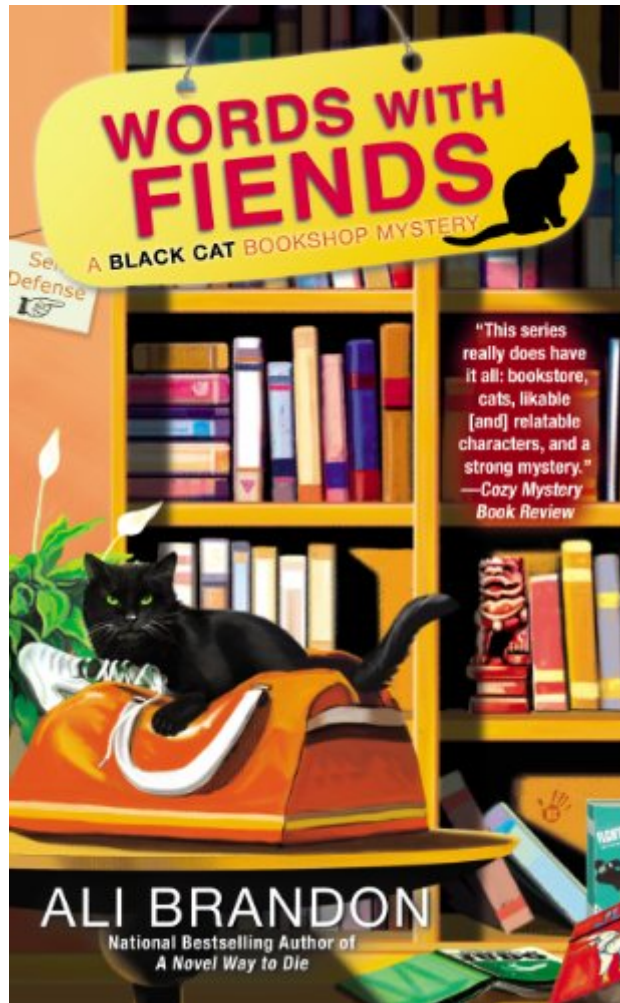


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# Words With Fiends (A Black Cat Bookshop Mystery Book 3)



## Synopsis

Brooklyn bookstore owner Darla Pettistone and her oversized black cat, Hamlet, have solved a few complicated capers. But after a recent brush with danger, Darla needs to get Hamlet out of a feline funk. Lately, Hamlet hasn't been chasing customers or being his obnoxious self—something Darla surprisingly misses. Concerned, she hires a cat whisperer to probe Hamlet's feline psyche and then decides to get out of her own funk by taking up karate to learn how to defend herself in case the need arises again. But when Darla finds her sensei dead at the dojo, it seems that even a master can be felled by foul play. Darla decides to investigate the matter herself, and the promise of a mystery snaps Hamlet out of his bad mood. After all, Darla may be the sleuth, but Hamlet's got a black belt in detection.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The third installment in this engaging series finds Hamlet struggling to regain his mojo, after nearly losing one of his nine lives in a recent adventure. Owner Darla has coped after their shared ordeal by taking martial arts lessons, and debates bringing in a professional "cat whisperer" to help her

furry pal. No sooner has the feline therapist diagnosed the root of Hamlet's issues, when he and Darla again find themselves wrapped up in another murder investigation! Someone has apparently killed Darla's well-liked sensei. Padding nimbly through no shortage of suspects, an unlikely friendship with an Italian greyhound, and a raucous martial arts tournament - Hamlet once again shows us why he's a contender!

I really liked this book -- and feel it is the best one so far in the series. More involvement this time with Robert, the Goth kid that works in the bookshop. We are also now introduced to a new animal character, a sweet little Italian greyhound that I assume will become a regular part of the series. Additionally, another aspect that was interesting was Darla's use of a cat whisperer for Hamlet -- or rather a feline empath! As cozy mysteries go, this is an enjoyable series, and I'm looking forward to the next one.

