Hello!

Welcome to the final part of Ravenpaw’s trilogy. All of you who wished he had stayed in ThunderClan and become a warrior, are you proud that he fought so well in Book Two on behalf of his former Clanmates? He never forgot his battle training, or what it meant to be loyal to a Clan. You can understand why Barley was afraid that Ravenpaw might want to stay in the forest now that Tigerstar has gone.

But Ravenpaw knows himself better than that. If home is where the heart is, his heart is firmly rooted in the barn with his best friend. Ravenpaw will have to call on the combat skills he learned long ago to drive out the cats who took over the farm, but deep down Ravenpaw knows he is not a warrior. He is loyal and brave and quick-thinking, but his path lies in a different direction than the Clans’.

So now do you see why Ravenpaw was never destined to have a warrior name? His name will be Ravenpaw forever, and he wears it with pride. Ravenpaw represents everything that is good about choosing your own path and having the courage to stick to it—but without forgetting any of the lessons learned along the way.

Best wishes always,
Erin Hunter
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE I'M HERE.

BACK IN THE THUNDERCLAN CAMP.

CATS YAWN AND STRETCH ALL AROUND ME AS THEY WAKE UP...

...AND INSTEAD OF DOGS BARKING OR ROOSTERS CROWING, ALL I HEAR IS THE SONG OF BIRDS IN THE FOREST.
My name is Ravenpaw. My best friend, Barley, and I were forced out of our home on the farm by a group of rogues...

What brought us here was pretty horrible... but I really do enjoy being here.

...and we came to ThunderClan for help.

Watching the hunting patrols heading out...

I was born into ThunderClan, after all.
IT’S TAKEN ME LESS TIME THAN I EXPECTED TO GET USED TO ALL THIS AGAIN.

IT’S HARD TO BELIEVE ONLY THREE DAYS HAVE PASSED SINCE BARLEY AND I HELPED THUNDERCLAN DEFEAT SOME OTHER ROGUES...

...A BUNCH OF SCAVENGERS FROM TWOLEGPLACE.

THOSE MANGY CATS WON’T BE AMBLISHING ANY MORE CLAN HUNTING PATROLS NOW.

AND TODAY, FIRESTAR’S MAKING GOOD ON HIS PROMISE.

HE’S GOING TO HELP BARLEY AND ME RECLAIM OUR FARM.

TODAY, BARLEY AND I ARE GOING HOME!
WE OWE HIM SO MUCH FOR AGREING TO HELP US TAKE BACK THE FARM.

THERE'S FIRESTAR NOW.

READY?

YES!

IT'S TIME!
HRHK...MMNH...
RIGHT...WHAT?

COME ON, BARLEY. TODAY'S THE DAY!

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE FARM AGAIN!
AND WON'T THAT SCOUNDREL WILLIE BE SURPRISED TO SEE ALL OF US!

GRAYSTRIPES GOING TO HELP US... ALONG WITH CLOUDTAIL, BRIGHTHEART, BRACKENFLUR, AND AN APPRENTICE NAMED BRAMBLEPAW.

ALL BRAVE CATS... ALL TRAINED WELL BY THUNDERCLAN.

THE ROGUES LIVING ON OUR FARM DON'T STAND A CHANCE.
HRRRKK, DO WE HAVE TO LEAVE SO EARLY?

RAVENPAW, BARLEY, THUNDERCLAN WILL MISS YOU BOTH.

ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN'T WAIT A LITTLE LONGER? THERE ARE MANY CATS THAT WOULD WISH TO SAY FAREWELL.

I'D PREFER TO GO QUIETLY, IF WE COULD. NOT HAVE ANY BIG FUSS.

I'M NOT ONE FOR BIG FAREWELLS.

THAT MIGHT BE BEST, YES.

AS YOU WISH, THEN.

LET'S GO TAKE BACK YOUR HOME.
WE WANT TO GO TOO!

THOSE ARE FIRESTAR’S KITS MAKING ALL THE NOISE.

HIS MATE, SANDSTORM, HAS HER WORK CUT OUT FOR HER, DEALING WITH THOSE TWO. ...BUT THEY’RE BOTH SO ADORABLE!

SQUIRRELKIT, BE QUIET! YOU’RE DISTURBING THE WHOLE CAMP!

BUT I CAN FIGHT! I CAN!

JUST LOOK AT THIS KICK!

UNH!
SANDSTORM’S WARNING COMES TOO LATE. SQUIRRELKIT’S RUCKUS WAKES EVERYONE UP.

THEY COME TO SEE WHAT SQUIRRELKIT’S MAKING ALL THE NOISE ABOUT...

...AND HERE WE ARE, RIGHT OUT IN THE OPEN. OBVIOUSLY ABOUT TO LEAVE.
SO MUCH FOR NOT HAVING ANY BIG FLUSS.

GOOD LUCK, RAVENPAW!

WE'LL MISS YOU, BARLEY!

GIVE THOSE ROGUES A SWIPE FOR ME!

WISH I COULD GO WITH YOU!
Barley’s handling all the attention a little better than I thought he would, actually.

All right, everyone. Let us through.

It’s time to go.

Thunderclan’s good-byes and thank-yous ring in my ears as we travel.

Part of me wants to stay... but only a small part.

Former Thunderclan cat or not, I belong on the farm.
RUNNING THROUGH THE FOREST, THOUGH, AS PART OF A WARRIOR PATROL... THAT'S HARD TO BEAT.

WARRIORS—HOLD UP. BE READY.

NO, GRAYSTRIPED... THERE'S NO NEED.

OUR FRIENDS FROM WINDCLAN ARE EXPECTING US.

DEADFOOT. GOOD TO SEE YOU.

