

All About Cats



Cat Tales Galore
History, Personality, Daily Life
Health, Habits, and Much More
Narrated by Freddy the Cat

Tygo Lee

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Note from the author:

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Prologue

Hi! I'm Freddy the Cat. Nice to meet ya!

Tygo Lee is a good friend of mine, and he loves us cats a lot!

He asked me if I could write a book about my own species for cat lovers to enjoy. He said I could include whatever information and details I wanted to. Well, I was excited about the opportunity, so I accepted!

I chose around 50 topics that I thought might be interesting and explained them in my own way, hoping that most of the stuff I noted is more or less correct. Keep in mind please that it's been a long time since my kitty school days, so I tried to remember these things the best I could and dictated to Tygo what I considered to be important.

Thus, what follows is my personal account of us cats. It's how I see us, and if I did okay, maybe you'll understand your furry friends a little better after having a relaxing read.

Hey, this was fun!

Here we go: *All About Cats*

Yours truly,
Freddy the Cat

Cat Tale 01: *Felis Silvestris Catus*

That's me! Actually, that's us! You know, *cats!*

Hi, I'm Freddy the Cat. It's nice to meet you! I'll be your tour guide throughout this book and I'm proud to be introducing you to my species in general and offering you a lot of cool details about us. It should be pretty exciting exploring the wonderful world of us kitties, don't you think? Ready or not, here we go!

They tell me this *Felis silvestris catus* designation is a Latin-based term that humans use in their taxonomical classification systems to refer to the beautiful, cuddly, meowing creatures found living on this planet that so many people lovingly know as *felines*. I don't why they have this obsession with using Latin, which I understand that they refer to as a *dead* language. Well, dead is dead, so I say why mess around with its much-desired eternal rest!

Anyway, this *Felis silvestris catus* could be translated as "domestic cat" or "housecat." That's much simpler to deal with, wouldn't you agree? And it makes sense since we like to hang out in *houses* and we are fully into the *domesticated* lounge-on-the-couch, sleep-on-the-bed, and patrol-the-kitchen scene. Cool, huh!

The generally accepted what's-up-with-us basics are that we're small, furry, carnivorous mammals that are especially appreciated for our getting along really well with humans. We're also known for our super expert hunting skills of spiders, mice, lizards, cockroaches, and other bothersome pests that invade the household territories.

"Small," they say? Well, that's a relative term. As long as you don't use it disrespectfully, I'm okay with that.

"Furry?" Without a doubt. You should see the luxurious coat I wear around for everybody to see!

Carnivorous mammals? Yeah, we like *meat*. A lot! Beef and maybe pork are acceptable if prepared properly. Chicken is paw licking delicious. And more than anything, if you got any fish in the house, that would be the most recommendable and tasty of all.

By the way, someone told me once that fish is not meat but rather it's... fish. Say what? Well, who cares. Call it what you want, but for this kitty, it's fish, fish, and more fish. And don't be worrying about whether it fits in the carnivorous classification or not. Just pop open one of those little, round cans of the cut-up, savory swimming things and I'll be meowing my thanks to you in delight!

As for the "hunter of pests" part, we've got that situation under control at all times. It's natural for us to be on the lookout for those crawling or climbing creatures, either using them as movable playthings or simply going for the kill once and for all. In other words, you can feel safe from unwanted invasions or bothersome visits when you've got a Freddy the Cat hanging out around the house. We're on guard duty 24/7, and that's a 365, okay!

Cat Tale 02: An Ancient Mau

How about if I fill you in on some neat stuff about us kitties that I learned in my feline history classes during my schooling days? You can take notes if you'd like and pass on this valuable information to your children, as I'll do with mine when yours truly settles down for family life at some point in the future. But no rush on that last part since I'm still enjoying my frisky freedom of bachelorhood at the moment! Anyway...

There are researchers who think that my species was first domesticated in Egypt— our original sacred territories— around 2,000 B.C. (“Before the modern Cat era”). Wow, that's probably a really long time ago, huh?

Some archeologists even go on to say that dogs had been domesticated thousands of years before us due to their helping out the humans with the hunting activities. Us cats, being more independent and aristocratic creatures, took more time making friends with the ancient Egyptians and thus for them to allow us to go into their houses.

There you have it— aristocratic cats from the very beginning of time. Yeah, we got the noble blood in us. No surprise there!

Now that I might have your full attention, I'll tell you a little more.

Our tale starts out with the Egyptian Mau, which at times was referred to as Miu or Mii, or something to do with “he or she who mews.” Pretty logical kind of name, huh?

