On Owning an Independent Cat

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It is no news that cats are, and always have been, extremely independent. However foolish it may seem to try and fit an entire species into one particular box, especially when the requirements in question have been set ages ago, in this case, few individuals will disagree. What is hidden behind their constant uninterested façade may be a series of "purrs" under the right hands or "meows" of recognition when someone ambles by, but do not let that convince you that they need your presence for a second, it is all part of their "plan." You are nothing but a mere escape when they lack entertainment and they will go back to their usual selves in no time, leaving you behind as they head elsewhere, unchaperoned.

Undoubtedly independent beings! Any cat-owner across the globe can confirm such a statement. Certainly, the fact that many cat-owners are not allowed to roam freely around their house without a tiny creature dangling from their legs will confirm this. I suppose these animals must regard their respective humans as an extension of themselves according to this logic, then—why else would they always feel the need to tag along, even for momentary trips to the kitchen?

There is also the fact that cats simply could not care less if you are currently occupied with something: if they happen to need your assistance, they will ask for it. Well, not "ask" per se, what they do is closer to establishing that they should now be the sole receivers of your thorough attention, no questions asked. Whether you are busy preparing the evening meal, polishing your shoes until they glisten, fulfilling assignments that have imminent deadlines: does not concern them. The average cat will come sit on your lap unprompted and expect you to drop all of your duties in order to give them some very well-deserved stroking. This continuous request for affection will only come to a halt if, and only if, their wish is granted. Do not think for a moment that you will be able to go on with your task with no interruptions, unless you gain the right to do so.

Leaving a cat unattended for some time may also have dire consequences. As much as they take pleasure in being by themselves, some are thoroughly offended when you leave the house without warning. If you ever decide to go on vacation without the company of your feline, at the very least leave a note! Lest you should arrive home and find that, all of a sudden, your pet has mastered the art of ignoring your presence. For some time they may even pretend to be absolutely unacquainted with you, which will last a while before they warm up to you again. For this reason, do not panic if the kitten should attempt to maul you or move away as you try to caress their fur, for they feel very betrayed and will not accept feeble attempts at gaining their affection back, just yet. I particularly would not recommend coming home smelling of another cat either, no one knows how many treats it will take for the human to be finally forgiven and exonerated from punishment in such a scenario.

The so-called cat-independence has been observed throughout history. Not even Sir Isaac Newton could be left alone when carrying out experiments in his gloomy basement, for his cat would always barge into the space, uninvited. Funnily enough, this regular occurrence led the scientist to cut a cat-sized hole through his door in order to make her entrance easier and less disturbing. While spending countless nights writing, Charles Dickens was also frequently interrupted by his cat: the mischievous creature would cleverly use his paw to put out the candle illuminating Dickens' work in order to get his

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owner's attention. The feline trait of craving company and attention is nothing new, but the tale about their solitary nature has been around for far too long for it to be suddenly forgotten. They will continue to be labeled as "independent", though I am not entirely certain that *that* particular word is the most fitting...