



Cat Daddy: What the World's Most Incurrigible Cat Taught Me About Life, Love, and Coming Clean

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Cat behaviorist and star of Animal Planet's hit television show My Cat from Hell, Jackson Galaxy, a.k.a. "Cat Daddy," isn't what you might expect for a cat expert. Yet Galaxy's ability to connect with even the most troubled felines -- not to mention the stressed-out humans living in their wake -- is awe-inspiring.

In this book, Galaxy tells the poignant story of his thirteen-year relationship with a petite gray-and-white short-haired cat named Benny, and gives singular advice for living with, caring for, and loving the feline in your home.

Cat Daddy: What the World's Most Incorporrigible Cat Taught Me About Life, Love, and Coming Clean Details

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From Reader Review Cat Daddy: What the World's Most Incorrigible Cat Taught Me About Life, Love, and Coming Clean for online ebook

Jay Greenwood says

Amazing, Cat Daddy is simply amazing. A surprise, a pleasure, and for me, a brutally honest view of the modern human experience. Once I picked it up, it didn't leave my fingers until every page was turned.

Let me start by being honest myself. When I first saw "My Cat from Hell", I thought that Jackson Galaxy was a tool. I mean, come on, who is named Jackson Galaxy? Who shaves their beard halfway and wears neon pink vests? What can a guy who has giant dangling piercings, a bald head, and a body full of tattoos teach me? I thought it was all for show, to make money off a niche that hadn't been exploited yet. And while I have a healthy distrust of "reality television", this book gave me a new respect for the man and his commitment to animals.

Just like Jackson found a part of himself in a broken white and gray cat named Benny, I saw myself in Jackson. I connected with every chapter, experiencing a full range of emotions, from laughter, to tears. I felt myself connect on matters of addiction, rage, jealousy and control. I went into this hoping to learn more about cats, and I ended up learning more about myself, more than I had cared to. I wasn't prepared.

Each chapter of Cat Daddy is a short story in itself, though it does occasionally tie into the TV show. When it does, it is done in such a subtle way that it never feels forced. A chapter rarely ends without having realized that Jackson just taught you one of the foundations of his "Cat Mojo" methods. The stories will effect you on such a deep and personal level that you will truly understand why cats respond to these actions. Jackson introduces us to the, "Cat I Love You" slow blink, the "Three Step Handshake" introduction, and many other strange, but successful, cat behavior tools. All the while using powerful and sometimes heart wrenching stories to teach them.

It would be ignorant to say that this book doesn't teach us anything about cats, I think it does so in a way that no other book has. Many of the stories revolve around the aforementioned cat, Benny. Benny is the combination of every problem cat out there, a cat who was labeled, "unbondable", and abandoned at a shelter in Bolder, Colorado.

Here the story begins. All of the behaviors that Jackson now helps solve for others, all stem from his challenges owning a small cat with a smudged nose. I can't help but think of the all too overused quote, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." Jackson teaches us how to fish. If you don't see your feline companion in a new way after closing this book, you might just be a dog person.

Jackson has a lot to say about the mistreatment of cats, and the millions of pets that are put down each year for no cause. If you are sensitive to foul language, discussion of addiction, and the haunting details of euthanized animals, you should probably prepare yourself. If you think a cat isn't a commitment, if you think declawing is an option, if you don't spay your animals, Jackson is going to have two words, and one of them ends in, "...you".

In my favorite scene, (view spoiler) In that moment, you can feel the energy, the transformation. From Jackson Galaxy, addict, liar, narcissist. To Jackson Galaxy, Cat Daddy, advocate and reality star. It's a powerful scene, and in a way its an epiphany, a change of energy, and a new outlook, that all of us hope to

and maybe fear to experience one day.

Jackson confronts his addictions and failures so openly, and so honestly, that you can't help but look inward at your own shortcomings. Whether it be drugs, food, love, or even cats, everything can become an addiction to an addict. I have never considered myself an addict, because I function in everyday life. But so does Jackson, and he does not hold back the punches, he realizes that only through complete and total honesty, only by ripping open his soul for us, only then is he able to make us truly feel his experience.

