

# Scratching The Surface Of Tales Of Cats' Powers

By DOROTHY MADLEE  
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Ever since my Impy broke into print — at age 18 Impy is the feline femme fatale of Ponce de Leon Court — I've been hearing marvelous tales about cats with extrasensory powers.

Some quite overtop Impy's adventures, both amorous and ghostly. But with the credence that unites all true cat people in the face of a skeptical world, I believe every one of them.

ANDRE NORTON, the widely known Maitland author, has given feline characters a prominent role in many of her 63 books translated into many languages. She also has three lively feline characters of her own.

They are black-

and-white Frodo, Punchy, a brown tiger, and Su Li, an elegant Burmese. A fourth, obsidian-black Samwise, lost his life a week ago when struck by a car.

A few nights before the accident, Andre was reading in bed when three of the cats — Punchy was out at the time — obviously saw a ghost.

"SAMWISE, Frodo and Su Li were curled in the bored half-doze cats assume when their people read," Miss Norton said. "Suddenly they all tensed, ears alert, three pairs of eyes fixed on the open bedroom door.

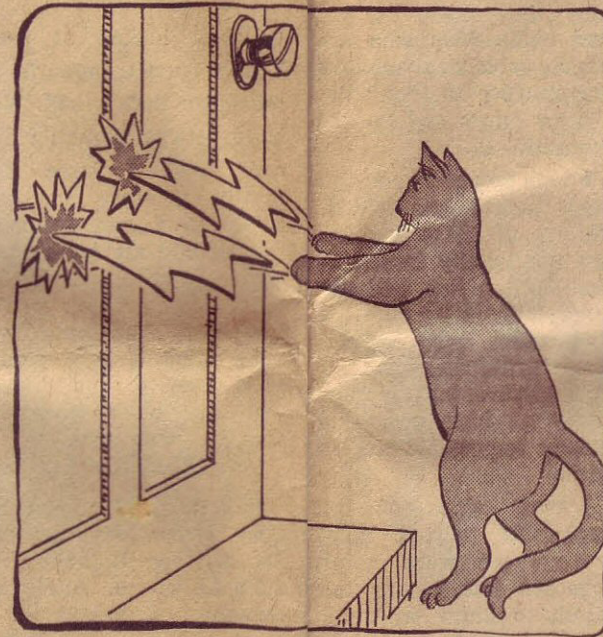
"They were not frightened — just interested," she said. "The three heads turned, following what seemed from the level of their gaze to be a

human-sized figure which came in and moved across the room to the mirror above my dressing table.

"Then they relaxed. Perhaps the figure disappeared into the mirror. I don't know. It was invisible to me. The house is not old, and has never been said to be haunted."

MISS Norton, whose research for her novels of interplanetary adventure has included much obscure scientific lore, said the vision of cats is known to extend 10 points higher into the ultraviolet and lower into the infrared range than human sight.

"We are said to coexist with many entities we cannot see nor detect with our instruments," she said. "Perhaps they



are the 'ghosts' dogs see and fear, and cats seem to welcome."

That may explain why Impy, curled on top of my covers one night in a

strange motel, woke me with a sudden tensing and a spring toward the edge of the bed.

SHE LEAPED to the floor, growling, stalked stiff-legged to the center of the room and reached up to touch noses with an invisible animal much taller than herself. Apparently it was friendly, for Impy relaxed and her fur lay flat again.

A slate-gray cat called Cleo lives with Bob Isaacs, the Orlando Sentinel head librarian. When Cleo wants to be let in at night she doesn't meow. Instead, people inside hear a sharp rapping at the front door as if an impatient deputy were about to present a court summons.

But cats have no knuckles, and there seems to be no mechani-

cal way a soft little cat could produce that sound. Cleo has never let anyone watch her do it.

SPIRIT RAPPING? Phyllis Schlemmer, an Orlando medium, says it's possible. Cleo may use her psychic energy to sound the knocks, the way poltergeist phenomenon are said to employ the excess energy of some adolescents.

For this one I have the

solemn word of a reputable newspaper-woman in a town near Milwaukee, Wis. She was there when it happened.

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(From Pg. 7-E)

A little boy, wheelchair-bound by polio, grieved over his lost kitten. The local newspaper printed the story and a radio station broadcast it. The parents had many calls offering substitute kittens.

The family was at breakfast in their farm-

house kitchen when my friend dropped in to check whether a kitten had been accepted. None had.

THERE WAS a muffled meow at the door and the boy's sister opened it. A gaunt mother cat walked in, a fluffy kitten dangling from her jaws. She carried it straight to the little boy,

placed it at his feet, ran to the door and away.

If cats don't ever have ESP, we have to assume this one heard the story from the radio or from people discussing it, checked the address in the paper and found the rural home by reading numbers on mailboxes.

I prefer the ESP theory. That undernour-

ished mother cat didn't look as if she could afford a newspaper subscription, or had a home where they'd let her listen to the radio.

I hope she knows her kitten was adopted and greatly loved.

There is also my recollection of the time Impy woke me to show me — from our second-floor

window — the scene of a motor accident at 2:47 a.m. on an otherwise empty street.

BOTH OF US had to lean out and crane our necks to see the spot at which she stared with blazing eyes and pricked-up ears. I stared too. Nothing unusual, nothing moved, there was no traffic.

A few seconds later, a car swerved from a section of street we couldn't see and crashed at the exact spot our gaze was fixed on.

It wasn't a serious accident — no injuries, and no one we knew was involved. But how had Impy seen it before it happened?