

# Ernest hemingway's 'cat in the rain'

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Moya, Jon Enc1102 February 27, 2013 Midterm Essay The story I will be analyzing is 'Cat in The Rain' By Earnest Hemingway. The story tells a story of an American couple staying at a hotel, presumably in Italy because of the mentioning of Italians and the dialogue sometimes having the Italian language. Hemingway uses good imagery to describe the room the couple stayed in. He wrote that it faced the sea, a public garden, and a war monument. He goes on to describe the beauty of the garden and how if there was a good weather, there would always be an artist admiring it and painting it.

He then mentions that Italians "come from a long way off" to visit the war monument. He does this probably to show that Italians really respect the monument and what it stands for. It then begins to rain and all the cars were gone around the monument which means that everyone was probably inside. Then story then introduces the American Wife and how she notices a cat trying to stay dry in the rain by sheltering itself under a table. She says that she wants to get the "kitty". After her husband offers to do it for her, she declines the offer and goes on to do it herself while her husband goes back to reading.

She goes downstairs and as she passes the front desk she has small talk in Italian with the hotel owner about the weather. I presume Hemingway made it in Italian to confirm that the setting was indeed in Italy. In this time Hemingway writes about the wife's feelings towards the owner, saying this "The wife liked him. She liked the deadly serious way he received any complaints. She liked his dignity. She liked the way he wanted to serve her.

She liked the way he felt about being a hotel-keeper. She liked his old, heavy face and big hands”.

Hemingway used many likes to contrast the hotel-keeper to the Husband. Hemingway makes it a point to have so many “likes” in that section to show that the wife is most likely unhappy with her husband because she’s paying close attention to what she likes in a man. After the conversation, she goes out into the courtyard to look for the cat. A maid that was sent from the hotel-keeper then offers her an umbrella. They go on to have a conversation on how the wife was looking for a cat and that it was no longer there and that she really wanted “kitty”. The story begins to address the protagonist as “American Girl” now. Most likely to emphasize her increasing childlike behavior stated by her use of the word “kitty” now rather than cat. The girl then returns to her room passing by the office and feeling special and important when the owner bows to her. Hemingway most likely wrote that to emphasize that she really doesn’t get much attention if a simple bow would make her feel special. Back in the room, the wife has a conversation with her husband on how she wants to grow out her hair.

The husband tells her she looks fine but she goes on to say that she wants to brush her hair, and she wants a kitty, and her own silverware and candles and some new clothes. After saying this, George just tells her to shut up and get something to read. This reaction that George has to his wife is also contrasting with what the wife liked from the owner. She liked the way the owner listened to her complaints and wanted to serve her, this instance further contrasts what she has in a marriage and what she wants.

The list of things wanted by the wife shows that she is unhappy with the marriage and that she wants things that are common in every marriage. She then says even if she doesn't get those things, she still wants a cat. The story then abruptly ends with the maid knocking on the door holding a cat saying it was sent by the owner to the wife. This ending contrasts the actions of the husband and the owner even more than before. There has been much speculation as to what the cat represents in the story.

One theory that scholars and professors have is that her want for a cat shows her desire for a child. [1] In the story there is also mention of a man in a "rubber cape" passing by the square. Scholars know it isn't Hemingway's style to add pointless interludes in a story so they speculate that it could represent a rubber condom preventing the wife from becoming pregnant. [2] In the biography "Hemingway's Cats", the author writes that "Cat in The Rain" was a tribute to Hemingway's wife Hadley.

According to biographer Gioia Diliberto, Hemingway based this story on an incident with his wife when she was two months pregnant and saw a cat under a table and told Hemingway that she wanted a cat. [3] Cat in The Rain is an extremely ambiguous story and really demonstrates Hemingway's skill of using very simple items to portray much more complex ideas. Sources [1] Hemingway, Ernest (1925, 2006). In *Our Time*. New York: Scribner. [2] Hamad, Ahmad S.. *Post-Structuralist Literary Criticism and the Resisting Text*. [3] Brennen, Carlene (2006). *Hemingway's Cats*. Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press.