In doing so, I not only felt what Jackson felt, but I started to see the patterns, the warning signs, and the addictions, in myself. I started to analyze my own conditions, my own projections onto my pets, my own fears, and my own futile grasp on order and control. I felt the same anxieties, and recognized the same types of sabotage that Jackson inflicted on himself to hide from the world. Like the people in his life that pushed him to keep going, he pushes you to look at your own shortcomings, he calls you a hypocrite to your face, and he's right. Perhaps it was a bait and switch, but it's one I am glad to have taken part of.

Whether you read this book to find out how the man became a cat phenomenon, or if you read it to find advice on battling your own demons, I can only highly recommend it and give it a solid 5 stars.

Brilliant writing by Jackson and his co-writer, brilliant story, brilliant lessons, and just pure brilliance all around. I for one, welcome Jackson Galaxy as a representative of modern cat culture.

Stacey B. says

MY THOUGHTS: I thought this would be a good book, but I had no idea how good of a book it would actually be. I am a huge fan of the show My Cat From Hell, so when I was at the library and I saw that this was a book, I knew I had to get it. Soon after, audible had a deal on this book, and I scooped it up. I love when writers narrate their own books because they can put emphasis on certain words or phrases that they want to stand out. Jackson does a great job with that in his book. I can hear in his tone of voice when he is angry or excited, etc. and it makes me feel those things right along with him.

I went through quite a lot of emotions in this book. I am an animal lover and have had my fair share of pets in the past, the present and most likely will have in the future. Therefore, I can put myself in Jackson's shoes during some parts of this book. I don't know what it's like to be addicted to drugs, but I do know what it's like to love an animal, and I could feel the love that Jackson has for his cat Benny. There was a chapter of this book that was particularly hard for me to listen to which made me tear up and feel quite emotional (I happened to be driving in the car at the time of course!). But being able to connect to something on that level just makes it better for me.

If you are already a fan of Jackson Galaxy, or you love animals, this is a book for you.

Jen says

I'm not done yet, but I wanted to comment on some reviews I've read...I'm not understanding how people are giving this book lower stars or a less than glowing review because they expected it to be a cat behavior book.

It's subtitled: "What the World's Most Incurable Cat Taught Me About Life, Love, and Coming Clean."

Not: "How I Taught the World's Most Incurrigible Cat to Live, Love, and Be Clean."

Rate a book on it's content and it's writing. Not your expectations.

Kelly says

Take the love you feel for one and love all. The process is terrifying. Loving the world is not like the trust fall exercise you did in EST, summer camp, or your last corporate retreat; loving the world is far bigger than that and far more impossible.

I'll say this much: you won't read the book if you don't love animals, but if you love animals, whether or not you know who this guy is, this is one to read. Not because it's brilliant but because sometimes you like hearing how much other people love being a pet owner as much as you do.

It was sort of a fluke finding Galaxy's show "My Cat From Hell," to be honest. But the minute I started watching I really fell in love with him. He's a big dude with tattoos, piercings, and he carries himself like one of those too-cool-for-life guys. But the second he opens his mouth and steps into the homes of people who are desperate for help with their cats, he is one of the most down to earth, humble people to watch. I'd go as far as to say he has a gift, but he'd probably hate that sort of term for what he can do.

See, the thing about Galaxy's attitude that makes me appreciate him so much is that he doesn't look at problems as things that can't be fixed. But anyone who watches the show (and reads the book) will learn pretty quickly that the "problems" people have with their pets are never about the pets. It's about the people. I'd venture to guess the bulk of the people dealing with cat problems on the show and in the book have them not because they're bad people or bad pet owners; for the most part, it's because they're struggling with something personally that they don't want to face. And that's where I think Galaxy's approach is one I can't stop watching or thinking about. He doesn't just "treat" an animal. He "treats" the people too. The idea that nothing is unfixable is something that's hard to grapple with, but it's true. There's no problem that can't be solved or adapted to. You just have to be willing to put in the work.

