend rescued ten cats a few weeks after my old cat Felix passed away. I looked at it as a sign that Felix was telling me to give another kitty a great life.”

MAN
JAMES

CAT
SHADOW





“Growing up with cats made me a cat person. I have a badass motorcycle-riding/fixing math teacher of a dad who loved cats. We always had at least three cats at a time.”

MAN

BOB

CAT

HENRY T. EDWARD

“Big Boy is determined to sleep between my wife and me every night. There is no workaround.”

MAN
JOHNNY

CAT
BIG BOY





“Everyone in the family calls her something different. The boys call her Kitty, my wife calls her Izzy (shortened from her official name, Isabel), and I call her Mitzi, which is a classic Hebrew name for a cat. She answers to all her names the same way: by turning her face away and ignoring us.”

MAN
RONEN

CAT
ISABEL

(aka Mitzi, Izzy, or Kitty)

“Sneezele is the alpha animal in our house. He’s large and in charge, and he does what he wants. He’s a great cat, but a terrible kitty.”

MAN

STEVE

CAT

SNEEZELE





“Lemon was part of a feral litter my sister was fostering. She said she was the ugliest kitten she’d ever seen, so of course I immediately took her.”

MAN
JAKE

CAT
LEMON

“I’m fascinated by my cats’ willingness to bond, but on their own terms. I love it when I turn around and one of them is staring at me like a living sphinx.”

MAN

CHRIS

CAT

DOMINO





“Oliver is a keen-eyed hunter. If there’s a fly in the house, it’s only a matter of time before it’s fluttering on the floor. Phoebe is the social one who wants us to play with her. She’s a part of all our dinner parties.”

MEN

WALTER
JAKE

CATS

OLIVER
PHOEBE

“Having a cat is as close as you can get to owning your own lion or tiger. When Bootsy May and I go outside, she stalks me like prey, hiding behind bushes or trees and then pouncing. It’s a game to her—she catches me every time.”

MAN

SCOTT

CAT

BOOTSY MAY



JUSTIN: “My stepdad got my brother Eric and me into cats—he taught us how to hold them correctly and smother them with love, which we do to this day.”

ERIC: “We got a cat for my seventh birthday, and they’ve ruled my life ever since.”

MEN

JUSTIN

(left)

ERIC

(right)

CATS

MATTIE

BARSIK

(left)

GAMMA

(right)







“At first I hated my girlfriend’s cats. It nearly came to an ‘it’s them or me’ moment. But now I couldn’t live without them.”

MAN

ERIC

CATS

PUP

BEAN

“Sphynxes need tons of attention—baths, grooming, teeth brushing, ear cleaning, and so on. But it’s worth every minute because they’re amazing.”

MAN
SHAWN

CATS
ELWOOD
ROACH





“I love how cats can be incredibly agile and elegant one moment, and then total goofballs the next. We should all have that range.”

MAN
CHRIS

CAT
LYLA

“I’m a cat person and also a dog person. It feels odd to have one and not the other. Cats are low energy and dogs are high energy; cats are a little anti-social and dogs are socialites; cats are independent and dogs are dependent. When you have both, your home and life become a little more harmonious.”

MAN

DAVE

CAT

SMOKEY





“I grew up with cats and always understood them. But when I found myself creating an Instagram account for my cats, I knew I had gone full cat person.”

MAN

JAMES

CATS

FIN

SAWYER

“I started training Tlaloc on a leash when he was 3 months old, and now he can’t get enough. I have to walk him every night—he climbs trees, meets dogs, everything.”

MAN

ROCKY

CAT

TLALOC



NO
PARKING
12NOON - 2PM
FRIDAY
STREET CLEANING



“My cats are all super chill.
But Mulan comes running
when I play the guitar. She
likes it when I jam out with
new people, too. I would
say her favorite song
overall is ‘(White Man) In
Hammersmith Palais’
by the Clash.”

MAN

JARED

CATS

MULAN

JUNEAU

WEDNESDAY

“I love cats! I have a cat shirt collection. I run a cat-sitting business. I even ran a performance event and clothing company called Pussy Power in the late 1990s.”

