

One Tough Cat: An Animal Tale for Adults

Melanie Moye

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Cat friends will take the greatest pleasure in pouncing on this tasty treat.

Melanie Moye's *One Tough Cat: An Animal Tale for Adults* is clever, humorous, and marked with complete originality. Told from a feline viewpoint, this imaginative tale accurately captures cat behavior and the trials of daily life, which the bold and sassy narrator reveals with precision.

With a penchant for unabashed truth telling, a cat who has been schooled in the need for survival quickly commands authority, delivering wry commentary about the "clue-less" around every corner. From the first to the last, fourteen vividly executed chapters cover accidents, misunderstandings, neighborhoods, decisions, new digs, conflict resolution, and more.

Instead of focusing on humans' experiences with cats, Moye gives voice to feline emotions, experiences, and misadventures through her lively cat characters. *One Tough Cat* hits the mark with every detailed observation and with its skill at encouraging thought about others' experiences and perceptions.

Beyond masterfully creating feline characters with personality and spunk, Moye often adds a funny twist when looking at the world through their eyes. *One Tough Cat* particularly succeeds because of its ability to convey the challenges of dealing with bumbling humans, who, here, are often portrayed as an alien species. Through astute descriptions and sharp word choices, humans' heavy-handed tactics and magnified imperfections come into clear focus.

One test in Moye's rollicking feline world involves deciphering a new language, with unusual references to cats, humans, and their possessions. Titles like "E-Yeows" result in paused reading and puzzlement, if not in missed connections.

Otherwise, *One Tough Cat* shows great agility, finesse, and incisiveness. The subtitle delivers on its promise, especially when applying some of these lessons to various combinations of human and animal relationships. Through on-target insights, Moye offers plenty of food for thought about our ability to empathize with and try to understand others who are different from us.

One Tough Cat adroitly tackles the dynamics of all types of reordered hierarchies. As the result of skillful storytelling, the book prompts thoughts about role reversal in a world where one party generally has the upper hand. From babies to kittens, Moye serves up keenly rendered scenes that leave us thinking about who actually has control.

Cat friends will take the greatest pleasure in pouncing on this tasty treat. *One Tough Cat* is more than a simple story about pets, dishing up an inverted scenario that turns the status quo of traditional relationships on its head.

ANDREA HAMMER (September 26, 2017)

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