AND YOU, FIRESTAR.

RAVENPAW... BARLEY. WE'VE HEARD ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE FARM.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU BOTH. YOU DESERVE TO GET YOUR HOME BACK.

THANK YOU... THAT MEANS A LOT!

LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE FRIENDS IN MORE THAN ONE CLAN NOW...!
WE DON'T GET ANY MORE SURPRISES ON THE TRIP, GOOD OR BAD.

JUST LOTS OF RUNNING. LOTS OF TIME TO THINK... AND THE MORE I THINK, THE MORE NERVOUS I GET.

BY THE TIME WE REACH THE FARM, I THINK I'M ABOUT AS NERVOUS AS I COULD POSSIBLY BE.

LOOK AT THAT. THEY FIXED THE BARN AFTER THE FIRE...

THAT HALF- RUINED BUILDING ON THE EDGE OF THE FAR FIELD. WHAT IS THAT?

USED TO BE A COWSHED. NOW IT'S ABANDONED.

GOOD. WE'LL SET UP CAMP THERE.
THE REST OF YOU, STICK WITH RAVENPAW AND ME.

RAVENPAW, I'D LIKE TO SCOUT THE FARMYARD. WOULD YOU SHOW US THE WAY?

CLOUDTAIL—TAKE A HUNTING PATROL OUT, BUT KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM THE FARM.

SURE THING.

OF COURSE.

WE KEEP OUR NOSES TO THE WIND, ALERT FOR THE ROGUES' SCENT.

WE CAN'T LET THEM KNOW WE'RE HERE.

NOT YET.
THOSE TWO. YOU RECOGNIZE THEM?

YES...

THAT'S WILLIE AND SNAPPER. THE ROGUES' LEADER AND HIS BRUISER.

KWAAWK! KWAAWK! BUK KWAAWK!

RAWR! RAWR! RAWR!

HISSS!
"These rogues are ruthless. They forced us out of here with a mix of savagery and dirty tricks."

"Plus, well... they outnumbered us pretty badly, too."

You were right to ask us for help, even if you hadn't been outnumbered, from the looks of them...

...there's no way that would have been a clean, fair fight.

Okay, now that those two are out of the way I want a look inside that barn.

Quickly now. Go.
IT BREAKS MY HEART, WHAT GREET US INSIDE THE BARN, THIS PLACE USED TO BE OUR HOME.

NOW IT'S A WRECK... AND IT STINKS OF STALE BEDDING AND CAT DIRT.

WE HEAR SOMEONE SNIORING, SLEEPING, INSTEAD OF TAKING CARE OF WHERE THEY LIVE.

NOT ONLY THAT... BUT THOSE KITS ARE PLAYING WITH THEIR PREY. I DON'T THINK THEY'RE EVEN GOING TO EAT IT.

THE WARRIOR CODE FORBIDS WASTING FOOD LIKE THIS. I'M NO WARRIOR-- I DON'T HAVE TO LIVE BY THE CODE...

...BUT THIS MAKES ME SO ANGRY, I BARELY HEAR FIRESTAR CALLING FOR US TO LEAVE. THE BLOOD'S RUSHING SO LOUD IN MY EARS.

HOW WASTEFUL... HOW WRONG.
WE'RE GOING TO KEEP THIS SIMPLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD. WE STAY HERE, OUT OF SIGHT, UNTIL NIGHTFALL.

THEN WE TAKE THE FIGHT TO THEM.

THE ODDS ARE STACKED IN OUR FAVOR. WE HAVE BATTLE TRAINING AND THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE. THIS IS OURS.

I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS, THOUGH, FOR THE TWO OF YOU.

WE'LL TELL YOU ANYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW.

ABOUT THOSE DOGS, ARE THEY GOING TO MAKE A LOT OF NOISE AND GIVE US AWAY?

NO, I DON'T THINK SO. THEY'RE HEAVY SLEEPERS. WE CAN JUST AVOID THEM.

HOW ABOUT THE CHICKENS? THEY'LL BE IN THEIR COOP WHEN WE GO IN, CORRECT?
THE CHICKENS DON'T LIKE THE ROGUES... WILLIE AND HIS CREW KILLED SOME OF THEIR CHICKS RIGHT BEFORE WE LEFT.

ALL RIGHT. WE'LL WAIT FOR THE ROGUES TO SETTLE DOWN FOR THE NIGHT.

THEN WE'LL GO UNDER THE DOOR AGAIN AND AMBUSH THEM AS THEY SLEEP.

BUT THEY ALWAYS LIKED RAVENPAW AND ME. THEY SHOULDN'T BE ANY TROUBLE.

UNTIL THEN WE MUST STAY HIDDEN.

DO NOT LEAVE THIS SHED.

THAT'S NO TROUBLE. OUR PATROL BROUGHT BACK PLENTY OF FRESH-KILL. WE CAN STAY HERE JUST FINE.
IT'S TENSE, ALL THE WAITING.

SEVERAL OF THE OTHER CATS GET SOME SLEEP, BUT I CAN'T.

POOR BARLEY. HE'S LOOKING... OLDER. THIS WAS HIS HOME BEFORE IT WAS MINE.

THIS MUST BE SO HARD ON HIM.

RAVENPAW. YOU OKAY?

YEAH, I'M FINE. JUST A LITTLE NERVOUS.

I OWE THIS TO BARLEY. I NEED TO MAKE HIS HOME SAFE AGAIN. HE WAS SO GENEROUS TO ME WHEN I NEEDED HELP.

VIOLET...

DON'T WORRY, OLD FRIEND. WE'LL MAKE THIS RIGHT.
WE CAN HEAR THE TWO LEGS START TO FEED THE COWS AND THE CHICKENS.