I might've been called Freddy the Mau or Freddy the Miu in one of my past nine lives that they say that we get to enjoy, don't you think?

Even more interesting, at least a part of our genealogical line maybe goes back around 3,000 years to some African Wild Cat—*Felis silvestris catus*. Yeah, it's that Latin expression again. Anyway, now you know why so many of us kitties have been named Felix or Sylvester. I told ya that this history stuff was valuable information, so that's why we're starting out with a few details here.

Cat Tale 03: Part of the Pantheon

The story gets even more historical! In my Ancient Feline History and Cat Mythology class, my teacher told me that the earliest known remains of a cat in Egypt were dated to sometime before 4,000 B.C. In one archeological site in particular, they uncovered more than 300,000 *mummified* cats all wrapped up and hanging out in the same place. *Spooky!*

And get this. It's been suggested that the status of the cat was so high in Ancient Egypt that our death frequently caused great suffering among our Egyptian families. That brings a tear to my eyes. Thus, we were commonly given the option of a full embalming ceremony and many times were buried right next to our caretakers in some of the most exclusive cemeteries along the Nile River.

In brief, I'd say that we've been a very special kind of creature from time immemorial, which means forever! I realize that this marvelous era is long past, but you can still worship us all you want, okay? A little heartfelt appreciation goes a long way to get some heavy-duty bonding going on between our two species.

How about another example that will give you an idea about how much we were respected?

It seems that in those B.C. times, killing a feline was considered to be a major crime and that in some cases, even an *unintentional*, life-ending incident for a cat caused by some careless human resulted in the maximum penalty— death to the offender! That's some serious kind of protection and admiration that we're rarely offered nowadays, wouldn't you say?

The reason why cats were considered such sacred beings, and quite deservedly so, is due in part at least to our being associated with Bast. You see, the people in the ancient Egyptian territories had a

religion that was centered on the worship of animals, and we felines were very appropriately included in their honorable pantheon. As it should be, of course. Who would question something like that?

Cat Tale 04: Pharaoh Freddy

The earliest feline goddess who was represented in a lioness form was referred to as Mafdet. (*Goddess* I said, are you following me on this?) But perhaps the most famous divine, adorable creature of all time was called Bast, known also by a variety of other nicknames as history progressed and depending somewhat on the region of her domain at any given moment too.

I learned that the honorable Bast was often depicted as having the body of a human woman and the head of a domestic cat. Gosh, that brings up a strange and uncomfortable kind of image in my mind, but it does make me think that us felines and the humans are maybe more closely connected throughout history than one might assume.

Maybe that's why our two species get along so well nowadays and tend to hang out together a lot and share our living quarters on such a common basis. A sort of natural union, wouldn't you say?

Hey, I like it. Yeah, I like it a lot! Best friends— past, present, and future!

Anyway, it was explained to me in my class that Bast was principally an ancient solar goddess, being the dynamic director of our shining sun. She was thus much appreciated by us cats for our being able to stretch ourselves out in the yard to get the fur all nice and warm.

I should mention that Bast had another more original and initial role as a war goddess. No, no, no. It's *not* what you're thinking. It wasn't the violent, super-aggressive, let's-conquer-and-dominate-the-world mentality. On the contrary, she was worshiped as a protector and defender of the pharaoh, and was in charge of keeping everybody and everything free from harm. That's more of

a respectable take-care-of-others and mind-your-own-business mentality, don't you think?

Besides the solar and war goddess responsibilities that Bast so humbly assumed, her extensive résumé included duties related to being a goddess of fertility and birth, motherhood, the family, music, dance, and pleasure. That's quite a challenging job description, wouldn't you say!

Cat Tale 05: In Bast We Trust

Cats in the Ancient Egyptian territories were therefore highly respected due to the existence of the very honorable Bast goddess, but we were also greatly appreciated for other more practical reasons. For example, our species was known for our abilities to eagerly control all kinds of little crawling creatures, as was previously mentioned regarding the present-day distinction we receive.

In our sacred homeland, we were similarly applauded in the past for our talents to be able to hunt down many kinds of unwelcome invaders that might be bothersome to the human types. In the case of the Egyptians, we protected their granaries, those being a principal and important storage area of food supplies for them.

In my classes, I also learned that cats of royalty, in some instances, were known to be adorned in gold jewelry and were allowed to eat directly from their caretakers' plates. How about that! Take note, please, and let's see if there are going to be a few changes made regarding the *current* home dining customs, okay?

