Opinion



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Roberta, the sister I live with, has always fed outdoor cats. I know some say cats are natural hunters and feeding them only makes them stronger hunters. But I know cats love comfort and so I hope a full stomach lures them into indolence. However, that's not my point.

Rob and I often look out at the porch in the evening and early morning before we take the food bowl inside. We see a few cats but we also see racoons and possums. The racoons try to wash the dry cat food in the water bowl, leaving a dirty mess. And sometimes the racoons are filthy, as if they are living in a chimney somewhere. The possums are bright white, except the older ones who are fat and yellowish or even spotted. Baby possums sometimes get into the food bowl, the better to eat.

But here's the marvel. These critters line up. Last night two possums were eating and a black cat was sitting two steps down off the porch. Other nights it's a racoon or a possum waiting in line. A few times we've seen all three species, one eating, one on the steps, one on the walkway to the steps. They seem to know there's plenty. They give each other space. They wait their turn. They are a model for us limited humans.

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