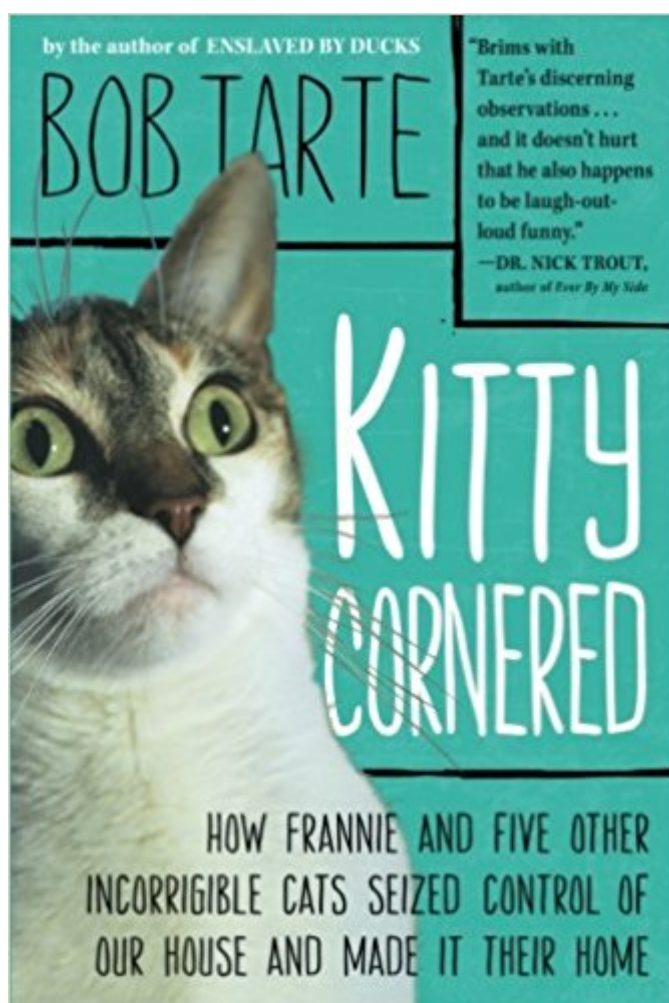


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# Kitty Cornered: How Frannie And Five Other Incurrrible Cats Seized Control Of Our House And Made It Their Home



## Synopsis

Bob Tarte had his first encounter with a cat when he was two and a half years old. He should have learned his lesson then, from Fluffy. But as he says, "I listened to my heart instead, and that always leads to trouble." In this tell-all of how the Tarte household grew from one recalcitrant cat to six—including a hard-to-manage stray named Frannie—Tarte confesses to allowing these interlopers to shape his and his wife's life, from their dining habits to their sleeping arrangements to the placement and furriness of their furniture. But more than that, Bob begins seeing Frannie and the other cats as unlikely instructors in the art of achieving contentment, even in the face of illness and injury. Bewitched by the unknowable nature of domesticated cats, he realizes that sometimes wildness and mystery are exactly what he needs. With the winning humor and uncanny ability to capture the soul of the animal world that made *Enslaved by Ducks* a success, Tarte shows us that life with animals gives us a way out of our narrow human perspective to glimpse something larger, more enduring, and more grounded in the simplicities of love-and-catnip.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A delightful analysis of each cat . . . Cat lovers will readily relate to Tarte's insistence that cats are as individualistic and quirky as humans, while non-cat lovers will gain a deeper appreciation for these animals and the people who live with them." ---Foreword Reviews --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Bob Tarte wrote for *The Beat* magazine for twenty years. He has also written for the *New York*

Times, the Boston Globe, the Miami New Times, the Whole Earth Review, and other publications. He hosts the What Were You Thinking? podcast for petliferadio.com. He and his wife Linda live in Lowell, Michigan, and currently serve the whims of parrots, ducks, geese, parakeets, a rabbit, doves, hens, one turkey, and way too many cats.