The book itself follows Galaxy's story from being a drug-addicted, goal-less guy just getting by. He admits to living a life that's just about survival, as long as he got to play his music at night. He was happy about it. But the chance opportunity to work in a shelter really caused him to reevaluate what it was that made him happy, and he realized that just connecting with the animals there -- both the four-legged kind and the two-legged kind -- brought him the kind of satisfaction he didn't know he could have. And he was GOOD at it, too.

He never portrays himself as a hero or even, really, as a likeable guy. But he doesn't play the pity card at all, either. Throughout the book, Galaxy talks about how being the caretaker for Benny, a notoriously hard-to-please cat, ultimately caused him to think about his own life and choices. Being forced to learn how to communicate with a difficult creature made him better able to be a communicator with himself.

But you see what he does here -- Galaxy gives you an impression of who he is, but he forces you to reevaluate your own biases because he is not at all what you'd expect of "someone like him." Just like a difficult cat isn't that, either.

The writing here isn't very good, to be honest, and the book itself meanders a lot. But I think for what it was, it was enjoyable. Galaxy lays out what a lot of people who love animals know, so it's much less about him and much more about reminding readers that animals can be a huge part of what makes life enjoyable. And yes, yes, yes, there is death in this book and there is more than one chapter about euthanasia, and yes, yes,

yes, I cried my eyes out more than once. But the thing is, Galaxy's approach to it is really sort of empowering, rather than painful. He just has a damn good attitude, period.

Much as it isn't an award winning book nor never will be, it's worth it to read for animal lovers. The little blurb on the cover about there being tips for raising happy and healthy cats is a little misleading. There's very little of that.

I did read this while my three shelter-adopted cats snoozed happily on my lap, thank you very much.

I cannot believe I wrote this long a review about a book titled "Cat Daddy."

Sue Jaffarian says

Very interesting look into the life of Jackson Galaxy. Thoroughly enjoyable.

Cheryl Anne Gardner says

Let me just preface this review by saying that I'm a twenty year ferret caretaker. I never had cats until I recently adopted a feral from my yard last August who we had been working with and caring for for six years. He eventually wanted to come in, so we let him. Cat guardianship is all new to me, but animal guardianship, in general, is not. I've been a lifelong animal lover and caretaker, so I devoured this book in a weekend. Galaxy is a kindred spirit, and I could not put this book down from the time it came in the mail until I finished in two days, and while it's not a light read, there is enough self-deprecating humor sprinkled throughout that the reader won't feel bludgeoned by the subject matter, and Galaxy touches on some very dark, disturbing, and controversial subject matter with regards to the animal welfare and shelter system currently operating in the US.

Most of the book is the autobiographical account of Galaxy's ascent out of the hell we know of as addiction. Galaxy was addicted to everything pretty much: pills, booze, pot, prescription drugs, and food, which were really only symptoms of a greater addiction: Galaxy's neurotic fear of being a fraud and a failure -- a fear most of us have had at some point in our lives, more so painfully felt if you are a creative type -- but Galaxy was at least self-aware enough to understand that fixating on himself wasn't going to improve his situation. People always like to tell addicts to "get over themselves," and in reality, that is wise advice when put in the proper context.

Galaxy did attempt to get over himself, hoping that if he focused his energy on helping shelter animals that somehow he would be able to manage his own demons and get himself some direction in life. He was right, but he didn't go in clean, so the physical and emotional pressures of working in the shelter system simply made things worse. Galaxy did find his calling as a cat behaviorist, but not without tripping, stumbling, and falling on his face along the way. Galaxy's life was a train wreck waiting to happen, and the carnage he left in his wake affected everything and everyone around him, including his cats. You can't have a good relationship with an addict. It's just not possible, and that is the truth of the story. How could Galaxy possibly have a healthy relationship with these troubled animals if he couldn't even have one with himself?

