

Excerpt from Defender of the Lost Book 2 of The Verities Silex (Fantasy Novel)

Josiah Lebowitz

Charging forward, the cat leapt into the air and slammed his sabre into the rock monster's face with all the force he could muster. The blade shattered at impact with an ear wrenching clang, sending sharp spines sliding across the floor. The monster grunted, not even a dent showed in its seemingly invincible skin. With a speed that appeared impossible for such a large beast it snatched Kengara up with one hand.

"Aargh!!!" the cat screamed as the thick rock began crushing his body. He struggled in vain as the grip continued to tighten but even his nimble feline form was unable to wriggle free. Kengara was struggling to even breathe when he at last remembered the medallion. There was no need to imagine the intense feeling of need required to teleport. He moved too quickly to land on the floor and appeared again several feet above the ground. Sweet air filled his lungs as he flipped over and pulled a graceful landing.

The rock monster took another swipe at him. Kengara dodged the first but wasn't expecting the second to come so soon. The hand smashed into his back with the force of a battering ram, sending him flying across the room like a rag doll. As he rolled across the floor he could feel the thin cord holding his magical charm snap. Kengara desperately reached for the medallion but it rolled away, coming to rest directly behind the rock monster, which was now looming over the battered feline.

Kengara struggled to his feet and spat blood onto the cavern floor. With no weapon he was powerless to attack the fiend and without the medallion he'd be lucky to even evade its attacks. There was magic but with the monster's speed he'd never have time to complete a spell. Things were looking bad, very bad. Pain filled every inch of his body but he wouldn't give up. He was on a mission for the Great One. He couldn't fail. There had to be a way to defeat the rock monster, but how? Suddenly Kengara remembered why he had come to this lost cave. The Zantetsuken... It still lay there, blade buried in the stone column, waiting for someone to take it.

Mustering all of his strength, Kengara ran. Rolling under the huge stone fingers, he jumped to his feet and grasped the legendary blade with both hands. It slid free from the stone with surprising ease, revealing a beautifully crafted saber with magical runes carved across its surface. Before he could resume the battle, Kengara once again felt the crushing pressure of unbreakable rock closing around him.

He moved quickly, before the fingers could completely trap him, and brought the Zantetsuken again the monster's wrist. The runes on its surface flashed as the sword cut through the thick rock as easily as if it were bread. Kengara jumped free as the hand hit the ground with an earthshaking crash. *Amazing...* He stared at the saber, realizing what he had just done. *What power...*

"Now it's you who will fall!" Kengara once more charged the hulking pile of rocks. Leaping high into the air he brought the blade down on the top of the rock monster's head. Sparks flew from the blade as Kengara dropped back towards the ground. He landed and pulled the sword free as the rock monster let out a last groan and broke into two pieces. Both hit the ground then broke apart and vanished in a flash of magical light.