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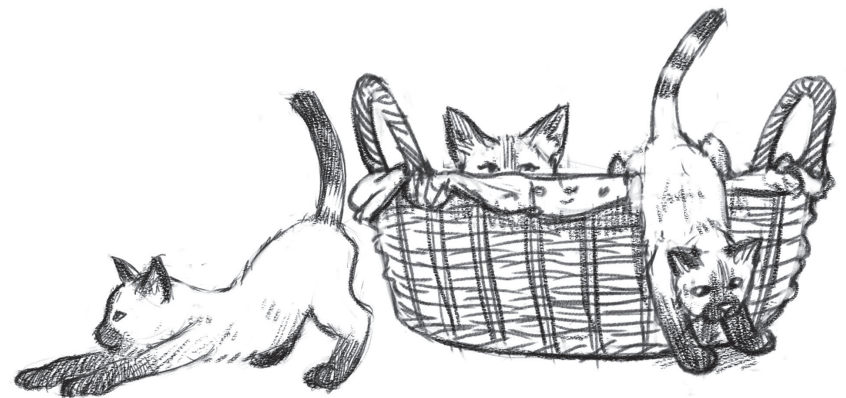
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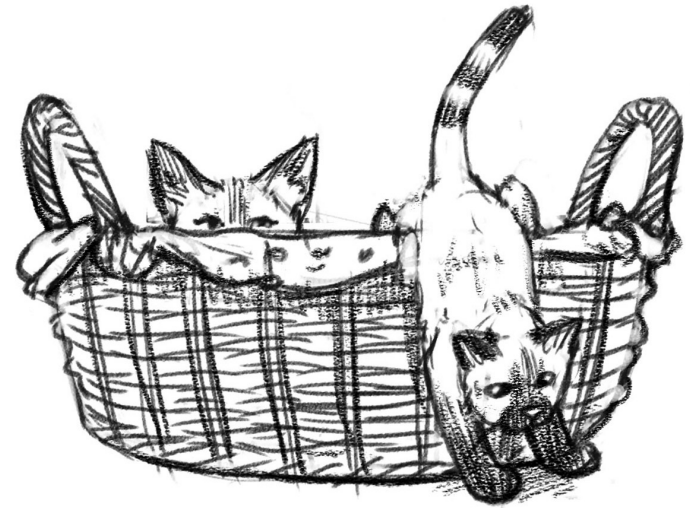
THE KITTENS



It was a windy day in March when Mr. Quinn brought the three kittens, Siam and Ko-ko and Java, home to his old country house near Dublin.

Up the long driveway he came in his car with the three kittens on the backseat. Their names suited them well, for they were Siamese kittens and their ancestors had come from the country of Thailand, which a long time ago had once been called Siam. And, like all Siamese cats, they loved to think they came from royalty.

Whether they did, or not, I cannot say, but they thought they did and sometimes they would prance around like kings and queens. But right now, all three were sitting still in the car and mewling quite loudly. They didn't like riding in cars.



Like all Siamese cats, the three kittens were very talkative. They would tell anyone who wanted to listen all about their day – how it was going, how much they had slept (as you know, cats love to sleep), what they had eaten and what they wanted for dinner. They simply loved to talk. They were especially talkative when they were upset – as they were now. They would mew and mew and mew till they made people's heads ache!

But, of course, they just wanted whatever was bothering them to be made right.



Ko-ko

Siam

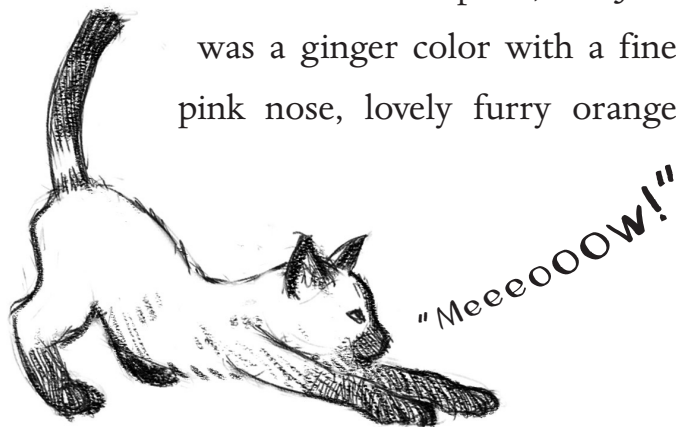


Java

Well, as soon as they came to a complete stop at the end of the driveway, the kittens started feeling better. Mr. Quinn brought them into the house and introduced them to his family – his wife, Mrs. Quinn, and his four children, who crowded around the kittens and said they were so cute and so lovely. The kittens knew they were going to like living in this house.

Siam, Ko-ko and Java were sisters and brother. Both sisters, Siam and Ko-ko, had deep chocolate brown ears with black noses

and dark velvet paws, but Java was a ginger color with a fine pink nose, lovely furry orange



stripes on his forehead, and orange-colored paws. Being ginger meant that sometimes Java was mistaken for being a common tabby cat – and that would upset him. “Oh, what a lovely tabby cat,” people would sometimes say, bending down to pet him. He would immediately stop purring and begin to mew. Loudly.

He was not a tabby, he would tell them, he was a royal Siamese cat.

Actually, in Java’s mind, he liked to think he was related to that lovely big cat, the tiger. When Java looked at himself in a mirror, he would see the stripes on his forehead and think that he was a big, fierce tiger. He would try to roar at his sisters to scare them, just like a tiger’s roar, but they knew that he was just their lovable little brother, and they

wouldn't be scared at all. Siam and Ko-ko would tell him to stop being silly and that he only had a few stripes on his forehead, not his entire body. They knew that he was not a tiger.




His roar was not loud at all (and certainly not scary).

In no time at all, the kittens began sniffing around, rubbing themselves on the furniture and jumping all over the Quinns, who laughed with delight. Despite that horrible drive, the kittens began to feel that perhaps they would enjoy their new home after all...

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CHAI





There was a fourth member of
the big Irish house that Siam,
Ko-ko and Java had yet to meet.
Another cat named Chai.