

American Cat: A Saga

by J.D. O'Guin



Gather round kitties and hear of this tale.
A terrible story of feline travail.
A story of trouble, and legions of pain -
of cats so diminished, for humans so vain.
Imagine a time in the land from before,
where humans set sail in the world to explore.
Each sailing vessel was duly provisioned,
with edible rations to last through the mission.
These precious vittles, the humans were certain,
were placed at the mercy of seafaring vermin.
Surely a risk they nay could afford,
they called upon cats and asked us aboard.
This is the barter upon which we sailed,
an alliance, since which, the humans have failed.
The humans had faith that we would excel -
and so we did, and did so quite well.

After we reached the American shore,
we the departed the ship and began to explore.
We didn't range far from our human mates,
and perhaps this mistake is what sealed our fate.
That humans needed our help was quite plain,
for rodents are plenty wherever there's grain.
Cats were employed by humans in scores,
to protect their wares and batten their stores.
This service we honored – we reveled the game,
and also the kind pats of human acclaim.
This was our mission, which we filled with valor -
we prevented disease within human squalor.
But such came a time when the humans evolved,
and learned of the things sanitation would solve.
Our verminous alleys of trash, scraps and offal,
our great hunting grounds we lost - it was awful.





Everywhere in the cities, the cats came to starve.
Amidst our great houses, the reaper would carve.
No cat was safe that roamed in the streets,
All cats were hungry with so little to eat.
Slowly our great houses began to diminish,
until man himself came in for the finish.
As sick as we were, and starving each day,
we can't really blame the ASPCA.
They came for us then, they rounded us up,
with their newly devised animal control pick-up.
All over the city the cats ran in fear,
three-hundred thousand killed in nary a year.
I will not mince words, the times were quite bleak,
I honor the loss of the ones who can't speak.
But even in these troubled times there were those,
who lived in the house and sported posh bows.
It must have been that the humans, I reckon,
discovered we offered a wealth of affection.

It wasn't long into the mass killing time span,
that the migration of cats into houses began.
For beloved we were, so protection they gave,
and this is the story of how cats were saved.
Gone were the days of digging through rubbish,
or defending our turf in an alleyway skirmish.
Humans invented feline-centric new gadgets,
Like commercial foods, cat litter, and baskets.
Into their homes our migration began,
and soon they were scooping the poop in our pan.
There was only one major downfall in their minds,
to keeping us inside with them all of the time.
That was that being felines like we are,
presented a number of humans with scars.
We didn't mean to hurt them of course,
and now we look back with so such remorse.
Marks on their children, their sofas, and rugs,
coincided tragically with new anesthesia drugs.





Humans had come up with new methods to cure,
and cats would be subject to a horrific procedure.
To tell you the story I will thus recount,
the tale of a mother, and how it came about.
Picture a woman, her eyes filled with tears,
consoling her children, the poor little dears,
as she carries their housecat into the vet,
to be euthanized for destroying their carpet.
This vet doesn't wish to be the grim reaper,
of a healthy young cat who otherwise is a keeper.
This vet is determined to come up with a way,
to allow this young cat to see the next day.
This method invented was not meant to harm,
it was simply intended to the cat disarm.
Reduced of his claws, this cat couldn't shred,
and back home to his family, then he could head.
The vet didn't realize the harm this would cause,
the procedure was met with puff and applause.

1952 will be known as the year it began,
the year the onychectomy was invented by man.
A. Grant Misener was the man's name,
who claimed this procedure was wholly humane.
First, he said, an anesthetic is administered,
before cutting off the toe with a Resco nail trimmer.
A tourniquet applied proximal to the paw,
will prevent bleeding out as you excise the claw.
Important, he notes, is a full excision,
else the claw will regrow from inside the incision.
It's true, I can tell you, it's commonly seen,
and a leading cause of why declawed cats are mean.
These painful fragments of the hacked off P3,
cause pain and suffering to many degrees.
Cats walk on their toes regardless of pain,
because they are part of the class digitigrade.
Doing so causes them misery and torment.
Is it any surprise they harbor resentment?





Hard litter in boxes on which they must walk,
the pain of the process does cause them to balk.
It's said that they can still jump, climb and play,
but the way they do, I'm so sad to say,
is very poorly and without any pleasure,
and for this we hope for new legislature.
It's time for the humans to stand up for,
and see that cat's paws are duly restored.
The harm is known, the studies in,
and ending declawing must now begin.
In other countries, the practice is banned.
It's time for America to take a strong stand.
We honor those who do choose to lead
us to this noble and decent just deed.
We cheer them on in this noble course,
and of this cause, we do thus endorse.
For until all cats can walk on their claws,
Americans must work to change the laws.

