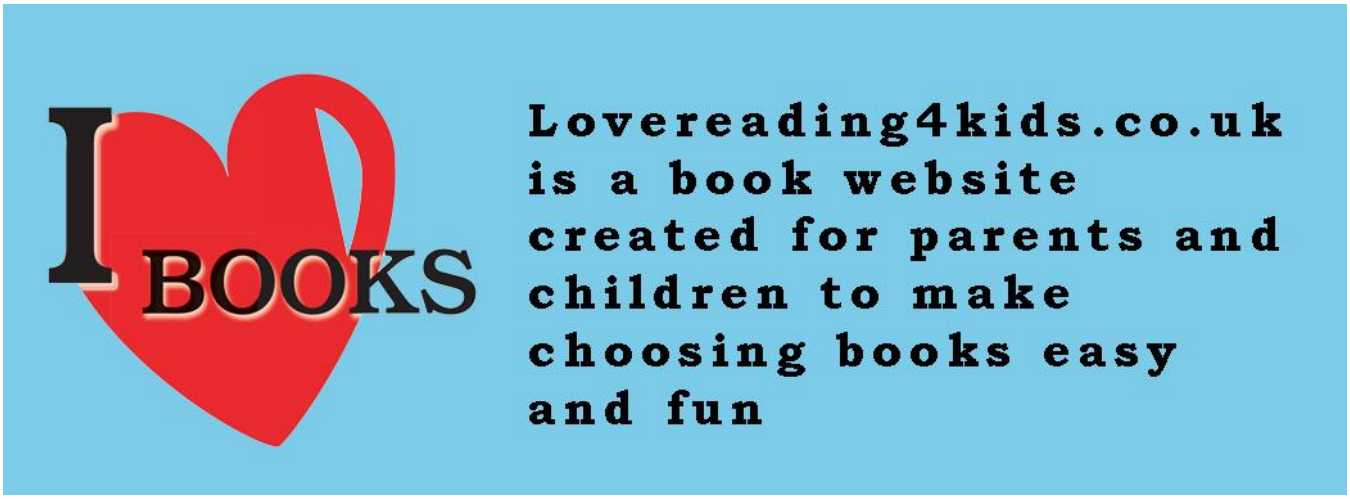


Opening extract from

Geronimo The Dog Who Thinks He's a Cat

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1

How it All Began



Geronimo was fed up.



His mother did her best but the fact was they were homeless and some days there wasn't enough food to go round.



She had so many little ones she didn't know what to do.

And so, one dark night, Geronimo decided he'd had enough. He decided to run away and see the world.

This is the life, he thought, as he padded round and round the dirt patch where they lived.

Before long he spotted a gap in the fence. Without a backward glance he trotted through it.

This is the life, he thought,



as he padded round and round next door's back garden.

After three laps Geronimo's paws felt sore and his legs ached. He sat



down. Then it started to rain.
He was just wondering
whether to creep back home,



with his (very long) tail between his legs, when he heard a soft thud. Something black and furry shot past him and disappeared into the house, straight through the closed back door.

I wonder how it did that? thought Geronimo.

He padded up to the door and when he got there he found a small, square door right at the bottom of the big door. The little door was just the right size for him.

Perhaps they knew I was coming, thought Geronimo.

With his nose he pushed open the flap in the middle of the little door and then clambered through into the house.

The first thing Geronimo



noticed was that there were four bowls of food, left out on the floor.

They definitely knew I was coming, he thought, scoffing the lot.

The second thing Geronimo noticed was a black cat, fast asleep in a basket.

The third thing Geronimo noticed was that there were three little cats fast asleep in the basket as well. As Geronimo watched them sleeping peacefully,



something became as clear as chocolate.

I've had enough of seeing the world, he thought. *I'm ready to settle down.*

He yawned and crept quietly into the basket with the kittens. And the next minute he was fast asleep.



2

Geronimo Settles Down



"Moby's had another kitten," said Dylan, the next morning.

Geronimo looked up at Dylan, blinking sleepily.

"She can't have," said



Mr and Mrs Plunket together, peering into the basket.

Geronimo wagged his tail sheepishly.



"Jumping jellyfish, she has," said Mr Plunket.

"Ugly looking thing," said Mrs Plunket.

"You're not ugly, are you?" said Dylan, picking up Geronimo.

Geronimo yelped and gave Dylan a wet lick on his nose.

"You're the best cat in the world," said Dylan, hugging him tight.

Interesting, thought Geronimo. *I always wondered what I was.*



His own mother had always been far too busy to tell him that sort of thing.

Moby on the other hand – his new mother – was never too busy for Geronimo. She

treated him like one of her own.

She taught him how to miaow...



woof!
woof
woof

How to catch mice...



And how to climb trees.



Only one thing puzzled Moby. Geronimo was getting very big, very fast.

For instance, he was far too big for the basket.



"Never mind," said Dylan.
"You can sleep on my bed."
But after a while he was
too big for that as well.



"He'd better move in with us," said Mr Plunket.

That worked fine for a while. Until one morning Mrs Plunket found that she'd been pushed out of bed.



As she sat on the floor, watching Geronimo sleeping peacefully, something became as clear as spaghetti hoops.

"He's no cat," she cried. "He's a dog!"

I've never been so insulted in my life, thought Geronimo, waking with a start.

