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My cat Luna demands equal time. I've talked way too much about the dogs in my life lately and ignored who's obviously the pivotal member of the household, her nibs, our cat. Well, okay, she'd say that if cats actually gave a flip about what we pathetic humans think. They do not.

But she has a point. America's gone to the dogs. Books about dogs are falling off the shelves. They're on TV and featured in movies. Fights break out over whether to feed your dog a raw diet or elaborately concocted meals. We struggle to keep our dogs entertained. We wonder how many dogs you can have before the neighbors report you. One — if it were left up to cats, who are not amused that the only attention they get is all those Internet memes showing them getting stuck in the dryer or

falling off things. This would be intolerable. If cats cared. Which they don't.

So I guess it's up to the cat's human to tip the scales back into balance. Once upon a time we had six cats. Then we had kids. Then we got dogs. Then the kids shrewdly left home. And we got more dogs. The economy moved the kids back in. My daughter brought her dogs. The kids moved out again. And left the dogs. You get the picture: We have a lot of dogs. And we're certifiable chumps. Luckily we're talking cats here. Rational need not apply.

It may sound like I don't like cats. This is completely untrue. I feed Luna. I pet her. I drove her and my son back from school in Kansas in an epic 15-hour drive through floods, tornados and snowstorms a couple of years ago. I find her endlessly fascinating because she's so... mysterious. Like, how does she know the exact moment when I'm teetering with too many dog bowls in my hands to possibly move? Because that's when she goes to the door and gives me a look that says, "You may let me out now."

How does she know that if she sits directly in front of the TV, we'll put her out? How does she know if she shakes a dog in the middle of the night, he'll howl and... we'll toss her out? It's mysterious.

In the last ten years, scientists have studied dogs inside and out and, thanks to MRI tests, can even tell you what a dog is thinking. Dogs are spilling their secrets left and right but cats... well they've tried testing cats, too. Cats will respond to treats, but only if they feel like it. They don't cooperate with MRI

machines or much of anything else unless they choose to. Scientists have had to resort to arcane and quirky experiments. Like, scientists in Kyoto, Japan put stuff in a box and rattled it. Then dumped the stuff out. They repeated it with an empty box. And they videotaped the response of 30 cats. Their conclusion? Cats know physics.

I think they're being overly kind here but, sure, I'll take their word for it. Add physics to the list of things cats apparently know but aren't talking about. Like, do you think your cat is acting aloof and ignores you when you call her name? Not so, say the scientists, who've painstakingly analyzed tapes of cats... ignoring their owners. But there were tiny signs — a twitch of the ear, a slight eye movement, a hint of a sneer — that showed the cats were indeed listening. They just don't give you the satisfaction of acknowledging you.

They probably even like you, say feline behavioralists. No, really. You have thumbs to open cans of catfood and clever hands that open the door for them 2,316 times a day. But you're more than a mere cat-servant. You more than a big lumbering figure who's amusingly easy to manipulate. You're your cat's surrogate mother. Cats are not social animals. They're loners. But they form a strong bond with their mother, which they transfer to you, their lucky human. Mother cat is gone. And they have all these cat-feelings they have to attach to somebody. You'll do.

Behavioralists say this is why they bring you dead things. You were wondering, right? They're not leaving dead birds and bunnies on your doorstep to feed you, as researchers once believed. It's to impress you, O' Mother Cat. You can sorta see

why the mother cat ditched, huh. Grisly tributes. They're just weird. And now, tag, you're it. Enjoy!

But the thing is, we do enjoy our cats. They're sleek, graceful and eerily self-possessed. They obviously don't need us, but they choose to stay and, however sparingly, they choose to bestow their affections. On their terms.

Recent DNA studies make our relationship with cats even more interesting. Because they show that the cat in all the centuries it's been with us has changed very little genetically from cats in the wild. While dogs gave up freedoms to be domesticated, cats remain stone cold predators, a wild thing that chose to come in and stay, living in our midst preternaturally alert and observant.

Unless you bring out the catnip or the laser toy. Then Wild Thang gets goofy. It's a funny relationship. But it's a long one. Archaeologists recently opened a 9,500-year-old grave in Cyprus that predated the pyramids and cat cults in ancient Egypt. Inside were the remains of a human and a cat, decorated with sea shells and polished stones. However maddening, the human wanted his cat with him throughout eternity.

Or, maybe the cat had the human buried with her to open doors and cans of food in the afterlife. I'd say it's a toss-up. Either way, we're an odd couple, but a devoted one.