



The Cat Who Covered the World: The Adventures Of Henrietta And Her Foreign Correspondent

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Henrietta was an ordinary New York City cat until she ventured overseas with foreign correspondent Christopher S. Wren and his wife and children. Over seventeen years and tens of thousands of miles, she became a plucky, indispensable companion for the reporter as he covered world events in Moscow, Cairo, Beijing, Ottawa, and Johannesburg.

Wren's often hilarious and sometimes poignant account of an American family's adventures crisscrossing the globe shows them coping with chaos in faraway places -- always with the help of their ever-resourceful feline. The result is a charming tale about a spunky, curious pet who earned the right to be ranked among the world's most widely traveled cats.

The Cat Who Covered the World: The Adventures Of Henrietta And Her Foreign Correspondent Details

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From Reader Review The Cat Who Covered the World: The Adventures Of Henrietta And Her Foreign Correspondent for online ebook

Brian says

"The Cat Who Covered the World" is a novel written by a journalist for the New York Times. This story begins with a coworker of the author bringing him a small cat and a bottle of Scotch. The author is called to work in Moscow, Russia on a writing assignment. Pressured by the pleas of his two children, Celia and Chris, he decided to take the cat, Henrietta, to Russia with him and his family. During the duration of the author's time in Russia, Henrietta turns from a shy little cat to a full grown animal. She spends time hunting in the apartment for mice to eat. She makes quite an impression on the two children by being their friend when they needed one and purring from enjoyment at the stroke of the children. Later in the book the family is moved from Russia to Cairo, Egypt. There, there are many sequences occur when Henrietta is faced with danger. The author is once again moved from Egypt to Japan. Here, Henrietta faces many problems such as, no beef, and all veggies. The family is also moved to China and then last of all England.

This book proved to me the ability of a pet to change someone's life. I personally own two cats and I know how it feels to lose or gain one. The base of this story was not well written or thought out. Being repetitive throughout the book did not intrigue as much as cat lovers. The book did have many good facts about the places the author went, but a lot of them were unnecessary. The book didn't really have a story to it since it was more like a list of things that Henrietta did. To the general public this book would not be interesting or fun to read at all. If I was looking for a book this one would not be on my reading list. It did not seem like a non-fiction piece, but more like a children's fiction book. Cat lovers would probably enjoy this book very much because the center of the book is the cat, and not what's going on around her, or where she is. The author does a good job of describing the cat, but he doesn't do a very good job of describing the setting or other characters.

Kristin says

While I'm usually a dog person, Henrietta's story intrigued me as it provided a unique look at a family's frequent efforts to intercalate itself into various cultures of the world, as anyone could write about how the human members are treated, but few people have taken their pet cat with them to live on 4 continents over the course of the cat's 15 or so years of life and know first-hand the challenges and benefits that may be encountered. Wren is a foreign correspondent for the New York Times and thus is sent to cover newsworthy areas of the world, from Russia before the breakup of the USSR, to Egypt during Anwar Sadat's Presidency, to South Africa at the end of apartheid and Mandela's release from prison. Naturally, he wrote about all of these events for the newspaper, but during a slow news period, he filed a story about his experiences taking Henrietta on these overseas assignments and got more reader response than any other piece to that point. If it was up to Wren, admittedly not a cat person, Henrietta never would have traveled the world, as he would have followed the precedent set by his fellow journalists and found her a new home with a colleague or friend before departing. However, he had two young children who had become attached to the cat, and he and his wife felt she would help them adjust to their new life in a foreign country. Therefore, Henrietta went everywhere with them; on plane trips, sometimes treated like royalty, other times like cargo; to hotels, including one that quarantined her in the basement yet her howls could be heard even outside; and especially to the family's new residences, which provided a variety of culinary options, from imported fish and caviar to rodents and giant cockroaches.

Overall an enjoyable book that educated me on the cultures of the countries where Wren and his family lived

in the late 1970s through early 1990s, better than any boring history book that would discuss the main events but not really show what life was like for the citizens and especially foreigners there to witness them.

Kris Sellgren says

Wren is a foreign correspondent for the New York Times, and this is a light-hearted romp through the adventures of his cat Henrietta (and her human family) while posted to Moscow, Cairo, Beijing, Ottawa, New York, and Johannesburg. We learn the ins and outs of finding cat food -- and cat litter -- in each of these places, as well as how the humans cope with changes in language, culture, bureaucracy, and cuisine. This charming memoir will cheer up any cat lover.

Pamela says

Don't read this if you don't like cats. Don't read this if you hold the following preconceptions about cats: a) cats don't like humans, b) cats are intellectually challenged, c) cats like to kill babies by stealing their breath d) you're a scaredy cat, e) you think cats should be forbidden to travel to foreign places that you will never find the money or time to visit. However, Wren's memoir of Henrietta's adventures might be the perfect gift for that cat-loving friend/ spouse/sibling/grumpy co-worker into whose good graces you wish to return.

I thought my feline companion, Maddie, would be interested in Henrietta's adventures, so I related some of Wren's stories about this jet-setting half-Siamese and the things she got up to in Moscow, Cairo, Beijing, South Africa, Canada and China. How she befriended Andrei Sakharov, how she nearly starved to death in Cairo, how much fun she had running about the cabins of jetliners, and how she had to stay off the streets of Beijing lest she become someone's dinner. Dinner. Of all the exciting adventures it was food that caught Maddie's attention the most.

"Caviar? She ate caviar?" her big eyes blurted out.

"Yes," I said. "And salmon and sturgeon and milk flown into Moscow from Finland and Parma ham from Italy."

"Really? She got all those fancy foods when ordinary Russians had to line up for days just for a loaf of stale bread and a carrot?"

