

SPLASHES FROM THE RIVER
PRESENTS

The Basic Cozy Essay Course®

Reproducible Notebook

by
MARIE RACKHAM
&
TYSON MIELKE

Directed by David Mielke

MY LITTLE TIGER

(sample personal narrative essay)

**Tyson Mielke
English 10
Mr. Jones
Aug. 31, 2003**

I wish I could tell you that my cat is some sort of super intelligent, crime solving feline. I wish I could tell you that he is witty, debonair and charming. But he is none of those things . . . and he thinks he's a tiger.

Duke ambled into my life one lazy summer day just around lunch time. Without knocking, he sauntered through the door, gave the place an appraising look, and launched a successful ambush attack on my fuzzy slippers. Cats have a built in sense for "push-overs" and I emit a signal like an emergency beacon. My new "tiger" quickly established some rules: the big green chair is his; breakfast is served no later than 6am; and, dinner is promptly at 5pm. When I fail to meet these conditions, I am greeted with a series of stern meows followed by a gesture I equate to a fist slamming into an open palm. I tried to amend the contract by moving breakfast to 7am, but Duke made that "fist" gesture and I decided against it.

My cat is not what people consider cuddly. In fact, I think he despises anything at all remotely cute or cuddly. Enter Fluffy, the neighbors cute and cuddly dog. One afternoon Fluffy (not his real name) happily pranced into our yard. Duke, a wee bit surly from having his nap interrupted — particularly by something happily prancing — stared malevolently at the intruder. Fluffy, realizing his error, froze completely and tried to look less adorable. Unaware of the show down, I bumbled out the door to grab the paper. Startled, Fluffy flinched ever-so-slightly, and Duke, interpreting this as a sign of aggression, shot after him like a tubby orange rocket. Deciding that a collision with 18 pounds of barreling tom cat was not a pleasant way to spend the afternoon, Fluffy turned and bolted. I quickly formulated a plan: I made sure no one was looking and snuck back into the house. Much to my relief Fluffy escaped with only minor mental trauma. Duke wasn't going to eat him as my neighbors suggested . . . at least I'm pretty sure he wasn't.

Duke always tries to impress me with his "tigerly" hunting skills. One day he showed up with the wing of a Canadian goose clamped firmly in his mouth. When I opened the door, he dropped it at the stoop and strutted in like the King of the Jungle. Now, as most people know, Canadian geese are rather large, irritable birds, that can easily deal with cats — particularly ones of questionable intelligence. Where he got the wing, I will never know. When I broach the subject, one of my slippers gets held hostage until I stop asking questions.

My cat is full of surprises. The other night we watched a documentary on T.V. about tigers. I have always been fascinated with tigers and was shocked to learn that they are on the verge of extinction. After the show a heavy sadness enveloped me. As I slumped down into the couch Duke jumped up and, for the first time ever, curled up in my lap.

No, I can't tell you my cat is some sort of super intelligent, crime solving feline. No, I can't tell you he is witty, debonair, and charming. What I can tell you is that my life would not be the same without him. He is my pal, my companion, and my friend. But most of all . . . he is my little "tiger".