

Cats

CHAPTER I

“What’s happening?” asked Riverstake. “The Leopards are about to attack!!” exclaimed Stargaze. “What?” Demanded Petalstore. “The Leopards are about to attack!” repeated Stargaze. ‘We need all the Cheetahs we can find,” barked Cloudstar. Suddenly, Littlepark appeared, looking frightened. “The Lions have sided with the Leopards!!” “What?” It was Stargaze’s turn to be surprised. “Oh, no!” she cried. ‘I knew something like that was going to happen! Lately they’ve seemed to be more close than usual!!” Then, just as it seemed things couldn’t get any worse, Flowerpaw appeared. “The Tigers have been sensed in our terri-“she was broken off by the roar of an angry tiger and the screams of petrified cheetahs. “We mean no harm!” roared the tiger. “We’ve come for revenge on Lion and Leopard clan because they have sided against the rules of the clans!” Immediately, all the screams died down. Riverstake, Stargaze,

Petalstore, Cloudstar, Littlepark, and Flowerpaw ran outside from the den of Rattletail. The Tiger's leader, Tigertail, was standing on the rocky outcrop on the border of the camp. Behind him were the rest of the Tigers. "We mean no harm!" Tigertail repeated. "We want to help you survive this ambush!" Stargaze ran over to the outcrop and stood next to Tigertail. "Since when have you decided that others need help?" she questioned. "Since the two of the four clans have sided," replied Tigertail. "But if you side with us, then you will be no better!" protested Stargaze. "I know," admitted Tigertail. "But we have to, otherwise there will be no more cheetahs left in the world and not even we tigers want that!" "I guess so," sighed Stargaze. She turned to face the cheetahs. "In order to survive we will have to side with the Tigers. I know some of you will protest strongly, but think about how weak we are at the moment with some of elders captured and taken away to the cages, we will not be able to fight well, and even if we do, we will have dozens hurt or killed and we don't want that one bit, do we?" "No" the cheetahs chorused.

“Good,” hissed Tigertail. He turned and walked down the outcrop and into the crowd of cheetahs, his clan following him anxiously. The cheetahs backed away warily as if the tigers were going to attack. Suddenly, Riverstake glimpsed the black and yellow of a leopard. He turned the other way and saw the eyes of a ferocious lion glinting in the shadows of the bush. “Stargaze!!” he bellowed. “The leopards and lions are waiting in the bushes!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” The ambushers chose that split second to attack. They came streaming out of the bushes in the dozens. The tigers were ready, though, and they fought back with much anticipation. The cheetahs quickly raced around the camp at full speed, knocking over lions and leopards as they went. Riverstake was battling a huge lioness. She was big and clumsy and he soon had her pinned to the ground. He looked at her huge, green eyes. They were the colour of grass in the early spring. Her eyes were frightened and looked even more enormous than they would have normally been. ‘I will let you go’ Riverstake whispered. “But the lions and leopards will have to surrender!” The lioness

nodded silently and Riverstake took his claws away from her shoulders. The lioness immediately roared and the lions and leopards raced away, leaving a trail of destruction behind them.

“We thank you for your kindness,” Stargaze told Tigertail. “Not a problem,” replied Tigertail. “Come,” he ordered the tigers. “We need to get back to camp before dark.” The tigers scurried through the bushes and disappeared into the darkness. “Well,” declared Stargaze. “That is over and I am sure the Lions and Leopards will not be coming back for a while.”

Cloudstar wasn't sure. They had just been on the brink of war. It had been lucky that the Lions and Leopards had gone without killing or injuring any of the Tigers or Cheetahs. The Lions and Leopards were sure to strike again in the cold season when all the clans were at their weakest. Cloudstar was sure. He could feel it in his heart. The Cheetahs had to be ready for anything...

CHAPTER II

Rattletail leaped over the rocks that led to Lion territory. He was followed by Petalstore, Cloudstar, Littlespark, and Flowerpaw. Stargaze, as the leader of the cheetahs, had sent them on a mission into the lion territory to spy on the camp to see if any leopards came to plan another ambush on the tiger clan or the cheetah clan.

Just the day before, Cheetah clan had been ambushed by the Lion and Leopard clans after they had sided with each other. Luckily, Tiger clan, the strongest clan, had come to the rescue and sided with the Cheetah clan to help save themselves from death and injury. The Lion and Leopard clans had scurried away before any cat got injured.

Suddenly, Rattletail stopped. A huge black cat had stepped in front of him. “What are you doing in cheetah clan territory?” Cloudstar hissed. “Oh, I’m a panther,” said the black cat. “I have just come here and was exploring

around in the clans.” Petalstore, Cloudstar, Littlespark, Rattletail and Flowerpaw had started circling the panther warningly. “Exploring?” spluttered Littlespark in disgust. “Don’t you know the rules around here?” “All the cats have to stay in their own territory unless they are spying or something like that. I have this feeling you have come here just to spy on the clans for the Panther clan and the Bobcat clan!”

A couple of years ago, the Panthers and Bobcats sided and were kicked out of the big cat family for breaking the law of heaven. “I was the Panther leader” said the black cat. “My name is Blacknight. I was thrown out of the Panther clan because I was caught speaking to Bobcat clan cat!” “But I thought Bobcat clan and Panther clan were sided?” Questioned Flowerpaw. “They were” answered Blacknight. “Until one day, 1 year ago. The Bobcat clan decided they were sick of the Panthers and they fought us until we were forced to surrender. We had to move to this forest for there were no more forests to go to. We live underground in the caves and tunnels. The Bobcat I was talking to was the Bobcat

leader, Goldenlight. She was deciding whether the clans would side again or stay away forever. Then one of the Panthers on hunting duty caught us talking and it attacked me. I still have the scars.” He winced and looked at his shoulder. There was a long, white scar running from his shoulder to his paw. The cats stopped circling and sat down around Blacknight. “We’re on our way to spy in Lion territory” blurted Petalstore. “Yes” agreed Rattletail. He explained the story about how the Lion and Leopard clans had sided and had ambushed The Cheetah and Tiger clans.

When Rattletail had finished, Blacknight was silent. “Could I join your clan?” He asked hopefully. “We would have to ask Stargaze,” decided Littlespark. “Yes,” agreed Cloudstar. “Why don’t you come with us to Lion clan to spy?” Offered Flowerpaw. “Okay,” agreed Blacknight. The cats continued on their journey. When they got to the border of Lion clan, they paused. “Come on,” whispered Rattletail. They all walked cautiously into the territory of the Lions. Suddenly a twig snapped and they all froze. The whole of Leopard clan had come out of the bushes. The

five companions ducked behind a lavender bush hoping the lavender scent would cover their scent. Luckily, it did the job. When Leopard clan were well away, the five hopped out of their hiding place and followed the Leopards. When the Leopards finally stopped, they had reached the Lion camp. “What are they doing at the Lion camp?” Asked Blacknight. “Having a meeting of some sort,” replied Cloudstar. “Now,” boomed the voice of the Lion clan leader, Smokehaze. “In the upcoming winter, we have decided that we will ambush the cheetah clan when they are at their weakest point” The companions didn’t need to talk. They just fled through the bush until they made it to the Cheetah camp. “Stargaze!!” Cried Petalstore. “Yes,” came the reply. “The Lion and Leopard clans are going to ambush us in winter!!!!” “Oh, no,” gasped Stargaze. “Yes,” answered Petalstore. But Stargaze wasn’t listening to her, she had her icy, cold, blue eyes fixed on Blacknight. “What’s he doing here?” she asked coldly. “He was kicked out of the panther clan!” answered Cloudstar. “Oh,” said Rattletail. “And the Lion and Leopard clans are planning an attack

in winter!” “So I’ve heard,” commented Stargaze, looking at Petalstore. “I can get the Bobcat clan and the panther clan to side again and we can all side and defeat the Lions and Leopards,” said Blacknight suddenly. “Okay,” agreed Stargaze. “We can then see whether you can join the clan,” she added. “Yes!” cried Flowerpaw. “But, right now, we need to find the Bobcat and Panther clans and persuade them,” said Stargaze.

So, with Blacknight leading the way, the cats journeyed to the underground caves. When they got to the entrance, they paused like they did at the Lion clan’s border. Suddenly there was a roar and the cheetahs and Blacknight were surrounded by panthers. “Blacknight” hissed one panther. “Streamtail” Blacknight retorted. “What are you doing here?” hissed another cat. “We sense Cheetah clan with you.” “They are my friends, they need help. The Lion and Leopard clans have sided and are going to ambush them any time in the winter. If you help us, Cheetah clan and Tiger clan, you can be brought back into the big cat family,” persuaded Blacknight. “Fine,” agreed the Panther clan leader named Streamtail.

The cats snuck through the tunnels with Blacknight leading the way. When they arrived at Bobcat territory in the neighbouring forest, they were greeted by the security patrol of Bobcats. “What are you doing here?” they snarled. “We want you and the panther clan to join the cat family again” replied Blacknight calmly. A cat moved forward. It was the leader of Bobcat clan, Goldenlight. You could tell it was her because she had a golden coat, shimmering in the moonlight. “Why?” she asked. “Why?” “Because cheetah clan are in danger of getting wiped out!” Blacknight exploded into the story even he now knew because he had heard it so many times. “Yes,” said Goldenlight. “Pardon?” Asked Petalstore. “What?” Cried Rattletail. “Huh?” Exclaimed Flowerpaw. “Hi!” Commented Cloudstar. “We will join your ambush,” Goldenlight repeated. Suddenly, a bobcat elder moved forward through the crowd. “You say that you want panther clan to join your ambush?” The cat asked. “Yes,” replied Petalstore. “Well, why don’t you just expect that they will? They are only black cheetahs!” Petalstore, Cloudstar, Littlepark, Rattletail and

Flowerpaw glanced at each other, confused. “No-” protested Rattletail. “Yes,” confessed Blacknight. “Who cares?” Bellowed Goldenlight. “Whiteraven,” she ordered. “Find the rest of Bobcat clan and bring them to Haven Stones! Quickly!!” In less than a minute, the Bobcat, Panther and some of the Cheetah clan were on their way to Haven Stones. When the cats got there, Tigertail and the rest of tiger clan were there. So were Cheetah clan. “It’s time for attack!!!” Screamed the leaders. Stargaze, Goldenlight, Streamtail and Tigertail lead the way to Lion territory. The cats slithered across the ground, the sunset making their shadows loom against the rocks. As soon as night had come, the Panther, Cheetah, Bobcat and Tiger clans were going to attack, well, not attack, close in on the Lion and Leopard clans. Finally, when the sun slipped below the horizon, the clans started to close in. The sounds of petrified Leopards and Lions filled the cool night air. “What are you doing here?” Boomed Smokehaze. “We’ve come to force you to stop your ambush on the Cheetah clan.” Announced Streamtail. “And what makes you think we’re going to?”

Sneered the Leopard leader, Smallfrog.
“Because you are outnumbered.” Declared
Goldenlight. Smokehaze and Smallfrog
glanced at each other. “Okay,” they finally
gave in. “Just remember,” Stargaze explained.
“We are all one family, the Cat family!”