THESE ARE THE LAST THINGS THEY DO BEFORE SUNDOWN.

IT’S ALMOST TIME.
EXCEPT FOR THE DISTANT HOOT OF AN OWL, THE FARM IS SILENT AND STILL.
EVERYONE...

...FOLLOW ME.

AND STAY QUIET.
SO FAR, SO GOOD.

I WONDER IF THE DOGS REMEMBER HOW BARLEY AND I SAVED THEIR LIVES DURING THE FIRE HERE.

ZZZZZ...

RRRRHH?

PROBABLY NOT.
It seems like the plan's going to go off without a hitch...

...until the chickens give us a nasty surprise.

Buk kwaawk!

Buk kwaawk!

What's going on?

I don't know! They never used to be this nervous!

Now they're scared of all cats!

It's Snapper! He must taunt them all the time!
THIS IS NO GOOD! THEY'RE TOO LOUD! EVERYONE, GO BACK!

RRH?

INTRUDERS!

NO POINT IN RETREATING NOW.

ATTACK!

WARRIORS OF THUNDERCLAN...
AND JUST LIKE THAT, NOT ONLY IS OUR CAREFUL PLAN GONE, BUT I'M FIGHTING AND I CAN'T EVEN TELL WHO'S WHO!

RAAOWR!

I JUST HOPE WHOEVER I'M SLASHING IS AN ENEMY, AND NOT A FRIEND.

FINALLY...
...MY EYES ADJUST ENOUGH TO SEE...

...AND I ALMOST WISH THEY HADN'T.

THERE ARE CATS HERE THAT I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!

AND THEN...

THIS WAY, JUMPER!

GET HIM, HOOT!
WHAT THE...

GET OUT! SCOOT!

ALL OF YOU, GET OUT!

I GET A GOOD, SOLID LOOK FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND IT CONFIRMS MY WORST FEAR.

THOSE CATS ARE BLOODCLAN. THEY’VE FOLLOWED US!
There are too many of them!

Thunderclan—scatter! You know where to meet up!

I can’t believe it. It’s like a nightmare.

...I know it’s a lot worse for Barley.

My brothers are here! I can’t get away from them... no matter where I go, they won’t leave me alone!

And they’ve brought Bloodclan cats to our farm!

But as bad as it is for me...

I’ve got to do something.

Now...listen...this is terrible, I’m not saying it’s not, but it might not be as bad as we think.

Those cats were calling your brothers “Jumper” and “Hoot,” not their Bloodclan names.

They might not think of themselves as Bloodclan anymore... and if so, that means they’re vulnerable.
Once a cat fears his own weakness, he's lost the battle before it even begins.

I know this is true.

I was terrified of Tigerclaw... and I let him bully me and threaten me because of it.

This is our home, and we have just as much a right to it as the Clans have a right to live in the forest.

And Bloodclan cats or not, we have to take this place back.

I see Firestar watching me, and I realize that, in a lot of ways, I am still a clan cat.

I definitely have a sense of honor, and duty and justice.

But I'm talking mainly for Barley's benefit here. I need him to feel the same way.

And to have the courage to fight his own kin.
THE CLOUDS HANG LOW AND HEAVY THE NEXT DAY. I KEEP WAITING FOR IT TO RAIN, BUT IT NEVER DOES.

NO ONE’S LEFT THE BARN SINCE SUNLIP.

WE USE THE TIME TO COME UP WITH A NEW PLAN OF ATTACK...

...AND I TRY NOT TO LET MY NERVES GET THE BEST OF ME.

FROM HERE THE PLACE LOOKS DESERTED.

THE BLOODCLAN CATS CHANGE EVERYTHING.

IS THERE ANY OTHER WAY INTO THE BARN BESIDES UNDER THE DOOR?

WELL... YES. YES, THERE IS!

THERE ARE HOLES IN THE ROOF, LEADING ONTO THE RAFTERS!
JUST THEN WE ALL NOTICE SOMETHING INTERESTING.

SNAPPER AND POUNCE TAKE OFF AS IF THEY ARE BEING CHASED BY FOXES.

COME ON! LET'S GET 'EM!

NO. STAY.

THEY KNOW THE TERRAIN. WITH THAT BIG OF A HEAD START, WE'D NEVER CATCH THEM.

WELL...GOOD RIDDANCE, I SAY. THIS JUST SHOWS HOW SCARED THEY ARE—THEY CAN'T EVEN KEEP THEIR OWN FROM DESERTING.

...WE'LL SEE.
Finally we come up with a plan. I think it's a good one... if nothing messes it up.

Everyone, listen to me.

It's going to happen like this...

Firestar explains his plan quickly and clearly. We'll be attacking on two fronts.

Since the door will be guarded, we'll send two cats to the front door...

...then we'll slip down through the roof and catch them by surprise.

This will work.

We will drive them out this time.
"IT'S CLEAR."

LET'S GO.

NONE OF US MAKES A SOUND...

...AND THERE'S BRACKENFUR AND BRAMBLEPAW. BUT—!

THEY'RE TOO CLOSE TO THE CHICKENS! THEY'LL SET THEM TO SQUAWKING AGAIN!

DON'T WORRY. THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING.
Bawk bawk buk kaawk

kaawk!

Bawk buk-buk kaawk!

buk kaawwk!

The clan cats are back! Get them!

Where are they? All I see is chickens!

Graahr bark bark bark
Now—show us a way in!

The chickens are a perfect distraction! I should’ve known better than to question Firestar.

Right! There are gaps in the roof, right over...

It’s a horrible feeling, though, when I realize I’m messing up the plan myself.

The roof’s been mended since the fire!

The hole we used to climb through—it’s not here anymore!

