

MEOW!

Mini 'Cat Whisperer'

A big shout out to all young humans who are reading this. You are all born naturals when it comes to loving animals. The manner in which you young people reach out to non-human beings is amazing. The bonding you make, the companionship you have and the whole secret world that you create between yourself and a pet is worth exploring. And that is what I hope to do by writing this to all you children. I am going to mention cats a lot because they are a big part of my life. Hence, there is a lot to share about these purring, furry, cuddly, soft padded, limpid large-eyed 'melt your heart' pawed bundles (see? can go on and on :)).

When it comes to keeping pets, most people think of dogs. In my opinion, that's only because one sees more of them around as pets. Cats are not far behind but a bit lagging in numbers as pets, since most people think they're not as loyal or intelligent as dogs. Well, no offense to bow-wows (they're The bestest!) but I stomp my foot down and say " cats are just as wonderful!". How? Allow my half-century's experiences in dealing with these cuddle bugs to speak for itself.

To look back, my earliest memories are of noticing these sleek creatures flitting by bushes, sidewalks, or just sitting on some wall. Their cute bodies covered in soft gleaming fur always looked appealing. Their gait is stylish and adorable - the rear ends bobbing as they trot along. The tiny pert ears picking up every little rustle. The eyes are big expressive pools - the pupils huge and pleading when they want to be cute ...narrowed and slit-like when aggressive! And oh, none of you can deny noticing those cute padded paws with which they move around so stealthily. Do I even need to elaborate on those majestic whiskers? That's just about looks. What about the way they crouch and lap up their food, the way they groom (lick lick lick...wiping their face repeatedly with licked wet front paws). The

innumerable ways of stretching are one of the many things we humans can learn from these supreme beings (very well adopted in yogic postures).

Cats, by nature, are independent. Believe me, that's one of the traits that make them great pets. They love being cuddled, their chin rubbed, and purr loudly as they sleep with you. They're with you for all the fun parts but don't need any assistance from you in actually being taken care of. They groom themselves, you don't have to bathe them (haha, you wish you were a cat, right?!), they don't need potty training (if you've the litter sand ready, straight they head to it for their loo business! even at a few weeks old), they don't need to be taken on walks!

Also, domesticated cats live looong. Up to 20-30 years! The pain and grief of losing one's dear cat are much less than having some other species.

Having drawn your attention to their appealing appearances and habits, let me move on to what it's like having one around the house. A treasure house of fun! That is the simplest way to put it. As kittens, their size, their antics, and the way they will follow you around is something of an in matched experience. The sheer joy that you feel is not to be missed. Any little thing, like a thread hanging by the end of a curtain, a moving blade of leaf, small spaces under a cupboard sets them off playing. They'll battle it with their tiny bodies. Pretending there's some ferocious beast that needs tackling. Tumbling around, crouching, sneak dashing towards the pretend enemy. And if there are two three in the litter, they manage to keep themselves amused with each other too!

As full grown, they are regal. The females make very caring mothers. Extremely protective of



her young ones till such time that they can hunt and take care of themselves. They are good hunters and can fend for themselves in the wild.

These one of a kind fur balls make excellent subjects for cartoons too. Surely you're all familiar with Tom and Jerry, Calvin and Hobbes besides a string of other sketches that portray their elusive nature and pranks. Aren't we lucky to have these cuties all around?!

I've to stop at some point lest this article stretches to miles. All I want to mention in conclusion is that the next time you come across one of these majestic cuddle-worthy potlums, stop and relish them. Engage with them; adopt one as your pal. As a young

person, your instincts are right - you need at least one in your life. More for your own sake than the cat's... Meeeeowwww!



Joey and Mandrake