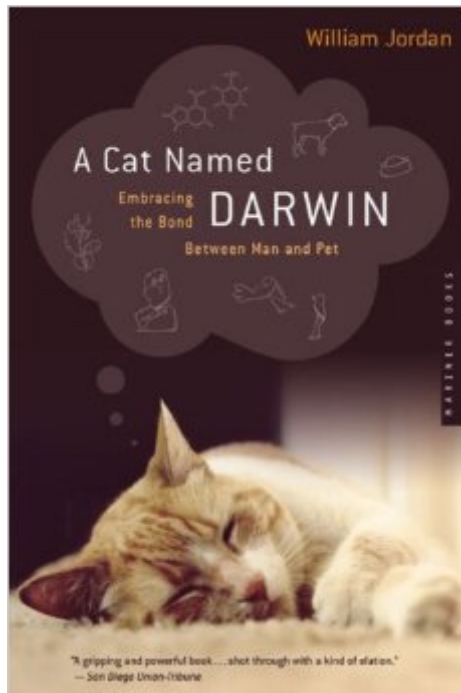


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A Cat Named Darwin: Embracing The Bond Between Man And Pet



Synopsis

In this endearing memoir, William Jordan's reluctant adoption of a stray cat leads to an unexpectedly deep bond, one that will be immediately recognizable to anyone who has ever fallen under the spell of a pet. When Jordan brings Darwin into his home, he is forced into a commitment more devoted and sincere than any he has known before. He observes Darwin not only with the lovestruck gaze of a doting pet owner but also with the keen eye of a trained scientist, and he ruminates insightfully on the complex relationship between humans and their pets. Through issues of territory and separation, sickness and health, Jordan's heartrending memoir of his relationship with Darwin is made irresistible by his "self-effacing honesty, his ever-present wit, and, above all, the unashamed nakedness of his emotions" (San Diego Union-Tribune).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have two cats of my own and I recognize they're not going to be with me forever: Someday I will have to make the decision to let go of them. I read A Cat Named Darwin to gain some insight into how another pet owner dealt with end-of-life decisions. The book gave me some great insight but it also left me conflicted, frustrated, and a bit angry. I'm still glad I read it, though, because it gave me a lot to think about. Jordan is a died-in-the-wool scientist and tries to explain almost everything in the book--including his emotions--from a scientific perspective. Indeed, that is the foremost purpose/theme of the book. At the human level, it made me mourn for a man who seems to have no hope beyond evolutionist thought. Jordan seemed to struggle at the cusp of considering the spiritual or the supernatural throughout the novel but almost invariably falls back on attributing everything to

complex chemical interactions. I did greatly appreciate some of his scientific explanations, especially the one about how humans possibly grieve so deeply because the portion of the brain dedicated to caring for someone or something (e.g. a pet) no longer serves any purpose once that someone or something is gone. Another explanation I really appreciated was his scientific comparison/description of dog owners versus cat owners. I thought he did a nice job of explaining why certain human personalities gravitate toward certain pets. As a Christian, I see no indication in the Bible that animals have a soul or that Christ-followers will someday get to see their beloved pets again in Heaven. Therefore, it's hard to stomach that this time on earth is the only time I'll get to spend with my animals. I sensed that same frustration in Jordan, too, though he makes no reference to the afterlife.

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