What do we do?

Everyone’s counting on us!

We make a hole.

Tear

Crack

Pop
COME ON.

WE CAN STILL DO THIS.

READY...

IT'S AS IF BRAMBLEPAW AND BRACKENFLUR CAN HEAR FIRESTAR THINKING.

HISSS!

Rrrheerrr!

THEY FLOOD THE WHOLE BARN WITH MOONLIGHT. THE ROGUES CAN'T EVEN HIDE AMONG THE HAY BaleS!
THE ROGUES MAY OUTNUMBER US, BUT THEY CAN'T OUTFIGHT US.

REEOOWRRRR!
FORWARD, THUNDERCLAN!
PUSH THEM OUTSIDE!

WOMP

SHUNT

CRACK

MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND—THEY'RE NOT WELCOME HERE!
So many of the rogues have already run away...

We're left with only a few of them.

But there's one that I'm glad to see. One I have personal business with.

Go, Willie. Get out of here. This is not your home.
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, IS IT, RAVENPAW?

WELL, LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING...

...IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU THINK!
OH NO... OH NO...

THEY WERE GOING FOR REINFORCEMENTS!

SNAPPER AND POLINCE WEREN’T DESERTING!

KILL THEM! KILL THE CLAN CATS!

IN A FLASH I’M FIGHTING FOR MY LIFE, WE ALL ARE.

AND THE BARKING OF THE DOGS IS SO LOUD IT FEELS LIKE MY HEAD’S GOING TO EXPLODE...!

RAWR! RAWR! RAWR!
I still have faith in Firestar. I know if he can get us to safety, we can figure out a way to deal with this.

But getting us to safety...

...all of a sudden...

...isn't looking too likely.
THUNDERCLAN! TO ME!

F-FIRESTAR?

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

WE ARE WARRIORS, RAVENPAW.

WE FIGHT.

NO MATTER WHAT.

OHHHH. JUST LOOK AT THEM, WOULD YOU?

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN CATS MORE PATHETIC?

NOPE.

SURE HAVEN'T, BOSS.
ALL THIS TALK ABOUT WHO BELONGS WHERE.

TEAR THEM TO PIECES.

WELL, I THINK THAT'S OBVIOUS, DON'T YOU?

NOW.

EVERYTHING SLOWS DOWN AS SOON AS WILLIE GIVES THAT ORDER.

I'M AWARE OF EVERY SINGLE CAT AS THEY CLOSE IN ON US. EVERY WHISKER... EVERY CLAW... EVERY TOOTH.

I KNOW THEY'RE GOING TO KILL US ALL! JUST AS WILLIE COMMANDED.

EVEN SO, I KNOW WE'RE GOING TO FIGHT THEM. FIGHT UNTIL IT'S OVER. FIGHT UNTIL WE CAN'T FIGHT ANY LONGER.

AND EVEN THOUGH DEATH IS ONLY SECONDS AWAY... THE ONE THING I HEAR... THE ONE THING THAT FILLS UP THE WHOLE WORLD...
RAWK! RAWR!

...IS THE BARKING OF THE DOGS.

rrrrhhhhRRH!!!
I don't even have the words to describe the fury the dogs unleash on the rogues.

As fierce and vicious as the rogues are, the dogs are so much more terrible...

...it's like watching a forest fire.

Run! We've got to run!

What?

No--no, wait!
Barley and I saved the dogs' lives once!

We might not be able to talk to them, but they're on our side!

It doesn't take long for the ThunderClan cats to understand this... or to get excited about it.

Let's go, dogs! Get 'em!

Wak

Chomp

Dong
FIND YOUR MOTHER AND GET LOST! THIS IS NO FIGHT FOR KITS!

ALMOST BEFORE I KNOW IT...

BUT I DON'T GET THE CHANCE TO ENJOY IT.

...I'VE GOT WILLIE PINNED.

ROHAOWR! HELP US!
HELP US, BARLEY!

WE DIDN'T KNOW THIS WAS YOUR PLACE, HONEST!

WILLIE TOLD US IT WAS HIS PLACE!

WE WOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE IF WE'D KNOWN IT WAS YOURS, BROTHER!

LIARS!

YOU KNEW FULL WELL, COWARDS!

I'M SORRY, MY FRIEND.

BUT I CAN'T LET YOU HURT THESE CATS.
They're weak... but they're my brothers.

I'll have to keep that in mind from now on, whenever I'm around dogs.

I guess the dogs can understand us... even if we don't speak the same language.

You can play happy families here if you want.

But if I ever see your faces in twoflepacle, I'll skin you.

This isn't over.

Really? What makes you think that?
WHEN YOUR FRIENDS FROM THE FOREST HAVE GONE AND YOU'RE ALL ON YOUR OWN, YOU'D BETTER BE LOOKING OVER YOUR SHOULDER.

'CAUSE I'LL BE BACK!

THIS IS MY TERRITORY. I WILL DEFEND IT TO THE DEATH.

IF YOU SET FOOT ON THIS FARM AGAIN, YOU DO SO AT YOUR OWN RISK.
THAT'S PART OF THE
GARBAGE CLEARED OUT.
TIME FOR THE REST.

GET A MOVE
ON, YOU TWO.

PLEASE, BARLEY! HELP US!
WE CAN'T GO BACK TO
TWOLEGPLACE NOW.
WILLIE WILL KILL US!

I CAN SEE THE
HESITATION IN YOUR
EYES, BARLEY. I HAVE
TO TELL YOU...

COME ON,
BARLEY...BROTHER.

...LETTING THESE TWO
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
YOUR GOOD NATURE
WOULD BE UNWISE.
I CAN SEE THE CONFLICT IN BARLEY AS CLEARLY AS I CAN SEE THE STARS IN THE SKY.