Benny the cat's story is also sad but not uncommon. In our throw away society, animals are nothing more than a commodity: something to own like a designer handbag. Most people, including Galaxy at that time, are woefully ill equipped for animal guardianship, and sad to say, most people are way too self-centered to

give what takes when it comes to loving and caring for an animal properly. Most people buy and/or adopt an animal because "they the human" need something. They put their human need first. Who the animal is and what the animal needs are often marginalized if not downright ignored. Animal guardianship is a commitment. It's work, and it's for life.

Now I don't want to spoil the book, it's such a wonderful and inspiring read. It's about hope, and faith, and the struggle to find it and keep it - with a few helpful cat care tips mixed in a long the way -- so I'll just say: if you've worked in the shelter system, you'll get it. If you've screamed, cried, and felt hopelessly impotent while caring for a disabled and/or sick animal, you'll get it. If you've ever struggled with addiction of any kind, you'll get it. If you understand that "you" directly affect how your animal companion understands and behaves in its/your world, then you'll get it, and, lastly, if you are the sort of person who understands that people don't own animals, that they share their lives with us, and that they are unique sentient beings who deserve our respect and understanding, so much so that you are the sort of person who is willing to spend endless hours educating yourself so that you can provide the most enriching and healthy quality of life possible for your animal companion, then you will totally get it. I could rant here about the pet industry, but I won't. Jackson Galaxy does plenty of ranting in the book. We just need to support the cause.

I've gone from ferret person to cat person in a very short span of time. When my last ferret passed away of old age, I could have wallowed in it, but I had a cat to care for. A cat who had had a hard life on the street; a cat who needed reassurance and comfort during the difficult transition it had decided to make. It decided to put its life in my hands the day it walked into the house on its own for the first time, and I could not have succeeded in rehabilitating my Moon kitteh without the helpful advice of people like Jackson Galaxy. If you are looking for a "How-to" manual for cats, this isn't the book. I would think of it as a "How I made myself a better person and a better guardian" sort of book. If that's your cuppa tea, then you'll get it.

Eyehavenofilter says

I don't really know why I picked up this book, 'cept I have psycho cats (seriously psycho) and was hoping to find out why they fight at 3:00AM EVERY morning, well, almost every morning. Jackson Galaxy is the host of the TV show " My Cat From Hell". This is how he got there. However, it is also a peek inside the way animals communicate with us, emulate us, and ultimately change us, or try to, with some great tips sprinkled in on how to observe your own pets and see what's really going on.

I have tried to write this review 3 times and I hope I do it justice.

This is funny, enjoyable, yet tragic, and distressing, but its a quick read, especially of you love your animals. Jackson Galaxy, had a major problem, himself.

He can't seem to get out of his own way. He writes this honestly and candidly, his lifestyle was less than stellar, and may not be for everyone, (but there is more to this than just Jackson.) it's a cautionary tale for both human and animal.

His addiction to perscription drugs, bad girls, and pot, had not been helpful in forwarding his budding musical career.

He needed a job, and eventually ended up working at the animal shelter.

There he found out the inconvenient truth of what really goes on in animal shelters today.

He does his best to ease the pain of the animals that are in his care, and to find homes for the animals that people discard. His heart seems to be in the right place, and despite his self destructive nature, he finds himself, and his destiny.

Jackson is a " cat daddy " ! A behaviorist in the real sense of the word.

Now I know we all feel like Moms and Dads to our pets, but Jackson is the real thing.

He can communicate with cats. In actuality he knows how to

observe their behavior, and figure out what it is that is driving them...well " catty " .
Along the way, He bonds with Buddy a homeless cat, gets promoted, gets fired....almost dies.....
but wait.... I'm getting ahead of the real story, and you just have to go there yourself.
Pathetically I have to admit it made this usually meaner than a snake reviewer, cry.
Oh shut up.... Don't judge me!