"Yup," I said. "Maddie, I had no idea you had a social conscience."

She stared at me, hard. Her eyes beaming contempt.

"You got the wrong job, ma!" She got up, stretched out and began to walk away.

"But, Maddie, I give you ham, Black Forest ham. The expensive kind with no nitrates. NO NITRATES MADDIE."

Her butt toward me, she swished her tale, angrily.

"You get organic kibble, Maddie. And it's gluten free. GLUTEN FREE, Maddie. Don't walk away from me."

“Wrong job, ma. Wrrrooonnngggg job!”

Ken says

I'm sorry, but the anecdotes in this book are not nearly as interesting or amusing as the premise would suggest. The stories are generally along the lines of “my cat sat on Andropov’s lap” or “my cat ate from KGB trash cans.” And more of the same. Sorry, although this sounds like such an adorable book, it does not live up to expectations.

Kennedy says

I don't read pet stories very often. I can't handle when the pet dies.

I thought that The Cat Who Covered the World sounded fun though. Henrietta, the main catracheater (ha), was owned by a family of a New York Times reporter, so she followed them around the world. There were funny parts of the story. When the Wren family lived Moscow she was able to eat Russian caviar.

Henrietta sounded like a fun cat, but I really had a hard time liking her owners. We don't let our cat out because I'm worried she get hit by car or munched on by one of the many wild creatures around here. Henrietta's owners let her out in Beijing and Cairo. She disappeared for a month in Cairo before she showed up near starving.

It was a fun story, but I was left a bit disconcerted by the lack of care that I felt like Henrietta's owners gave her.

Susan says

This book is a lot of fun to read. I love the authors sense of humor. I love cats and I love reading about them. I was very touched by the love the author and his family had for their cat. I cannot imagine life without cats, or dogs, or books about them.

Peggy says

ADDED AFTER COMPLETION: I have to admit that I enjoyed the last section of the story of Henrietta the cat once I got back to finish it. In the right mood, at the right time and place, this can be a rather delightful quick little read and does bring along side of it the historical events which the foreign correspondent (Time magazine) was covering in various countries. I did have to add another star and could easily go 3.5.

EARLIER: This is another one of those books I read NEARLY all the way through and then just couldn't seem to quite finish... (abandoned it page 186 of 201 pages back in the fall). I guess that has to speak "volumes" (pardon the pun) about how much I am enjoying the read!

Well, you probably need to like cats to even undertake it at all; I do and would never have embarked at all if not. Also it was bought on a \$1.00 sale at Borders, so little harm done for a quick, light read - AND I have other "catty" friends I thought I could share with later (and guess I will as I can't imagine anyone requesting it on SWAP). Another "plus" is the travel stories involved; the author is a foreign affairs journalist who takes his whole family from post to post, along with their apparently very adventurous cat Henrietta. There are some interesting, humorous and fun little stories about various antics and diet issues and travel challenges in places such as Moscow, Cairo, Beijing, Ottawa and Johannesburg.

That said, it is a light read bordering on fluff and eventually begins to run thin, or at least did so for me. Still, for something quick and easy and non-cumbersome mentally or physically, it could just fill the bill for somebody in some situation or other. I must add that Christopher Wren DOES tell Henrietta's story with enjoyable enough clever patter to entertain for a while.

Sarah says

My sister lent me this book to read. Her cats had urinated on it at some point so there was a little something extra that made me feel like Henrietta was right there with me. Now, I have barely been able to manage a fifteen minute car ride to the vet's for rabies shots in case my own cats happen to survive a fox attack. The fact that this cat lived through car rides, planes and getting lost in various countries may be enough right there to warrant writing a book. This unusual upbringing also affected Wren's children, who developed wanderlust and were disappointed in American kids' consuming interest of their own welfare over world events. This book is worth your time, but just find a clean copy to read.

April says

I love books like this! In the beginning I didn't like the author and his anti-feline feelings. Thank goodness he was convinced to change them by none other than Miss Henrietta! I enjoyed seeing different cultures through a cat's eye!

Susan says

Interesting and somewhat entertaining because of the countries lived in, but I didn't get the sense the author (or even the family) was a true cat lover. Given the fact that the cat was allowed to roam free in whatever city or hotel/apartment/home they were in, cross busy streets, disappeared in Egypt for weeks, and given MILK on a regular basis, suggests either they were terribly ignorant and/or the author embellished quite a bit.

Sally Bennett says

Henrietta was blessed. She led an amazing life so full of adventure. And, as animals always do, she taught her humans the meaning of love.

As an ethical vegan, a couple of the stories were difficult for me to read. One in particular left me wondering

how her well-educated humans couldn't anticipate the deadly outcome which I could see coming the moment the rabbit arrived at their home. But like so many others, theirs was a pet-one-eat-the-others family.

Overlooking those couple of issues that were personally hard for me, the book was a delight to read. I thoroughly loved living vicariously through Henrietta as she traveled the world and taught her family about the value of life, as well.

Sarah says

My dad was college roommates with the author, which is how I found out about this book. It's a lot of fun.

Margaret Perdue says

I enjoyed the details of traveling with the family cat and how much Henrietta was a part of the family. But it didn't seem to read with as much emotion as I thought it should.

M— says

Purchased on the fly and enjoyed highly. I'm not an avid reader of the New York Times and have not read Wren's articles, but his writing style really clicked with me. This is an ideal book for any cat lover, with heaps extra bonus points if the reader is also a travel enthusiast. And the Meilo So illustrations were whimsical and perfect.

Three and a half stars, rounded up to four possibly because of the illustrations. I had a lot of fun reading this, but I won't be likely to have the urge to read it again.