HE CAN'T JUST SEND THESE ROGUES TO THEIR DEATHS.

LIKE IT OR NOT, THEY ARE FAMILY.

IT'S ALL RIGHT, FIRESTAR. IF BARLEY WANTS THEM TO STAY...

...I'LL MAKE SURE THERE AREN'T ANY PROBLEMS.

WELL...IF YOU'RE BOTH SURE...
I can only imagine what this must be like for Barley.

Losing his home...

He looks frailer than ever.

Dealing with his brothers...

Is this even the same place, Ravenpaw? I...I barely recognize it.
DON'T WORRY, BARLEY. WE'LL MAKE IT RIGHT AGAIN.
JUST LIKE OLD TIMES.

THANKS.

I GUESS THEY'RE READY TO GO BACK TO THEIR CAMP.

YEAH, WE'D BETTER SAY GOOD-BYE.

THANK YOU, FIRESTAR.
EVERYONE, THANK YOU. YOU RISKED YOUR LIVES FOR US.
CLAN OR NO CLAN, RAVENPAW, WE ARE FAMILY.

IF EITHER OF YOU EVER NEEDS ANY HELP, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK.

I THINK WE'RE SAFE FOR NOW.
I know the warriors are anxious to get back to their camp...to their own mates, their own kits, their own dens.

Their own home.

Hoot and Jumper hardly lift a paw to help us as we clear away some of the soiled straw to make a nest.

But I'm too tired to care. I suspect Barley is too. All I want now is sleep.

Hoot.

Jumper.

We'll talk more in the morning.
AS I WAKE UP, THE SOUNDS COME BACK TO ME.

THE COWS AND CHICKENS... THE TWOLEGs... THE CREAK OF THE BARN'S WOODEN WALLS...

WELL, ALMOST EVERYTHING... Hoot and Jumper are here now. We're back...

I'M HOME AGAIN! I'M HOME, AND BARLEY IS HERE WITH ME, AND EVERYTHING IS RIGHT IN THE WORLD.

...BUT I WONDER... CAN THINGS EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN?

AS SOON AS I'M OUT OF SIGHT—JUST GOING TO CATCH A MOUSE FOR BREAKFAST—I HEAR THEM TALKING TO BARLEY.

REMEMBER, BARLEY? REMEMBER ALL THE FUN WE USED TO HAVE PLAYING WHEN WE WERE ALL KITS?
YEAH, REMEMBER HOW WE USED TO HIDE FROM EACH OTHER? THOSE WERE THE GREATEST TIMES!

BARLEY DOESN'T EVEN RESPOND. HE LOOKS SO OLD AND WEAK... MAYBE HE JUST NEEDS SOME TIME TO RECOVER FROM ALL THIS.

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE.

HEY, BARLEY, LISTEN. IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY OUTSIDE. WHY DON'T YOU GO FOR A NICE RELAXING WALK?

I CAN STAY AND START SHOWING YOUR BROTHERS AROUND THE FARM. YOU KNOW—ALL OUR BEST HUNTING AND SNOOZING SPOTS.

THANKS, RAVENPAW. THAT SOUNDS GREAT. I WON'T BE GONE TOO LONG.

AS I WATCH HIM GO, I CAN'T HELP WONDERING EXACTLY WHAT I'VE GOTTEN MYSELF INTO WITH THESE TWO.
AS IT TURNS OUT, I CAN BEST DESCRIBE BARLEY'S BROTHERS IN ONE WORD: LAZY.

I SHOW THEM THE BEST SPOTS TO HUNT...

I SHOW THEM WHERE TO TAKE THEIR DIRTY STRAW...

I SHOW THEM HOW TO PUT TOGETHER THE MOST COMFORTABLE NEST....
I even show them where to collect medicinal herbs like tansy and poppy seed and mint.

But they don’t seem to want to do anything. They just want everything handed to them.

I try to see the good in them, for barley’s sake, but they’ve got a long way to go.

The last thing I show them is underneath the chicken coop...

...where we can gather up some of the tasty grain that falls through.
AFTER THAT, I'M DONE. IT'S BEEN A LONG, HARD DAY, AFTER A WHOLE LOT OF LONG, HARD DAYS, AND I AM EXHAUSTED.

I'M BEAT. I'M GOING TO TAKE A NAP.

IF BARLEY COMES BACK BEFORE I WAKE UP, JUST TELL HIM WHERE I AM, OKAY?

I CAN... BARELY KEEP MY EYES OPEN...
I have no idea how long I've been asleep.

What? What? What's wrong?

Wh...what?

But I can tell immediately that it's barley shaking me awake.

Take a look around! You tell me what's wrong!

Hoot! Jumper!
WHAT DID YOU DO? WHY HAVE YOU WRECKED THE PLACE LIKE THIS?
WE WERE ONLY TRYING TO CATCH MICE, RAVENPAW. IT'S DIFFICULT!

Yeah!
WE REALLY NEED SOMEONE TO SHOW US HOW, YOU KNOW.

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING AB-

BARLEY, I DID SHOW THEM! I SPENT ALL DAY SHOWING THEM!

I CAN'T HEAR WHAT HOOT WHISPERS IN BARLEY'S EAR.

BUT I DON'T HAVE TO KNOW THE WORDS TO GET THE GIST OF IT.
BARLEY?

BARLEY, WHAT’S GOING ON?

HOOT SAYS YOU GOT HIM AND JUMPER TO COLLECT ALL THE HERBS AND SUPPLIES WHILE YOU TOOK A NAP.

TH-THAT’S NOT TRUE!

