

LIBRIS ANNE WILKINSON FINE
books

THE
KILLER CAT
RUNS AWAY



Illustrated by Thomas Docherty



CORGI YEARLING

CONTENTS

1. Silly Pink Babies	1
2. Parasite	5
3. The Same Old Boring Cat-Chat	8
4. One Good Reason to Stay	13
5. A Chapter of Sad Farewells	16
6. So Spank My Bum	20
7. Dead Mice and Birds? Eee-yuk!	22
8. Tuffy the Busker	25
9. The Wild Cats' Chorus	29
10. The Perfect Home	34
11. 'Come Home So I Can Strangle You.'	40
12. I Did Not Kill It!	43
13. 'A Photo of My Beautiful Tuffy!'	45

- | | |
|--|----|
| 14. Nightmare Stuff! | 51 |
| 15. A Blur of Fur | 55 |
| 16. No Hope of Rescue. None. | 59 |
| 17. 'Haven't You Heard?' | 64 |
| 18. All the Usual Rubbish | 67 |
| 19. Reprise | 73 |
| 20. My Precious, Wonderful, Amazing Tuffy! | 80 |
| 21. 'You Promised You'd Never Forget Me.' | 83 |

1

Silly Pink Babies

OK, OK. So twist my tail. I spat at the stupid baby. But it was *annoying* me, lying there in its frilly basket, chuckling and gurgling. The thing was *laughing* at me. And no one likes being laughed at. Especially not me. I'm not called Tuffy for nothing. And I didn't earn the nickname of 'the killer cat' from sitting purring on a cushion.

And then this baby poked its finger in my eye. For heaven's sake! It could have hurt me. So it was lucky, really. I could have bitten it. Or scratched it. But I only spat. Spit doesn't hurt at all, so why's everyone picking on me?



'Tuffy!' said Ellie. 'Get away from the baby at once!'

She rushed to scoop it up. I don't know why. It wasn't even yelling. The baby didn't mind. It was still laughing as if the whole thing was a giant joke. And there was only a tiny bit of dribble running down its face. Nobody in this house has any sense of humour at all. They all go mad about the slightest thing.

'That cat is not to be trusted,' said Ellie's father. 'He's the most jealous creature under the sun.'

I like that! Jealous? Me? Of something that can't even walk or feed itself? I gave the man the slit-eyed stare. But he just stared right back and said to Ellie, 'Remember poor Tinkerbell?'

Ellie went pale. Of course she remembered. Tinkerbell was a small kitten the family had to look after for four whole days. You wouldn't believe the fuss they made of her.

'Isn't she pretty? So fluffy! And so sweet!'

'Look, Ellie! Tinkerbell's learned how to flick her tail!'

'See her tiny pink tongue! Look, Mum! Look quickly, while she's lapping up her milk!'

'She's not cold, is she? If she's cold, push Tuffy off the rug and let Tinkerbell sit near the fire instead.'

'I think she's hungry. Shall we offer her a dish of cream?'

Offer her cream? She didn't even live with us! We were just kitten-sitting for a day or so.

And I was their real pet, not Tinkerbell. I'd lived with them for years, ever since Ellie got old enough to nag them into getting me. Is it surprising that I got a little testy?

And that I wouldn't let Tinkerbell sleep in any of my favourite places.

And that I accidentally pushed her off the windowsill.

And ate her special, juicy baby kitten food, all by mistake.

And all the other stupid, petty things that they complained about. No, I don't think that Tinkerbell will be in any hurry to come and stay with us again.

And there's no room, in any case. Because they clearly prefer silly pink babies now.

If they're not careful I shall spit at it again.

2

Parasite

OK, OK. So cover me with jam and put me in a box of wasps. I broke their new television. It was an *accident!* I didn't mean to tip the screen over like that. I was after a bumblebee, and if that stupid television hadn't been in the way, I would have got it too. No one likes being stung by bees. They should have been *grateful* to me.

And whose fault was it that the new, slim, wide, high-definition screen wasn't fixed on its stand more safely in the first place?

Yes! That's right. It was Ellie's dad's fault, not mine. You only had to watch Mr Oh-That'll-Probably-Be-All-Right fixing the screen