



This book is for **Caleb**, who chirped like a bird,

With love on each page and care in each word.

Elizabeth polished what **Teal** and **Gemini** framed,

And thanks to **Zachary** for how it was named.



In a shelter of cages where scared kitties stirred,  
Sat a little black cat who cried like a bird.  
With a bent crook at the tip of his tail,  
He purred up a storm that would rival a gale.

We took Caleb home and I started to groom,  
And the fur that came off simply filled up the room!  
For an hour I combed, and the pile just grew,  
I had brushed off enough for a sweater or two!





"Caleb" in Arabic means "dog," Grandma would say,  
And he acted just like one for most of the day!  
If you said his name, he would trot down the hall,  
Except beneath the bed—he'd ignore every call!

Whenever I sat, he would rub on my knee,  
As sweet and as friendly as any cat could be.  
But instead of "meow" from his little black chest,  
He chirped like a bird in a feathery nest!





Now, a tabby named Stripes claimed every space,  
And chased little Caleb all over the place.

But they became friends and gave up the fight,  
Preferring, instead, to snuggle at night.

Stripes showed Caleb the bed that lifted in the air,  
With a pile of suitcases waiting down there.  
It was the best spot for the kitties to hide,  
Just lounging around on the luggage inside.





One day, two spherical beds arrived, felted and round,  
But Stripes was too large for the space that he found.  
So he planted heavy paws right on the crest,  
And squished poor Caleb in his snug little nest.

So, we folded the beds into two soft bowls,  
And peace was restored for both fair young souls.  
They would lie side-by-side in their half-circle homes,  
Resting their paws and their sleepy cat domes.





High up in New York City, overlooking Central Park,  
Caleb and Stripes stared out from daylight till dark.  
They watched the airplanes that flew through the sky,  
And they saw every beautiful season go by.

They dreamed of a world far beyond their own,  
Of wide, greener pastures they didn't yet know.  
Where forests and seas and canyons could be,  
Heading West to a life that was open and free.





Their dreams came true as we packed for the road,  
With a big jug of syrup tucked deep in the load!  
Stripes hid in a cozy spot beside the sweet treat,  
While Caleb surveyed all from his high window seat.

When we finally arrived, it was time to roam free,  
Across the grass and the dirt and the root of a tree.  
Stripes leapt across the yard with playful delight,  
While Caleb stepped gently, paws treading light.





Late one night, when the window was left ajar,  
They took a stroll beneath the Northern star.  
Led by the moonlight home, Stripes retraced his track,  
But poor Caleb could no longer find his way back.

We searched and searched for days on the ground,  
Just hoping our chirping black cat would be found.  
We talked to neighbors and passers-by, near and far,  
Hanging paper flyers on every streetlight and car.





So Caleb continued his great adventure out there,  
Maybe, with open meadows and fresh mountain air.  
Perhaps he passed by where the honeybees fly,  
And stopped a while to smell the flowers nearby.

Perhaps he met a few mice and joined their crew,  
Or gardened with jack rabbits to see what they grew.  
Perhaps he found a new family to welcome him home,  
And he's sharing our stories wherever he may roam.





Sometimes a journey takes its own bend,  
And we can't always know how the story will end.  
But the love that we share is a light that will stay,  
No matter how far loved ones travel away.