LOOK, I CAN TELL YOU’RE EXHAUSTED. I’M SURE YOU DON’T WANT ANY TROUBLE. I KNOW I DON’T.

THEY’RE LYING!

YOU JUST WANT TO REST, RIGHT?
I CAN'T BELIEVE BARLEY
WOULD BELIEVE THEM OVER ME,
EVEN FOR A HEARTBEAT!

IT FLUSTERS ME SO BADLY,
I CAN'T EVEN SAY ANYTHING.
BUT I DO KNOW THIS:

I AM SICK OF THOSE TWO.

YOU KNOW,
BARLEY...
THIS PLACE IS MUCH
NICER, NOW THAT WE'RE
HERE WITH FAMILY.

YEAH! LIVING HERE
WITH YOU IS GREAT.
A LOT BETTER THAN
SHARING THIS SPACE
WITH OTHER CATS.
I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA, BARLEY. COME AND GO FOR A WALK WITH US--

JUST THE THREE OF US, THREE BROTHERS.

YEAH, GOOD IDEA, HOOT--LET'S GET CAUGHT UP.

FIND OUT WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN OUR BROTHER'S LIFE.

...ALL RIGHT. IT'S A NICE NIGHT FOR IT.

WE'LL, UH... WE'LL BE BACK LATER, RAVENPAW.

NO NEED TO STAY UP WAITING.

HOOT AND JUMPER WERE IN BLOODCLAN! THEY TRIED TO KILL THEIR OWN SISTER!

CAN BLOOD RELATIONS REALLY BE THAT IMPORTANT?

DON'T WAIT UP, HE SAYS.

HRMPH.
When they come back, they’re laughing and joking with one another... just like family. Just like brothers.

Maybe blood is that important. Maybe it can overcome anything. But if Barley is choosing them...

...where does that leave me? What place do I have here?

Hey, Ravenpaw, catch us some dinner; would you?

I can’t compete with them. That much is becoming obvious.

Easier to just... do as they ask, I guess.

We’re still getting caught up with Barley.

There he is.

Yeah—it’s no problem. I’ll get a mouse.

Naturally it doesn’t take much effort to catch a meal, but I’m not prepared for what happens next.

About time.
SO, HEY, WE CAN SLEEP IN YOUR NEST TONIGHT, RIGHT? YOU DON'T MIND, DO YOU?

PART OF ME WANTS TO CALL THEM LAZY AND WORTHLESS, AND DEMAND THAT THEY GET OUT OF MY NEST.

BUT I DON'T WANT TO CAUSE MORE TROUBLE FOR BARLEY.

YEAH—WE'D MAKE OUR OWN, BUT THAT WHOLE CARRYING MOSS UNDER OUR CHINS THING...

WE DON'T HAVE THE HANG OF THAT YET.

SURE... ALL RIGHT.

I CAN ALWAYS MAKE ANOTHER.

I HAVE SORT OF A FAINT HOPE THAT THINGS WILL BE BETTER IN THE MORNING.

GUESS I SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER.

HEY, RAVENPAW!
GO CATCH US A NICE JUICY MOUSE, WILL YOU?

YEAH, AND MAKE IT SNAPPy! WE'RE FAMISHED!

YOU SHOULD TRY HUNTING YOURSELF.

YOU NEED TO LEARN.

BUT YOU'RE THE BEST, RAVENPAW. WE'LL ONLY SCARE AWAY THE PREY.

I SILENTLY NOD MY HEAD. I CAN'T BELIEVE BARLEY'S JUST SITTING THERE.

...ALL RIGHT.

AND WHEN YOU'RE DONE WITH THAT, YOU CAN CLEAN OUT OUR NEST, TOO.

DOING NOTHING.
I shouldn't be so upset, I guess. This is my own fault.

Barley and I are not clanmates. There's no bond between us. I chose not to live in a clan.

...and this is what life is like on the outside.

I guess...I'll have to find a new place to live now...

RRRHEEHHRR!

Barley!

What could make him snarl like that? I hope it's not a rat. He's so frail right now, he might not be able to handle a rat, he's—
YOU WORTHLESS PILES OF MANURE!

DO YOU THINK I'M BLIND?

DID YOU THINK I'D LET YOU TREAT RAVENPAW LIKE THAT? THIS IS HIS HOME TOO!

YOU DON'T BELONG HERE.

GET OUT.

BUH-BUH-BUT WE'RE YOUR KIN!
BLOOD ISN'T EVERYTHING.

LOYALTY IS EVERYTHING.

AND RAVENPAW HAS BEEN MORE LOYAL TO ME THAN YOU COULD BE IN A HUNDRED LIFETIMES.

NOW GO, OR DO I HAVE TO MAKE YOU?

NOW, YOU SHOULDN'T GO THINKING YOU'RE BIGGER THAN YOU REALLY ARE, BROTHER.

YOU SURPRISED US WITH YOUR LITTLE TANTRUM THERE, BUT WE CAN STILL TAKE YOU DOWN.
RRRHEEHHRR!

SKATCH

YOU'RE RIGHT. WE ARE KIN. WHICH MEANS I CAN FIGHT JUST AS WELL AS YOU CAN.
IT'S ALL I CAN DO NOT TO RUSH OVER THERE. STAND BY BARLEY'S SIDE.

BUT THIS IS HIS FIGHT, NOT MINE.

BARLEY NEEDS TO SETTLE THIS ON HIS OWN.

RID HIMSELF OF HIS BROTHERS ONCE AND FOR ALL.
Hmph. We were never going to stay here anyway.

It's filthy, and who wants to eat dusty mice? We can find better food someplace else.

We're not scared of you, Barley. In fact, we think you're pathetic.

I pity you.

What?

You've only got each other now. No other friends, no other family, and you have no idea what loyalty means.

