



Clever Cat

By Peter Collington

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Clever Cat By Peter Collington

Peter Collington, recognized master of wordless picture books, proves in this funny feline fantasy that he is just as entertaining with words and pictures.

Tibs, the orange tabby hero of *Clever Cat*, knows that being the cat of a busy working family means patiently waiting around a lot--to be let out, to be let in, to be fed. So one day Tibs takes matters into his own paws. To the amazement of his family, he opens up a can of cat food and serves himself. Soon he's a cat about town, with a set of house keys to come and go as he pleases and the use of Mrs. Ford's bank card to buy his own food--and a few other things that tickle his fancy. He regards the other kitties in the neighborhood, snoozing in the sun all day, and thinks, *What a bore!* But when Mrs. Ford's monthly bank statement arrives, suddenly this clever cat must earn his keep, and Tibs begins to wonder if he's too smart for his own good.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Every morning Tibs waited by his front door. And waited... And waited... And waited... And waited..." until finally someone notices him and begrudgingly lets him inside, where he has to wait some more before getting his breakfast. Things proceed in this manner for a long time, until finally one day the orange tabby becomes fed up with all this waiting around. Much to his human family's astonishment, he climbs to the cupboard, gets down his own cat food, and opens the can with a can opener. Impressed (and somewhat relieved), the Ford family soon gives Tibs carte blanche around town. He shops with the family credit card, hangs out in cafés, goes to movies, plays tennis--until the Fords get their monthly bank statement. It's time for Tibs to earn his keep. And suddenly, Tibs isn't sure his cleverness is such a boon after all.

Feline fans--especially older ones--will laugh out loud at this not-so-hard-to-believe fantasy. Most cat owners have wondered at times just how helpless Fluffy really is. Peter Collington's adroitness matches that of Tibs, especially in his priceless illustrations of the cat opening his first can, and strolling by the "less gifted" cats on the stoop. (Ages 6 and older) --*Emilie Coulter*

From Publishers Weekly

Best known for his wordless picture books, Collington (*The Angel and the Soldier Boy*; *The Tooth Fairy*) adds a clipped, comical narrative to his meticulously detailed art in this wry volume starring a family cat. One morning, Mrs. Ford finds her pet Tibs a bother and wishes aloud that he could feed himself. Fed up with not being fed, Tibs takes her suggestion to heart and a transformation results. Collington shows him as he rises onto his hind legs, reaches into the cupboard, opens his own can of food and proceeds to eat with a spoon. The Fords proclaim him "a clever cat" and hand him a house key and ATM card so he can buy his own food, too. Tibs's cleverness seems to know no bounds. He dines at an outdoor caf?, shops at a toy store and relaxes in a movie theater. But his carefree lifestyle comes to a halt when the Fords announce that he must find a job to earn his keep. Tibs tries hard to make ends meet but his work suffers and he is fired. The artist creates empathy for the furry fellow throughout his aping of a human existence with expressions to match and perfectly captures feline behavior when the hero returns to a cat's life. Collington's droll pictures of this enterprising animal engaged in activities normally reserved for humans will elicit Cheshire grins from readers young and old. All ages. (Aug.)

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From School Library Journal

Kindergarten-Grade 3-Tibs waits patiently to be let in and then to be fed while his harried owners scurry about preparing for school and work. One day, tired of waiting, he gets his own food, much to his family's astonishment. His independence escalates as this clever cat is given a house key and a money card; however, so do his expenses as he visits shops, movies, and a caf. Soon his humans repossess their card and demand rent. Tibs finds work at his favorite establishment but discovers the exhausting realities of self-support. He oversleeps and loses his job. The next day finds him waiting once again at the door and at his dish and then snoozing with the neighborhood cats, who finally consider him a clever cat indeed. Tibs's transition from ordinary house cat to enterprising bipedal feline is amusingly captured in small illustrations interspersed with full-page spreads that wryly depict his British family and neighborhood. He appears appropriately awkward as he stands erect but comfortably catlike on all fours and has much more personality and appeal than the humans with whom he interacts. Some of the sly humor is derived from folks bemusedly interacting with this upright feline in their midst. Simple, direct text with lots of brief sentences reinforces the well-paced action. "Patience is a virtue" gets a sardonic twist in this clever and visually arresting tale. Pair it with Susan

Meddaugh's Martha Speaks (Houghton, 1992) for a storytime about enterprising pets and their exasperated owners.

Carol Ann Wilson, Westfield Memorial Library, NJ
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jaleesa Greenwood:

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Michele Reynolds:

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Vikki Maynard:

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