Gretchen says

I wanted to love this book; I really did. I am a fan of Jackson Galaxy's Animal Planet show, and I really appreciate him and his mission to help cats and other pets find forever homes and stay in homes once they are placed. However, this book was not my favorite.

I did understand going in that this was a memoir about how Jackson's relationship with his cat Benny helped him through a very difficult time in his life and helped him kick his addictions. At least, that's what I thought it was about. However, I have to say that I didn't really see this play out in the book. Mostly it seemed to be about Jackson and his drug and alcohol problem, and then every once in awhile he would come back to Benny briefly, and then go back to the addiction problem. I guess for me I didn't really see Benny as having a significant role.

The writing style was not my favorite either. Too many metaphors, and too much switching between past and present tense. Sometimes I got so bogged down in the overuse of figurative language that I had to really concentrate to figure out what was happening in the book. The organization of the book a lot of times was confusing to me -- is this a narrative or just a series of vignettes? Finally, I just had to sit down and pound through the last 50 pages just to get it over with.

I really respect Jackson Galaxy as a cat behaviorist, but he should definitely not quit his day job. But maybe now that he's gotten this memoir out of the way, a future book could focus more on cat behavior. Because I did enjoy the cat mojo tips that were sprinkled throughout the book.

Rebecca Huston says

A very interesting, non-fluffy book about cats, and living with them. Jackson Galaxy is outspoken, honest and compassionate, and I can happily recommend this one. Two serious notes here -- he's very honest about overcoming alcohol and drug addiction and that won't sit well with some readers, and also about spaying and neutering your pets. Four stars overall.

For the longer review, please go here:
http://www.epinions.com/review/Cat_Da...

Angie says

<http://angelasanxiouslife.blogspot.co...>

The book focuses on who this guy is??? I mean how does a guy who looks like Jackson become and advocate for cats? I am totally with him too when it comes to spaying and neutering your pets. There are millions and millions of pets. Do we really need anymore? Do people really need to make that \$1000 off another litter of animals. So sad. Please Please read this book if you are thinking about getting a pet ESPECIALLY a cat. I just dished out almost \$1500 on my cat in 2 weeks. He is healthy and 100% better... are you willing to do this? Also watch the show if you are lost and don't know what to do with you cat. It might just keep that cat in it's forever home.

Online Eccentric Librarian says

More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>

I chose to list to the audio version of this book, narrated by Jackson Galaxy. Really, there is nothing more poignant, emotional, and compelling than a book with this much pathos actually narrated by the author himself. It allows Galaxy to punctuate and accurately show the triumphs and failures - in his own unique voice.

As the title suggests, this is about the 'cat daddy' as he was nicknamed. But it is also about his relationship with a very unhappy cat (hit by a car, abandoned) he fostered early in his cat behavior career. Though both animals, human and feline, had a lot stacked up against them, they manage together to create a relationship. In the end, Jackson learns a lot about feline behavior through his difficult charge(s) and the cat, Benny, is given as comfortable a life as can be achieved with the amount of physical debilitations with which he will be challenged.

This is a book about recovery from several types of addictions - eating disorders, prescription drugs, illegal drugs, etc. Although it had the potential to become preachy (and I'm very sensitive to that, so I was worried going in), I found that he really didn't shove anything down anyone's throat. Similarly to how he deals with cats, he doesn't force a viewpoint, he lays it out and leaves it there to be dissected or ignored.

This is a relatively short book. It is broken down into vignettes/events that characterized certain points of his 'cat daddy' life. It starts with working at a shelter, where he will eventually meet Benny, and really ends with Benny's death (a heartwrenching chapter) years later. In between, both will go through a lot to arrive at that point.

This isn't a book about cat behavior and it isn't a book about his cat Benny. It's about the man behind the cat and it makes for a compelling, honest, easy-to-follow and in many ways uplifting story of a cat advocate. And yes, the audio version of this is AMAZING - definitely hold out for the audio version!