You do not need to be a cat lover to enjoy this book about cats but I happen to be one so this book was extra special to me. Bob describes cat behavior better than anyone since Doreen Tovey. I loved seeing the different personalities of the cats, how they tried to handle each one according to the cats' terms. I like to check into Bob and Linda's life every so often and find out how things are in Michigan. Bob pulls you into their world so easily I found myself reading almost all night to get caught up since the last book. Linda's back, Bob's naps, repairs on their home, and how his sisters are doing, he can make us interested in seeing what some people might consider small problems but Bob and I know they are BIG. Bob Tarte is the only author I preorder and Kitty Cornered shows me I am correct in doing so.

A couple weeks ago, I was home sick from work. How lucky I was to receive my copy of "Kitty Cornered" from in the mail that afternoon--best get well present I could imagine. As he does in his previous books, Bob Tarte writes about how animals enter and enrich his life in "Kitty Cornered" The cat cast of "Kitty Cornered" is diverse, charming, and maddening. There's Agnes who plays the role of the stereotypical feline, welcoming interaction with humans on HER schedule. Beautiful Moobie with one green eye and one blue eye not only tolerates veterinary procedures but also manages to turn the experience into a way of getting extra chow. Honest Maynard is never bashful about wailing his needs; Lucy challenges Bob to design a better litter box; and Tina makes a quiet entry into the Tarte home but surprises all with her youthful exuberance. Then there's shy Frannie. Frannie connects with the author early in the book, but her acceptance of her new home must be slowly won, a relationship created with time and care. As someone who has lived with rescue animals over the years, I particularly appreciated Tarte's efforts to understand Frannie's mysterious origins. "Kitty Cornered" is a wonderful book for several reasons. Dog owners such as myself can learn a great deal about the behavior and health of cats. Readers in need of a chuckle will laugh at Tarte's humorous (but kind) portraits of the humans in the book. If a reader happens to be in a philosophical mood (and sneezing and coughing and feeling miserable), Tarte's book will brighten life with his tale of how six cats "took over his household" and brought happiness in exchange. You will enjoy reading this book!

Just realized I had not posted a review of this, one of my favorite cat books. Bob Tarte's writing is a delight-- reminds me of Robert Benchley with his self-deprecating humor. He has a great turn of phrase. Hapless Bob finds himself with a menageries of creatures, from parrots to bunnies to turkeys, along with five domineering cats. His humor may not be for everyone, but I laughed until I cried and bought extra copies of the book to give to others. All his books are excellent, and I highly recommend them. As I wrote on the bookblog back in 2012:I have a penchant for cat books. I do like nonfiction at times, but when it comes to animals I tend to regard nonfiction books with suspicion. Those are the only books I routinely flip to the back and read the end before I start the book so I know if the animal in question survives or if I need to lay in an ample supply of tissues. That's how I approached Kitty Cornered: How Frannie and Five Other Incurable Cats Seized Control of Our House and Made It Their Home by Bob Tarte. Cats seemed okay at the end, so I decided I'd read a chapter or two. I had a pretty good idea of where this was going by the diagram of the house (including the area where black cat Agnes makes daily attempts on Bob's life) and the cast of characters (Lucy: snapping crocodile disguised as a diluted tabby), but by the time I laughed my way through the introduction, I was sure he couldn't sustain this level of humor. So help me, he did. He kept me laughing from the first chapter to the last and all the ones in between. Bob has a wonderfully semi-cynical, self-deprecating sense of humor and a keen eye for the absurd. I resisted the impulse to call friends up in the middle of the night to read passages from the book, but oh, the temptation was there. The true reason I didn't was that I was afraid I wouldn't be able to stop laughing long enough to read the passages aloud in understandable English and might be mistaken for an obscene phone caller. But I have to say that the sentence that completely won me over and made me know that I would love this book came right after Agnes -um, "accidentally" intersperses herself between Bob's foot and the stair: "I pitched backward, trying to avoid her, my hand attempting to latch onto the nonexistent rail which I had been intending to have someone else install for years." That is the story of my life. But I do wish his publisher had let him call it "The Funnel of Happiness."

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