



## **The True Tails of Baker and Taylor: The Library Cats Who Left Their Pawprints on a Small Town . . . and the World**

*Jan Louch , Lisa Rogak*

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*An Advance Reader Copy edition exists here.*

Not since George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life* has someone so lifted the spirits of an entire community. That the 'someone' in this case is, in fact, two library cats makes this true tale of the love of literature combined with a fondness for nose licking all the more magical. This book, like a purring kitten who may also be a genie, should be welcomed into any home.—Francesco Marciuliano, *New York Times* bestselling author of *I Could Pee on This: And Other Poems by Cats*

It all started with mice in the library.

Assistant librarian Jan Louch and a coworker decided that what the library needed was a cat. Or, even better, two cats. Soon, they found a pair of Scottish Folds who were perfect for the job. Jan named them Baker and Taylor, and they took up residence in the library.

But these cats were much more than mousers. Visitors to the library fell in love with Baker and Taylor and their antics just as Jan had. And then, after Jan let the cats be photographed for a poster, they became feline celebrities. Children from across the country wrote them letters, fans traveled from far and wide to meet them, and they became the most famous library cats in the world.

In *The True Tails of Baker and Taylor*, Jan Louch looks back and tells the remarkable story of these two marvelous cats and the people—readers, librarians, and cat lovers of all ages—who came together around them.

## The True Tails of Baker and Taylor: The Library Cats Who Left Their Pawprints on a Small Town . . . and the World Details

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# **From Reader Review The True Tails of Baker and Taylor: The Library Cats Who Left Their Pawprints on a Small Town . . . and the World for online ebook**

## **Shaun says**

*I received an advance copy of the book for free through a Goodreads First Reads giveaway*

A fun, cute read! The book is really more a memoir of the author, history of the library she and the cats were a part of and the community that surrounded them all. Baker and Taylor were definitely the focus of the book, but Ms. Louch does a great job of balancing stories of the cats with background on herself, background on the library and background of Carson Valley, Nevada.

The book follows a general timeline of Baker and Taylor's time in the library. From when they first arrived (separately) to their rise in popularity due to being a part of an advertising campaign for Baker & Taylor booksellers. The author introduces many characters throughout and how the cats impacted their lives individually and as a whole.

Overall, I'd recommend this to any animal or cat lovers along with anyone that enjoys unique memoirs. It made me laugh, worry, be surprised and actually shed a few tears.

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## **Emma says**

DNF 30%

Honesty this is a book about things all cats do, but PLOTTWIST they live in a library. The difference is well, nothing. I lived with cats my entire life and they more or less do the same thing. Maybe this book is fun if you don't know anything about the daily routine of a cat, but if you do this book isn't for you.

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## **Evelyn says**

This is the story of two library cats that became international superstars after being photographed by a major book distributor.

I really enjoyed the cats' story but never totally connected with Jan Louch. I know she loves books and cats, but a couple parts of the library's story and her own personal story came across a little whiny in my opinion. Most of the public doesn't know that most people working in libraries are not actual librarians.

The story of Mr. Figini tugged my heart. Anyone who has worked in a public library has met and tried to help people like him. And, I LOVED the pics at the end of the book!

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## **Rhianon O'Halloran says**

I loved this book! If you love cats and books this is a must read! Baker and Taylor were famous, and they wormed their way into my heart by just reading this. Had I known of them while they lived I would definitely have traveled to their library to meet them!

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## **Patricia says**

Cute story, but the writing was on par with a grandma who writes a recipe blog for church. Not engaging writing nor particularly well-written. At least the cat stories are cute.

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## **Joy D says**

Endearing non-fiction about two cats that lived at the Douglas County Library in Minden, Nevada, and how they became celebrities, complete with fan club, photo shoots, and “cat tourists” stopping by to meet them. It is also the author’s memoir about her life with animals and books, and how the cats helped her pull out of a difficult time in life.

For me, the main attraction of this book is that it is set in a town about 15 miles from where I live. The descriptions of the area are spot on. If you are familiar with cats, the behaviors of Baker and Taylor will bring a smile of acknowledgement. The story shines in highlighting the sense of community in this small town, where people gather in the library, pet the cats, and spend parts of their days reading. The less successful portion of the book has to do with the author’s life story. She is very guarded, not wanting to expose a great deal of her pain, which is, of course, her prerogative, but it lessened the impact. I also didn’t care for the technophobia, as I believe libraries need to embrace the changes of the information age.

Recommended to cat and library aficionados, or those who enjoy stories of local interest, in this case Northern Nevada, US.

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## **Robin says**

Oh my, but how I loved this story of two famous cats--well, famous to anyone who has worked in a library, especially in the 1980s.

Jan Louch was hired as a librarian at the Douglas County Public Library in what was then the little town of Minden, Nevada, about 40 miles south of Reno. A few years later in 1983, Louch was instrumental in acquiring Baker as a library cat, soon followed by his feline companion, Taylor. The Scottish Fold cats went on to become the very well known mascots of Baker & Taylor, a major book vendor to libraries, and anyone who has worked in a library knows the rest is history and probably owns a poster or shopping bag with their photo or likeness.

Louch and Rogak chronicled not only the rise of B & T, but also Louch's personal life story and her experiences of working in a small library in a growing community. Interspersed are a few "interviews" with

other library cats which are quite charming, and a chapter from the viewpoint of the vet that cared for B & T.

I had a smile on my face the entire time I was reading this except when I had to mop a few tears because, well, you know, animals don't live forever. It is a wonderfully delightful read that any cat fan will love, and is especially recommended for anyone that loved DEWEY by Vicki Myron and THE CAT WHO WENT TO PARIS (and sequels) by Peter Gethers.