How long will you last out there? How long before you turn on each other?
I'M SO HAPPY... SO RELIEVED...
TO SEE THEM GO.

I'M SO SORRY, RAVENPAW.

I REALLY WANTED TO BELIEVE THEY'D CHANGED.

DON'T APOLOGIZE. I'M VERY PROUD OF WHAT YOU JUST DID.

...I KNOW IT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD.

YOU... YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO SEND THEM AWAY JUST BECAUSE OF ME.
I didn't.

I sent them away because this is our home. Yours and mine.

We fought for it because we have the right to live here.

As strong as a clan.

Come with me. I want to show you something.

Something in the rafters?

Ha! No...
...up here.

Welcome home, Ravenpaw.

This is our place.
HE'S RIGHT. I GUESS I WAS AFRAID TO BELIEVE IT, BUT HE'S RIGHT.

WE'RE AS STRONG AS A CLAN, THE TWO OF US.

AND THIS TERRITORY IS OURS.

ALL OUR OWN.

THE END
ERIN HUNTER

is inspired by a love of cats and a fascination with the ferocity of the natural world. As well as having great respect for nature in all its forms, Erin enjoys creating rich, mythical explanations for animal behavior. She is also the author of the Seekers series.

Visit the Clans online and play Warriors games at www.warriorcats.com.

For exclusive information on your favorite authors and artists, visit www.authortracker.com.
DON'T MISS GRAYSTRIPE’S HARROWING JOURNEY

WARRIORS

THE LOST WARRIOR

WARRIOR’S REFUGE

WARRIOR’S RETURN

Find out what really happened to Graystripe when he was captured by Twolegs, and follow him and Millie on their torturous journey through the old forest territory and Twolegplace to find ThunderClan.
Sasha has everything she wants: kind housefolk who take care of her during the day and the freedom to explore the woods beyond Twolegplace at night. But when Sasha is forced to leave her home, she must forge a solitary new life in the forest. When Sasha meets Tigerstar, leader of ShadowClan, she begins to think that she may be better off joining the ranks of his forest Clan. But Tigerstar has many secrets, and Sasha must decide whether she can trust him.
Black-and-white Tiny may be the runt of the litter, but he’s also the most curious about what lies beyond the backyard fence. When he crosses paths with some wild cats defending their territory, Tiny is left with scars—and a bitter, deep-seated grudge—that he carries with him back to Twolegplace. As his reputation grows among the strays and loners that live in the dirty brick alleyways, Tiny leaves behind his name, his kitterypet past, and everything that was once important to him—except his deadly desire for revenge.
Many moons ago, five warrior Clans shared the forest in peace. But as Twolegs encroached on the cats’ territories, the warriors of SkyClan were forced to abandon their home and try to forge a new life far away. Eventually, the Clan disbanded—forgotten by all until Firestar was sent on a quest to reunite its descendants and return SkyClan to its former glory.

Now, with Leafstar in place as leader, SkyClan is thriving. But threats continue to plague the Clan, and as dissent grows from within, Leafstar must face the one question she dreads: Is SkyClan meant to survive?
Floodwater thundered down the gorge, chasing a wall of uprooted trees and bushes as if they were the slenderest twigs. Leafstar stood at the entrance to her den and watched in horror as the current foamed and swirled among the rocks, mounting higher and higher. Rain lashed the surface from bulging black clouds overhead.

Water gurgled into Echosong’s den; though the SkyClan leader strained her eyes through the stormy darkness, she couldn’t see what had happened to the medicine cat. A cat’s shriek cut through the tumult of the water and Leafstar spotted the Clan’s two elders struggling frantically as they were swept out of their den. The two old cats flailed on the surface for a heartbeat and then vanished.

Cherrytail and Patchfoot, heading down the trail with fresh-kill in their jaws, halted in astonishment when they saw the flood. They spun around and fled up the cliff, but the water surged after them and carried them yowling along the gorge. Leafstar lost sight of them as a huge tree,
its roots high in the air like claws, rolled between her and the drowning warriors.

_Great StarClan, help us!_ Leafstar prayed. _Save my Clan!_

Already the floodwater was lapping at the entrance to the nursery. A kit poked its nose out and vanished back inside with a frightened wail. Leafstar bunched her muscles, ready to leap across the rocks and help, but before she could move, a wave higher than the rest licked around her and caught her up, tossing her into the river alongside the splintered trees.

Leafstar fought and writhed against the smothering water, gasping for breath. She coughed as something brittle jabbed inside her open mouth. She opened her eyes and spat out a frond of dried bracken. Her nest was scattered around her den and there were deep claw marks in the floor where she had struggled with the invisible wave. Flicking off a shred of moss that was clinging to one ear, she sat up, panting.

_Thank StarClan, it was only a dream!_

The SkyClan leader stayed where she was until her heartbeat slowed and she had stopped trembling. The flood had been so real, washing away her Clanmates in front of her eyes...

Sunlight was slanting through the entrance to her den; with a long sigh of relief, Leafstar tottered to her paws and padded onto the ledge outside. Down below, the river wound peacefully between the steep cliffs that enclosed the gorge. As sunhigh approached, light gleamed on the surface of the water and soaked into Leafstar’s brown-and-
cream fur; she relaxed her shoulders, enjoying the warmth and the sensation of the gentle breeze that ruffled her pelt.

“It was only a dream,” she repeated to herself, pricking her ears at the twittering of birds in the trees at the top of the gorge. “Newleaf is here, and SkyClan has survived.”

