

## Cat Magic - Good Luck Spells

Contributed by Beate

Once in a while we all need a little good luck and what is better to have a 4-legged purring good luck charm in the house, or maybe two? Diablo, my pitch black good luck charm is my companion for nearly 13 years now and never has my life been more pleasant since he is around. Is this cat magic? I do believe it is. One of my favorite books is *Cat Spells* by Claire Nahmad and I want to let you participate in Cat Magic for a moment.

Cats are traditional luck-bringers, although their goodwill must be fostered and respected. The reason why they are so revered as omens of good fortune has been lost in the mist of pre-history. However fantastic claims have been made for cat's origins, not least that they came to earth long ago from another planet and another dimension.

In some places, fear of cats persists, however, and the idea of them having their genesis in the dark bowels of the earth, might linger to influence miners and seamen, for both are superstitious about pronouncing the word "cat" when underground or at sea. Sailors favor them as luck-bringers, even so, and to throw one overboard is said to raise a witch-storm at sea. Actors believe that to kick a cat, or to abuse it verbally, brings bad luck to their performance. They are happy to have an established theatre-cat, and for it to run about behind stage, but if it actually crosses the stage, dire misfortune will be visited on the theatrical production.

It was once thought unlucky to "flit a cat", or to remove it with the rest of the family when they moved house. Such a superstition seems to be connected with the idea of avoiding the anger of domestic spirits and hearth brownies, which often became attached to the household cat, sometimes using their body as a vehicle. This tradition still seems to be honored today in some cases, although the custom would certainly seem to be an abusive one.

Although the magical powers on the cat can be used for good or ill according to human purposes, people once held the belief that cats could be intrinsically evil. Attitudes seemed to sway between desiring them as household companions because of their luck-brining properties and visiting cruelty on them because they were associated with the Devil. They were thought to harbour evil spirits, and if a cat fell ill, however harmless the disease to human beings, they were put outside in the belief that the demons of their sickness would pursue the entire family. These unkind customs have almost died out, prevailing only in a few rural communities today.

The cat, however, with its nine lives, is a resilient creature. These good-luck spells honor its dignity and its appeal, and obviate those superstitious practices which arose from penalizing the unfortunate cat for human failings.

A great recourse for more information about cat magic is *Magic Paw*.