

The Dragon's Scribe

J.L. Henker, Author – Quarterly Newsletter



From [The Chronicles of Amber](#) by Roger Zelinsky – Art by Boris Vallejo (1978)

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Bookmarks, magnets & more...

In the Beginning:

At the end of the last ice age (c. 10,000) large portions of the Sahara received rainfall creating a savannah whose inhabitants were some of the first to domesticate animals. [Their rock art](#) tells some of this story. For example, an early image shows fighting cats. These images pre-date some of the earliest Egyptian cat art (1990 BCE).

More familiar are the images of cats in Egyptian art. [Earliest evidence of domestication](#) comes from a 9500 year old grave in Syria containing a mummy of a tabby buried with its owner. From that point forward it appears we humans were hooked.



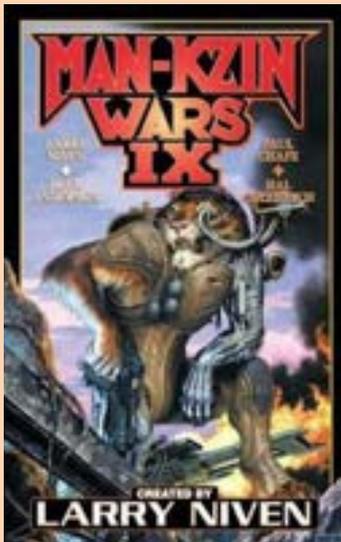
Fighting Cats - Libya (Sahara)

Cats in Castles & Space – Cont.

Before cats appeared in Fantasy/Sci-Fi, they made an appearance in legends, myths and fairy tales. An early character from Scotland called [Cat-Sith](#) was rumored to haunt the Scottish Highlands, possibly a shape-shifting witch. *Puss N Boots* comes to us from France and *Señor Don Gato* from a Spanish children's song. Many of our childhoods included the Cheshire Cat from [Alice in Wonderland](#).

Cats (both domestic and wild) are scattered across the early days of Fantasy/Sci-Fi. The short story, [The Cats of Ulthar](#) by H.P. Lovecraft appeared in 1920.

[Man-Kzin Wars](#) series (first title published in 1966) authored by Larry Niven and a long list of other famous authors of the periods, featured their feline warriors on many of the covers.



The [Chanur novels](#) by C. J. Cherryh (1981) featured the Hani, a feral cat-like people with space-technology.

Fritti appears in Tad William's [Tailchaser's Song](#) published in 1985.

The [Honor Harrington series](#) by David Weber (first published in 1993) features the large tree cat Nimitz who creates a powerful bond with Commander Honor.

And the beloved Terry Pratchett brought us the worst/best cat character in [Wyrd Sisters](#) (1988) and Greebo the vampire-eater in [Discworld](#).

“Witches were a bit like cats, they didn’t much like one another’s company, but they did like to know where all the other witches were in case they needed them.”

Terry Pratchett

And who could forget Church in Stephen King's [Pet Sematary](#) and Ginger the talking cat of Narnia.

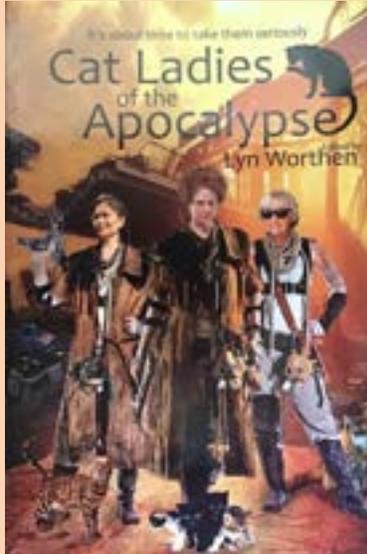
You might be interested in the latest issue of [Translunar Traveler's Lounge](#) (#6/February 2022) which includes a couple of cat stories and lot of other great content.



If you'd like to learn more, here's a list of novels with [cats & other animals featured as familiars](#) and a [list of cats in literature](#).

