To Spike

—R.S.

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Mom and Splat
went into the garden.
They pulled back the tent flaps.

Splat peered inside the tent.

Two sets of eyes peered back.

"Say hello to Spike and Plank,"

said Splat's mom.



Splat felt his whiskers wobble with fright.

"Mom," whispered Splat,

"I don't like Spike."

"You might like him better if you spent some time together," said Splat's mom.

"You'll see.

Everything will be just right."





"I'm hungry," said Spike.

"What did you bring
for me to eat?"

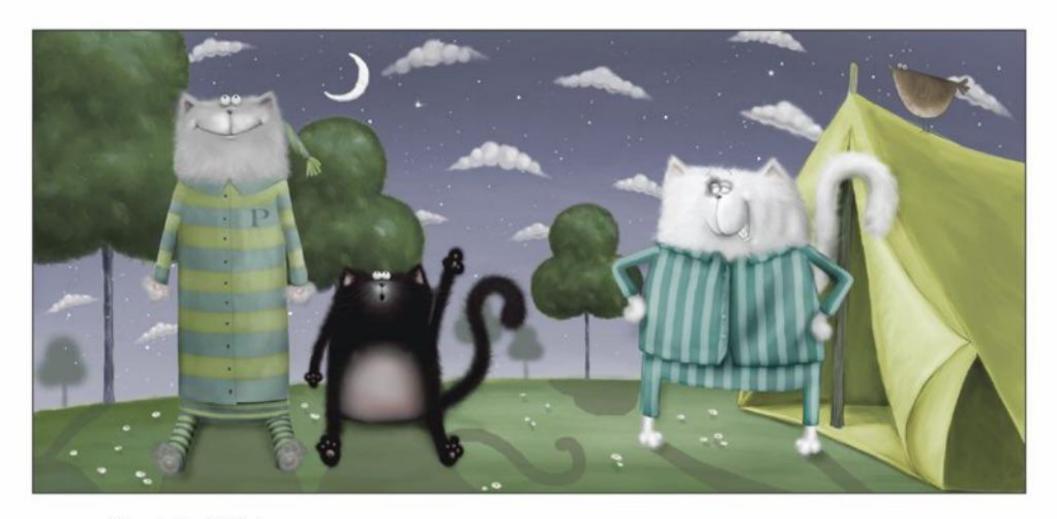
"I have some fish cakes,"

Splat said.

"Yum," said Spike.

He gobbled them up in delight.





"Look," said Splat.

"The stars are so bright.

I see at least a million."

"I see seventy-one," said Plank.

"I see nothing," said Spike,

"but two silly cats

looking at the moonlight."

"It's getting late," said Splat.

"Let's try to sleep."

But Plank could not rest.

Plank tossed. He turned.

He struggled, stretched, and strained.



"My sleeping bag

is much too tight," he said.



"You're welcome," said Spike.





Splat was just about to fall asleep when something felt wrong.

He saw a dark shadow creep up the tent wall.

"Run for your lives!"

Splat shouted

with all his might.



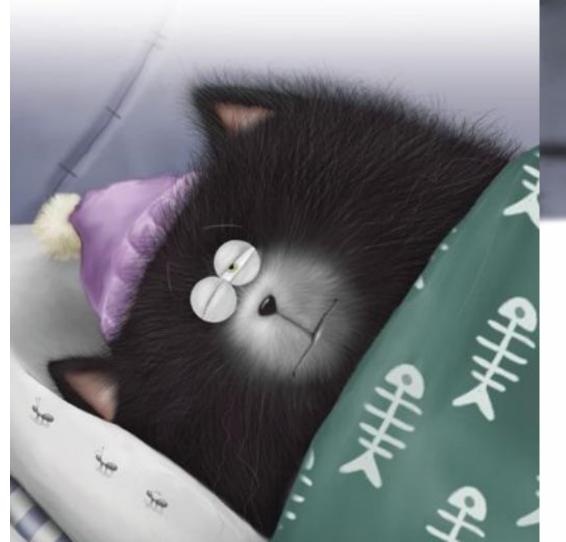


"Everything is all right."

Splat did not think so. But he was too tired to pick a fight.



One by one,
Splat's whiskers drooped.
One by one,
his eyes shut tight.





Suddenly, Spike sprang up.

"What's wrong?" said Splat.

"There's something strange
crawling up my leg!" yelled Spike.

"Mommy!" screamed Spike.

He scrambled out of his sleeping bag.

He stumbled out of the tent.

When Spike took flight, he took the whole tent down with him.



"Oh, Seymour!" said Splat.

"It was just you."





"It's all right, Spike!

Come back!" said Splat and Plank.

"We will protect each other

for the rest of the night."



"Promise?" sniffled Spike.

"Promise," said Splat.

"Now good night," said Splat.

"Sleep tight," said Plank.

"See you in the morning light," said Spike.