Side note: In 1990 I had the privilege of meeting Baker & Taylor while passing through Minden. Not only were they sweet and mellow boys, but the library staff couldn't have been more gracious, even leading me to the back room where Taylor was sleeping. I now realize that it was a bit of an imposition to interrupt their workflow and am very grateful for their hospitality. And after reading about the bad experiences the cats endured getting professionally photographed, I now know why Baker looked a bit annoyed in my photo, although I do remember him also loudly purring.

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### **Amanda (TheBookwormAdventures) says**

I'm not going to lie, I cried (a lot) through the last 50 or so pages of this book.

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### **C. says**

Wonderful memoir about two library cats and Jan, the librarian who cared for them for fifteen years. I thoroughly enjoyed the first person POV, and all the wonderful insight to the workings of the library system and librarians, and a glimpse into an earlier time in American history, and so many changes.

As a lifelong avid fan of cats ,books, and libraries, I found this book delightful!

Highly recommended for readers who feel the same.

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### **Marjorie Dawson says**

A real delight.

While this terrific book tells the story of Baker and Taylor, famous library cats, it also gives us insight into the changing world of libraries, how vital they are to a communities worldwide, even in the age of electronic media We see the very human librarians who work and the people for whom a library is a true lifeline and inspiration.

The story is defty handled, and there is a sprinkling of 'interviews' with library cats and a cat author to leaven the mix. These all shine lights into corners of the library cats world in different ways.

Jan Louch is a practical lady with a deep love for books and cats. How could we not love a book like this, the people it shows, the lives we see and two wonderful and inspiring cats.

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## **Mimi Fintel says**

If you work at the library, as I do, you know that most library order their books from the book retailer company "Baker and Taylor." In a small library in Nevada a Scottish Fold cat was adopted by a library to get a mouse problem under control. He was named Baker and soon the librarians decided he needed a friend. Since Scottish Folds are expensive and the librarians didn't want to use tax payer money they knew it would be awhile before they could get a second cat. However, their friend from the Baker and Taylor Company offered to purchase the library a second cat if they could use the two cats as mascots for the company. The offer was accepted! This book chronicles the photo shoots, the publicity, the fan club and life in the Minden branch of the Douglas County Library in Nevada with Baker and Taylor. This is a great book, especially for animal lovers!

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## **Margaret says**

Full disclosure: this is in no way an unbiased opinion. My grandmother was the co-owner of the cats and appears many times in the book, I know Jan Louch, and I knew the cats well. In fact, I used to work off my library fines by helping out in the library, and one of the things I did was brush the cats (which Baker loved; Taylor had to be in the right mood).

Anyway, with that said, I enjoyed this book a whole lot. In addition to the charming story of the cats themselves, I really liked Jan's retelling of her personal history and how the cats and the library affected her life. Many other lives were touched by the cats, and I particularly loved the Baker and Taylor fan club and Jan's letters to them (though the letters at the end of the cats' lives made me cry).

Definitely recommended for cat lovers and book lovers alike.

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## **Lin says**

Honestly, I would have given this book 3.5 stars, but since the setting is my own local library, I bumped it up to 4. I really enjoyed the author's descriptions of our area, and the cat's vet was the same veterinarian my dogs went to until he retired. The most surprising thing was how famous the cats were! I moved here in 1994, the same year that the first cat died (Baker), and though I remember seeing Taylor in those few years before he passed away in 1997, I had no idea that people all over the country and the world knew who the cats were! If you're curious, take a look: <https://bit.ly/2CpYale>

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## **Lesa says**

If you're a librarian, you'll recognize the names of Baker and Taylor. For those who are not, that's the name of a library book wholesaler. Those were also the names of two Scottish Fold cats, the mascots of a public library in Nevada. The True Tails of Baker and Taylor is the story of those cats, told by the librarian who

took care of them for fifteen years, Jan Louch, with assistance from Lisa Rogak.

In 1982, the Douglas County Library System in Nevada built a new library in Minden. It wasn't long before Louch and the library director, Yvonne, saw mice behind the library. The new library had been built on an alfalfa field, and that meant mice. Jan and Yvonne decided to get two cats, and, once they did research about cats who would be good in a public building, they pooled their resources and bought a Scottish Fold, naming him Baker. It was going to take time to save up money for the second cat, but after Yvonne wrote to Baker & Taylor about their plans for the pair of cats, the company offered to buy the second cat for the library. In exchange, they wanted a few pictures to make a poster. Once librarians saw the poster of those two cats, Baker and Taylor became the first famous library cats.

This book is the story of two library cats, but it's also Jan Louch's story. She grew up in California, married a man who became a college professor, had two children, and was devastated when he said he wanted a divorce. In a fog, she moved to Nevada, and she and the kids moved in with her parents. But, as a child it was her love of books that kept her sane. And, in 1978, at the age of forty-seven, that love of books found her a job at the public library in Minden. But, it was really Louch's relationship with Baker and Taylor that lifted her out of the post-divorce fog.

Baker and Taylor pre-dated Dewey, the library cat. They became famous throughout the library world, on bags, calendars, and other giveaways. But, they also became part of the community, and Jan Louch's heart. The cats represented the library to people who had never been in the library. But, here's a warning. This book will break your heart. It can't be helped. The book was just published, and the cats were library cats in the 1980s and 1990s. You know how the book will end. I sobbed throughout the last seventy pages or so.

The True Tails of Baker and Taylor is the story of two cats who brought a library staff together, brought a community together, and mended Jan Louch's heart. It's a story for all of us who love cats, books, and libraries.

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## **Brandi says**

I'm not crying, you're crying. Man I love cats...and books...and libraries. Such a sweet "tail."

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