Lyn Worthen, Editor

Cat Ladies of the Apocalypse (2020)



From the back cover:

"It's time to turn the "man and his dog" trope on its head and tell the stories of cats and their badass women."

Cat Ladies of the Apocalypse wanders through broken worlds with stories of survival, technology, magic and sheer determination.

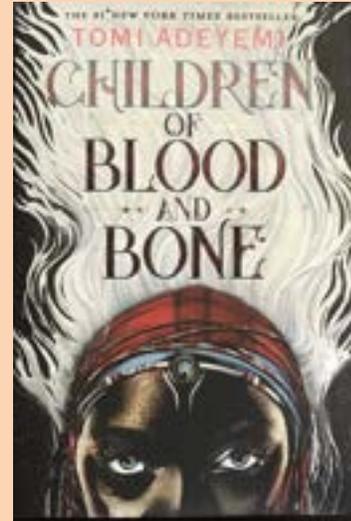
From a 5 Star Goodreads Review (Theresa B.):

"I wasn't sure I even wanted to think about the apocalypse in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. I'm sure glad I got my paws on this read. What a variety of characters and scenarios. And how refreshing to see cat ladies of all ages kicking ass in their own special ways using their brains, shotguns, zombie-eating sidekicks, motorcycles and even knitting."

An entire anthology with nothing but stories about women and their cats. What are you waiting for? Run out and get a copy of this fabulous collection of twenty-one stories right now!

Tomi Adeyemi

Children of Blood & Bone (2018)



Tomi's stunning novel is full of telines. Not the gentle settle in your lap type, but powerful, intelligent creatures that carry their humans on their backs and serve as protectors.

The big cats are an inspired part of the story but not the focus, which is about the epic journey of a people massacred and displaced because those in power fear their magic. The cats appear as a natural part of this fantasy world and feature prominently.

From a 5 Star Goodreads Review (Chelsea H.):

"The atmosphere is so rich you can practically taste it. No matter where our characters travelled to, I had a sensory experience. I could smell the moisture of the jungle air, I could taste the ash on my tongue when villages burned, the writing was of such high quality, the characters were unique and developed, the action scenes tense and heart-pounding and the emotional moments were deeply felt by all."

I agree. The writing is lush and descriptive. I found the protagonist's journey to save her people from annihilation deeply moving, with tense action scenes and unexpected plot twists. As a reader I'm deeply invested in the outcome, and looking forward to Children of Virtue and Vengeance (Legacy of Orisha - Book Two).

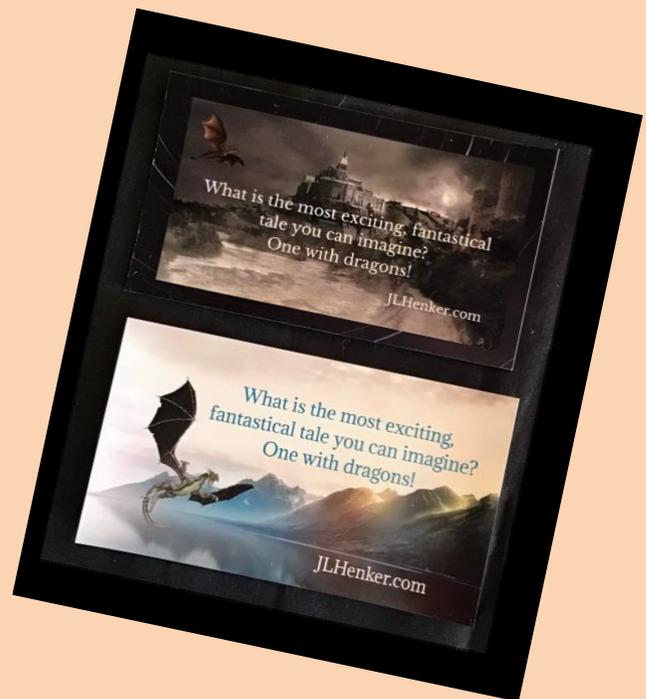
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