Note that there is an extra chapter at the end with cat behavior recommendations.

surfmadpig says

This is what you would get if you met a drunk Jackson Galaxy on holiday who decided to share the story of his life with you over the course of an entire night.

What you get is: brutal honesty, well-meaning but vague lessons about acceptance, struggle and addiction, a bittersweet calm joy for his achievements. Cats are sprinkled in the mix, not that generously, but only because you know this guy is bound to mention cats quite often. You like this guy, his monologue is interesting.

At the same time, and because of the aforementioned imagined conditions, this book feels a lot like a verbal monologue: It lacks cohesion, it's too random at times. He means well, but he's drunk and jumps from incident to incident, then comes back. Sometimes he tries too hard to be poetic, not in a literary but in a philosophical/mystical sense. Tenses are confused, metaphors get too tiring. This book is just not well-written in any way.

Sure, it's well-spoken, in terms of honesty and intentions and actual sharing and bonding with the listener. But we haven't actually met Mr. Galaxy on that beach, although we know a little about his life now, and empathize, and even like him a little more.

I'm surprised there was a ghostwriter involved in this. He has obviously failed greatly, because the actual content is a decent story with positive messages. It's the way it's written and organized that costs this book greatly and makes it tiring at times.

DROPPING OUT says

An easy book to read in a sitting or two.

I desperately wanted to like this book because I like Galaxy's program on Animal Planet, and because he has devoted so much time and effort in helping people to live with cats. (I was permitted no pets as a child, but cats entered my life forty years ago and are now fully there. So I am an unabashed cat person.)

The ghost-writing is breezy, even flip. But I learned as a child that people who resort to "curse words" show they have a limited vocabulary and possibly a limited mind. (Far too much freakin' use of the F word!)

I learned a good deal of about Galaxy's personal life (perhaps in greater detail than necessary) and too little about cats.

(And what there is of cat wisdom will be known to anyone who watches his program with any regularity).

But I was deeply moved about the live and travails of his cat, Benny.

Emily says

Frankly, I'm amazed that Mr. Galaxy lived long enough to write this book. To me, that is part of the problem of this book, as it spent quite a lot of time chronicling the author's struggle with drugs, alcohol and food.

Benny, meant to be the inspiration for writing this book, seemed to be more of a side character and, while I got an essence of what made him so special, I wanted to spend more time with him and less time in AA. There were also some turns of phrase that were too clever for their own good, however, it is difficult to tell if they are attributable to Mr. Galaxy or Mr. Derfner. What does shine through is the author's voice, which is extremely compelling and readable. I hope the next book is about feline behavior, because the tips that were sprinkled through were tantalizing.

Naomi says

Read my full review:<http://bit.ly/1cqk5CY>

My opinion: OK...LET ME GIVE A PREFACE WARNING!! IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A CUTE CAT BOOK OR ARE SIMPLY A FAN OF JACKSON'S SHOW, CAN ONLY HANDLE NICE-NICE AND NOT OPEN TO THIS MAN'S ROUGH START OR HIS INCREDIBLY STRONG OPINIONS...THIS BOOK IS NOT FOR YOU. THIS BOOK IS RAW. THIS BOOK IS GRITTY. AND YES...THERE IS PLENTY OF SWEARING!

This is one of those books that the book description is so off from what the book is truly about that I would have to ask the person who wrote the book's description....What (dramatic pause) were you thinking? Did you even read the book?

Jackson's early life is one that many addicts can relate to and is written with such insight that I have seen it in many a client. This continued on with addressing or not addressing the underlying causes for his addictions that had not been addressed.

I felt a "YEAH BOY" with his strong opinions on issues such as cat declawing; spay/neutering; kill versus no kill shelters, etc.

He does give advice for reading your cat, but it was few and far between. One had to really read and grasp the entire story to pull those situations out.

This book was so engrossing on so many levels and so many topics that I had to force myself to push it aside. I ended up listening to this book
