

Honorable Finalist, Level I

Grace Sugaski

Letter to author “Erin Hunter” (authors Victoria Holmes, Kate Cary, Cherith Baldry, Gillian Philip, Inbali Iserles, Tui T. Sutherland, and Rosie Best) concerning *Bluestar’s Prophecy*

Dear “Erin Hunter:”

In your book *Bluestar’s Prophecy*, I knew right away, when *Bluestar’s* character was introduced, that she was a noble and fair leader. She offered *Rusty* a place in her clan because of her shortage of warriors. I thought that was a very wise decision. I always wished I could be as calm and wise as *Bluestar*. Little did I know about her sad and troubled past. As I read your book, I felt like I could relate to her character as she was growing up. *Bluestar’s Prophecy* reminded me of the quote “Be kind, for everyone is fighting their own battles.” I try to be more patient, which all of the *Warriors* books have reminded me, as I face my own battles.

I lost my mom in 2013. I blamed myself because I thought I could have said goodbye or visited her one more time. I felt lonely. I am an only child, and my dad has since remarried. A lot of times, to this day, I feel lonely, and that my family doesn’t love me very much. I am not used to the treatment that is much less gentle than what I received from my mother. This is kind of like how *Bluestar’s* father never paid her and her sister much attention. It is miraculous how well *Bluestar* turned out as a warrior and as a character.

I feel that I am still like a piece of clay, still being molded into who I am and who I will be. I am being chipped away and beginning to harden. I feel that I am getting more negative and stubborn with each passing day, for I feel I am always being put down for something that I feel is out of my control. I am forgetful, but whenever I say that I forgot to do something, I am told again and again that “No, you didn’t forget. It’s just an excuse; you chose not to do it!” It hurts. I have been told that it is my fault that I forget. I am trying what I can do to try to be better at remembering things, like writing down lists, but nothing works very well. I don’t have much motivation. I know that I mess up, and make mistakes a lot, but nobody seems to understand and see that. I don’t even know the difference between just saying something and talking back. I am just yelled at for it. It is frustrating. It feels like being yelled at for having an opinion.

When I read your words in *Bluestar’s Prophecy*, I felt like I could understand *Bluestar’s* grief for her mother and sister. When *Snowfur* went to *Starclan*, I understood how hard it was for *Bluestar* to accept it. It was an emotional area in your book, and I cried when she was telling *Whitekit* about *Snowfur*. It was just very sad. It is hard to explain the emotion of the loss of family or friends. You blame yourself, always thinking that there was something you could have done to prevent it or make it easier. Just like *Bluestar*, I learned to be strong. I relate to *Bluestar’s* loneliness, I feel like I don’t have anyone to go to sometimes. I bottle up my emotions and never let them out. Both *Bluestar* and I lost our mothers at a young age. We understand that they were gone and never coming back. It was hard to accept that.

I felt such a strong connection with your book because I could relate to your character *Bluestar*. Your book was life changing for me. I know my mother watches down on me from above, as *Bluestar* knew *Moonflower*, *Snowfur*, and *Mosskit* were watching and supporting her from *Starclan*.

Grace Sugaski