After a recent brush with danger, bookstore owner Darla Pettistone is worried about both herself and her cat Hamlet. In order to protect herself if needed in the future, she is taking karate lessons; to help Hamlet she's hired a cat whisperer (or feline behavioral empath as Brody Raywinkle prefers to be called). It is going to take a while before hamlet shows any sign of improvement but Darla soon has other things to worry about when she and coworker Robert find the body of their sensei. Tom Tomlinson's death isn't as it appears and soon Darla (and Hamlet) are in the middle of a murder investigation. Will Darla's snooping put them in danger? *Words with Fiends* is the third book in Ali Brandon's Black Cat Bookshop a cozy mystery series. Although I have not read the first two books in the series I quickly fell in love with the characters and setting and fully intend to buy the first two books. While I enjoyed all the human characters (Darla, James, Robert, and Jake), as someone who is owned by two cats Hamlet was easily my favorite character. While Hamlet reminded me a bit of Koko from the Cat Who series, this book is not nearly as fluffy as that series with deeper written characters and situations. The bookstore setting is a good one and the events at the dojo are nicely done. The mystery itself is well plotted with plenty of suspects and readers no doubt will be surprised at a few things that happen in the book. Finally, there is a wonderfully funny event towards the end of the book that made wish it really happened and really was a YouTube video. That's one video I could watch over and over again :-)  
*Words with Fiends* is a nicely done cozy mystery and I look forward to reading more books in the series.

It's winter in Brooklyn, and putative mobster Alex Putin has become a client out of

investigator/former police officer Jake Terrell, Darla Petitstone's downstairs tenant and best friend. Putin's mother, a 50s "something bombshell", has disappeared and Jake must find her. Darla and Robert have also begun taking a martial arts class at Tomlinsons School of Martial Arts. The school has a combination of characters, from headmaster and his two odd stepsons to a highschooler who is talented but has an attitude and a mother who dresses and acts like she is from the Sopranos. A class member who is also a member of the Thursday afternoon bookclub that meets once a week at the bookstore is creepy and difficult to deal with. Finally, Hamlet is suffering from some sort of malaise and is definitely off his game. He is actually seen by a "cat whisperer" who identifies the problem but offers no solutions. In short order, the owner of Tomlinsons dies. The police first suspect suicide but it soon becomes obvious that he was murdered. There is no dearth of suspects. In addition to master Tomlinson's stepsons, wife and Chris, Tomlinson's widow ranks at the top of the list. Darla must find the killer quickly, before a karate championship, in which they are all participating, turns deadly. The final scene in this book is extremely exciting and unlike anything the book has prepared you for. I strongly recommend it.

I loved the first two books and especially Hamlet the black cat. Could not finish this particular book and did not even care about the outcome, the whole style of the series changed, the cat did not do what he used to which was for me the main draw, and this turned out to be, for me, a huge disappointment. This seems to happen to quite a few series, that by book three, the author takes a wrong turn somehow. I have saved the first two books to read again since they were so good, but I would not buy any future books in this series. Really disappointing.

Oh my gosh - four paws up! Darla and crew just keep getting better with each book. I never, ever, suspected the killer in this one (and usually I have at least a suspicion). Bookstore owner Darla and employee Robert are taking martial arts lessons and unfortunately find their master dead at the dojo when they show up for a private class. Suspects abound but with some help from her friends, and lots of help from store mascot Hamlet, the black cat, the killer is caught before he can murder Darla. Of course, if Darla could only correctly interpret Hamlet's hints to her, the killer would have been brought to justice much earlier - but then we'd be missing a great mystery read. The characters are very real and although it does have the usual cop-as-possible-romantic-interest angle, this is not overdone. I like Darla because she may have concerns and fears, but she is a strong female heroine and definitely not a damsel in distress who always needs a male to protect her - except, of course, for Hamlet. Hamlet has some leftover problems to his esteem (from their last adventure) but

with the help of a cat empath and by having another crisis to avert, he gets his mojo back.

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