Between you and me, the *jewelry* I could do without since that seems kind of arrogant for us cats to be wandering around the neighborhood with a bunch of necklaces and earrings and bracelets. On the other hand, the *plate-sharing* idea definitely and without any doubt is a real winner of an idea!

What's mine is yours and what's yours is mine, and how about if we head over to the kitchen right now and do some serious snacking! You do the cooking and I'll set the table and wait for the delivery of the delicious munchies. No more circling around down below on the floor for this Royal Freddy!

Speaking of eating, it seems that the Ancient Egyptians had this super-duper, fantastic festival every year in the city of Bubastis

(meaning “she who comes from Bast”), which was the center of worship for the goddess herself. This festival took place during the month of October for many years, and hundreds of thousands of humans and cats made their annual pilgrimage to attend.

You might want to make a note on your own calendar right now. When this sacred month rolls around the next time, you can organize a special fish festival for your own kitties in your city, washing it all down with an unending stream of fresh, whole milk. Yum!

At Bubastis, there was singing, dancing, and lots of food, drinks, and craziness in general. Probably some good mouse-tracking exhibitions, tree climbing competitions, and things like that were to be enjoyed too during the festivities.

On a more serious note, as the festival ended in the evening each year, they offered prayers to the honorable Bast, accompanied by the burning of incense and spiritually oriented music. Solemnly they all kneeled down, clasped their hands together, looked up to the heavens, and soulfully thanked Bast for their good fortune.

What wonderful times those must have been.

Cat Tale 06: Fond of Felines

Cats were so important back then, as they hopefully are today, that our likenesses appeared on all kinds of jewelry, amulets, hand mirrors, cosmetic containers, and other objects of everyday life. In particular, amulets were supercharged for the protection of the humans. This confirms that even without our *direct* presence and intervention, we are dynamic forces and true inheritors of the powers of Bast. Quite impressive, I must say.

It's been said that the ancient Egyptians took their cats on hunting expeditions and that we were trained to retrieve birds and fish from the marshy areas. That doesn't surprise me at all. As far as the training goes, we are of course very good students and quick learners.

Being sent to go get the birds and fish— well, I don't believe I need to explain much at all the pleasure and excitement that this kind of activity would bring us. The deal is though, and as you would expect, we might keep for ourselves a couple of the flying or swimming prizes for our own *personal* dietary enrichment. This should be considered as fair compensation for our faithful fetching duties. Hey, and who said the dogs were the only ones who can “go and fetch,” huh!

The only thing I don't quite like about those hunting expeditions is the requirement of the wandering around in the marsh. Do ya know what I mean? “Marsh” means “water,” and lots of marshy water all over the place. I suggest the humans provide us with one of those boat vehicles so we can float on over to the prey without getting our delicate paws wet and our fur messed up. Sound like a fair deal?

Anyway, the friendly and respected feline had definitely become an integral part of ancient Egyptian family life, as they have continued to be until the present time in many different places. I

even learned that many Egyptian parents named their children after cats, especially their daughters. No, I'm not kidding!

Quite sadly, I think that's a tradition that has been forgotten about today. I strongly urge you humans to consider the renewal of this very simple naming procedure. "Freddy" is always a great example of a name that you could use for *your* offspring, with the feminine versions being "Freda" or maybe "Frederica."

And one more thing. You see, us cats have a name and only a name — *one* name— and we're done with it. No two or three first names with middle names mixed in, and double last names.

Let's get to the point. I'm just *Freddy*, and Freddy is all there is to it! Nothing else is necessary. Freddy is quite fine all by itself, with no extra name or middle name or one or two last names or all that nonsense. Aren't things a lot easier that way? Aren't they?

The same goes for Bast. It wasn't Bast Smith, or Bast Smith-Jones, or Bast Mary Thelma Smith-Jones or... Come on now!

Thus, for the birth of your next child, look to your *cats* for guidance in the naming process, okay? You won't forget, will ya?

For example, your next little girl could be called Fluffy, and your baby boy, Bingo. Sound good? Or if you want to go the Egyptian route in honor of our heritage, then your baby girl could be named Habibah (beloved) and your baby boy, Abayomi (bringer of joy). Make a note of this too so you won't let this detail slip by.

The ancient Egyptians also had statues of cats standing around everywhere in their cities. This was especially true of mother cats and their kittens since we are so well known for taking good care of our babies. Nowadays, I would suggest that a big feline statue be prominently located on every street corner for everyone to admire. I'm sure a famous sculptor will be looking me up someday

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