Clarion Review

Autobiography & Memoir

My Life with the Scorpion Kitten
Christopher Thomas Hunt
AuthorHouse
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Four Stars (out of Five)

Visionary tale of a man and his blind feline companion is honest and insightful.

Mathias, aka "The Scorpion Kitten," a name given to bolster his confidence, was the son author Christopher Hunt and his wife, Tina, never had. How and why the undersized, blind runt, born with the feline leukemia virus and an eye that had to be removed, became so beloved forms the compelling story of Hunt's memorial tribute. For added value, it's also a captivating memoir of a five-year period in Hunt's own life when deaths, downturns, and disappointments were often the order of the day.

Hunt admits to an early affection for animals, to always being seen as a loner, and to finding his friendships and affections among cats "that were always there when I needed them. Mathias, he writes, even with his many afflictions, was "the one person that held my life together." Hunt also notes that he was fortunate to have a loving wife, a good job that he enjoyed, an interest in 4-H programs, and a faith in God that helped him get over setbacks such as the deaths of family members.

Although Hunt's memoir is often poignant, it is never maudlin, as he describes sightless Mathias learning to cope by increasing his senses of smell and hearing, even to the point of frustrating his playmates as they attempted to ambush him among shoe piles or up, over, and around furniture.

Of special importance to both Mathias and Hunt, and particularly revealing of their bond, are their daily sessions of shared quality time when Hunt returned home from his teaching job. This was their exclusive time for the processing of Hunt's daily activities, listening to the music of Johnny Cash, or watching favorite programs such as *The Waltons* or *The Planet of the Apes*. "Mathias also developed a taste for the sound of the harmonica."

On the other hand, Mathias could display his displeasure with being ignored by urinating on the rugs in a particular room. He also communicated his discontent by running laps around the dining room furniture, an activity that is captured in one of the more than fifty candid snapshots throughout the book. Hunt's photo of one-eyed Mathias staring out from the book's cover, sightless and stoic in his "bring-on-the-world" pose, reinforces why he captured the author's heart.

Hunt's philosophy is that "People can learn a lot from cats." His honest and insightful tribute to the disabled and disadvantaged kitten with the heart of a Scorpion king is an excellent place to begin those lessons.

Wayne Cunningham