MAN
TOPHER

CATS
BUDDY
RASCAL





“We found Kitty in our backyard. It was kind of tragic circumstances: her mama had placed all of her siblings in our pond, and she was the sole survivor. She was only 3 or 4 weeks old, so we nursed her along, and now she’s our chubbiest cat.”

MAN

PAUL

(with William)

CAT

KITTY

“Tess was sleeping by a heater when a chair accidentally fell on her leg. She was in a cast for three months. Now she’s out of the cast and fully healed with full range of motion. She’s back to playing fetch and giving nose kisses. She’s awesome.”

MAN
COREY

CAT
TESS



**WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART
OF CAT OWNERSHIP?**

“When they’re ill or hurting,
they hide it.”

KENT WITH MICKEY AND JESSE



“The shedding.”

MATT WITH PAM FROM ACCOUNTING





“We’re not counting cleaning the litter box, right? Because that’s the hardest.”

GRANT WITH TUX



“Leaving him for any period of time sucks.”

JOSH WITH LUCERO

“Callie has an array of sounds and noises to communicate with me. Her meows signal varying degrees of need, from a short staccato that calls for my attention to a drawn-out wail that conveys true misery. My favorite is a chirrup that she uses to acknowledge my presence, essentially a friendly hello.”

MAN
DENNIS

CAT
CALLIE





“In the city, Dylan sleeps most of the day. Then when we open the front door in the evening, he dashes out into the hall, excited to see us. In the country, he hunts for birds, chipmunks, and frogs. He likes to show off his game.”

MEN

TOM
JAY

CAT

DYLAN

“When I’m working from home, I’ll look up from the computer to see Kitten staring at me. I stare back, and she takes off. I chase her in laps around the apartment, and then she chases me in the opposite direction. I like to look at it as a little exercise break for the both of us.”

MAN
MICHAEL

CAT
KITTEN





“The most difficult thing about cats is the fact that they know they are better than you. Cats keep your ego in check.”

MAN
DEVITO

CAT
CARLOS

“When I got her she didn’t want to be touched at all. I wasn’t even able to pet her for at least a year. Now I can no longer lie down on my couch without her sitting on my chest and nuzzling my face.”

MAN
RANDALL

CAT
LIL MISFIT





“I think that all cats, like sports cars and fighter aircraft, are beautiful. They’re such a wondrous combination of form and function.”

MAN

BARRY

CATS

CHAS

PHERBER

“I wanted my cat’s name to be his personality, so I waited to name him. After a few weeks, I decided he was a Steve.”

MAN

DAN

CAT

STEVE





“The most difficult thing about
owning a cat is not owning
more of them.”

MAN
PAUL

CAT
EMO

“I like dogs, but cats have always been more my speed. Professor is very relaxed in his everyday life, and I try to be like that.”

MAN

RUBEN

CAT

PROFESSOR





“Don’t even think about wearing black around these cats because you’ll look half cat if you even glance at them. SO MUCH HAIR.”

MAN
KEVIN

CATS
GARFIELD
CYRUS

“I grabbed him from the main street in my town so he wouldn’t get run over. That night while I was lying in bed, he jumped on my chest and started kneading his paws in my beard and licking my face. I fell in love with the guy.”

MAN

BRENT

CAT

SAMMY

(aka Samuel “T” Cat)





“I was left with cats and had to make the most of it. Now I love them more than anything because we’re a team. They aren’t my ‘kids’ or my ‘furry babies.’ They’re my shitty roommates whom I adore taking care of.”

MAN

JARED

CATS

RILEY

BELLA

“My family has always had cats, but my girlfriend had only known barn and feral cats, so she didn’t know how great they are when socialized properly. I finally convinced her to let me get Doc, and now they’re inseparable.”

MAN

BEN

CAT

DOC PAWLIDAY





“Before Baomiao, I only ever thought of cats as a source of allergic misery. But I had read that if you wash a kitten once a week for a few months, it will forever after produce less of the allergen. I tried it and sure enough, to this day I am still allergic to almost all cats except Baomiao.”

MAN
ZOLTAN

CAT
BAOMIAO

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