A warm glow of satisfaction flooded through her as she recalled that only a few short moons ago she had been nothing more than Leaf. She had been a loner, responsible for no cat but herself. Then Firestar had appeared: a leader of a Clan from a distant forest, with an amazing story of a lost Clan who had once lived here in the gorge. Firestar had gathered loners and kittypets to revive SkyClan; most astonishing of all, Leaf had been chosen to lead them.

“I’ll never forget the night when the spirits of my ancestors gave me nine lives and made me Leafstar,” she murmured. “My whole world changed. I wonder if you still think about us, Firestar,” she added. “I hope you know that I’ve kept the promises I made to you and my Clanmates.”

Shrill meows from below brought the she-cat back to the present. The Clan was beginning to gather beside the Rockpile, where the underground river flowed into the sunlight for the first time. Shrewtooth, Sparrowpelt, and Cherrytail were crouched down, eating, not far from the fresh-kill pile. Shrewtooth gulped his mouse down quickly, casting suspicious glances at the two younger warriors. Leafstar remembered how a border patrol had caught the black tom spying on the Clan two moons ago, terrified and half-starving. They had persuaded him to move into the warriors’ den, but he was still finding it
hard to fit into Clan life.

*I'll have to do something to make him understand that he is among friends now,* Leafstar decided. *He's more nervous than a cornered mouse.*

The two Clan elders, Lichenfur and Tangle, were sharing tongues on a flat rock warmed by the sun. They looked content; Tangle was a bad-tempered old rogue who stopped in the gorge now and again to eat before going back to his den in the forest, but he seemed to get on fine with Lichenfur, and Leafstar hoped she would convince him to stay permanently in the camp.

Lichenfur had lived alone in the woods farther up the gorge, aware of the new Clan but staying clear of them. She had almost died when she had been caught in a fox trap, until a patrol had found her and brought her back to camp for healing. After that she had been glad to give up the life of a loner. *"She has wisdom to teach the Clan,"* Leafstar mewed softly from the ledge. *"Every Clan needs its elders.*"

The loud squeals she could hear were coming from Bouncepaw, Tinypaw, and Rockpaw, who were chasing one another in a tight circle, their fur bristling with excitement. As Leafstar watched, their mother, Clovertail, padded up to them, her whiskers twitching anxiously. Leafstar couldn’t hear what she said, but the apprentices skidded to a halt; Clovertail beckoned Tinypaw with a flick of her tail, and started to give her face a thorough wash. Leafstar purred with amusement as the young white she-cat wriggled under the swipes of her mother’s rough
tongue, while Clovertail’s eyes shone with pride.

Pebbles pattering down beside her startled Leafstar. Looking up, she saw Patchfoot heading down the rocky trail with a squirrel clamped firmly in his jaws. Waspwhisker followed him, with his apprentice, Mintpaw, a paw step behind; they both carried mice. Leafstar gave a little nod of approval as the hunting patrol passed her. Prey was becoming more plentiful with the warmer weather, and the fresh-kill pile was swelling. She pictured Waspwhisker when he had first joined the Clan during the first snowfall of leaf-bare: a lost kittypet wailing with cold and hunger as he blundered along the gorge. Now the gray-and-white tom was one of the most skillful hunters in the Clan, with an apprentice of his own. He even had kits, with another former stray named Fallowfern.

_SkyClan is growing._

As their father padded past, Waspwhisker’s four kits bounced out of the nursery and scampered behind him, squeaking. Their mother, Fallowfern, emerged more slowly and edged her way down the trail after them; she still wasn’t completely comfortable with the sheer cliff face and pointed rocks that surrounded SkyClan’s camp.

“Be careful!” she called. “Don’t fall!”

The kits had already reached the bottom of the gorge, getting under their father’s paws, cuffing one another over the head and rolling over perilously near to the pool. Waspwhisker gently nudged the pale brown tom, Nettlekit, away from the edge.

But as soon as their father turned away to drop his prey
on the fresh-kill pile, Nettlekit’s sister, Plumkit, jumped on him. Nettlekit swiped at her, as if he was trying to copy a battle move he’d seen when the apprentices were training. Plumkit rolled over; Nettlekit staggered, lost his balance, and toppled into the river.

Fallowfern let out a wail. “Nettlekit!”
ENTER THE WORLD OF WARRIORS

Warriors
Sinister perils threaten the four warrior Clans. Into the midst of this turmoil comes Rusty, an ordinary housecat, who may just be the bravest of them all.

Warriors: The New Prophecy
Follow the next generation of heroic cats as they set off on a quest to save the Clans from destruction.

Also available unabridged from Harper Children's Audio
HARPER
An imprint of HarperCollins Publishers

Visit www.warriorcats.com for games, Clan lore, and much more!
**Warriors: Power of Three**

Firestar’s grandchildren begin their training as warrior cats. Prophecy foretells that they will hold more power than any cats before them.

Grab the first three adventures in the *Warriors: Power of Three* Box Set.

**Warriors: Omen of the Stars**

Which ThunderClan apprentice will complete the prophecy that foretells that three Clanmates hold the future of the Clans in their paws?

Visit www.warriorcats.com for games, Clan lore, and much more!
Delve Deeper into the Clans

Warrior Cats Come to Life in Manga!

Visit www.warriorcats.com for games, Clan lore, and much more!
The New York Times bestselling series from Erin Hunter, the author of Warriors

SEEKERS

Three young bears ... one destiny.

SEEKERS
The Quest Begins
ERIN HUNTER

SEEKERS
Great Bear Lake
ERIN HUNTER

SEEKERS
Smoke Mountain
ERIN HUNTER

SEEKERS
The Last Wilderness
ERIN HUNTER

SEEKERS
Fire in the Sky
ERIN HUNTER

SEEKERS
Toxl's Story
ERIN HUNTER

www.seekerbears.com

HARPER
An imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers