

He peered down the inside of the wall. He could see nothing through the trees. The Gentleman's cats and the Elder Paw were hidden by the tangled net of branches. There was no way back. He was truly on his own.

Had he done the right thing? Shouldn't he have helped his grandfather? He couldn't get that picture out of his mind: the Elder Paw, limp, like a broken toy.

Tremors were coming up from somewhere deep within him, racking him open. Varjak blocked them, stopped them, pushed them back down. The Elder Paw knew what he was doing. He'd planned it. He was willing to lay down his life, so Varjak could have the chance to go Outside, and find a dog.

All he could do now was go on. But where?

Ahead of him was a sea of lights, stretching far away into the darkness. Varjak couldn't tell what they were, or where they led. He looked up. Another sea of lights: the moon and stars, cold and distant. They made him giddy in the pit of his stomach, so dizzy that he could almost feel the wall slip out from under him.

He closed his eyes and counted to ten. It didn't work. The view was too big; he was too small. A pure-bred Mesopotamian Blue had no place on top of a wall. But then, as his family said, he wasn't much of a Blue. So who was he?