

A MESSAGE FROM CHICKEN HOUSE

This heart-warming, emotional and absorbing verse novel tells the story of an orphan puppy, the lonely boy who saves him, and how they lose and find each other again. Zana's story is funny, colourful, dramatic and beautifully told with some fantastic word pictures! Most of all, it's a tale of love.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Cunningham'.

BARRY CUNNINGHAM

Publisher

Chicken House

THE WAY OF DOG



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Illustrated by
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*To Chris,
for showing me the other Ways of Being*

THE WAY OF DOG

Dear Shoe-Legs

Are you coming? Are you? Are you?

Then shake wide awake and take my

advice

throw the Burs from your fur and

sliiiiiide on the Ice.

Come flat-foot follow and paw-pad my way

for I have a thing

or four

to say about living this life according to

The Way of Dog.

And if you're coming prick your ears

pause your paws and

listen sharp

stretch your limbs

swell your lungs with every howl

every scowl with a full-blown

RRRRRRR00000W WWWWL

for this story is LOUD

it's made to be growled

to be bellowed and roared to be

freed from your jaws to

travel Wind-wide and find those ears and

souls all waiting.

So come scamper
 come trample
come schnuffle about
 come discover this world
from a Dog's point of snout.
Are you coming? Are you? Are you?

THE BARN



LIFE IS MORE

Be strong. Be fierce. Life is more than a concrete floor.

That is all my mamma yip-yap-yips

that is all she ever says with nuzzling nuzzles

lulling licks

with her tail's fwip-fwap-fwip on the thick of
the wire the

click of her paws the

whine in her jaws

and the way her heart ROARS

Be strong. Be fierce. Life is more—

and then we ten pups are rough-grabbed away
to another concrete floor.

Colder

on our little thin-furred bellies

than before.

We wait

whine and

whimper for our mamma to come

for the warm of her milk the

silk of her fur on our snouts

but all we get are the shouts

from the big GrowlMan to

SHUT IT!

Shoe-legs can be mean.

And in the shadows the Rat kings creep
cutting claws climbing
sharp teeth snipping

snapping

grinning at us

creeping closer to us

and we howl for Mamma

we waaaooowl-yowl-yip

Are you coming? Are you coming? Are you, Mamma?

Are

you?

but she doesn't

not once

call back.

I guess she's lost her strong

I guess she's lost her fierce

I guess she's learned it's our turn

to be taken. We try not to shake

in the hard empty

cold.

And those shadows keep creeping closer.

Be strong. Be fierce. Life is more ...

scary without your mamma.



LEARNINGS

In the towers of the cages all around us
is a fear and sad that rages in
waves that surround us
and sticks to our fur
like muck.

Where are you, Mamma? Mamma? Mamma?
Where are you? Where are you? Mamma? Mamma?
but no yap
no grrrrurf
no yip
no awwwouf
no nothing
from our mamma comes back.

Hush the other mammas howl
to all our puppied yearning yowls to
all our calls of confuzzled confusion.
Their conclusions are the same: they are very sure
that
Somewhere life is really more
and their knowings down the rows
pass from tongues
to ears to
snouts all sew

The Way of Dog
into our dreamings.

So we ten of us curl and snuggle up tight and
our hearts thumping together
makes us strong

 makes us fierce
 makes us

 mostly

all right.

Even those Rats aren't so bad after all.

In the light those Rats are
really quite small even though

 their teeth

 are really

 quite big

even though there's a fat one that won't stop
his watching.

But we ten pups together are too big for a Rat
no matter how fat

 no matter how sharp his teeth are.

But I guess some of us
just need
more.

I guess some of us
just need

a mamma to squirl in tight close to

and some of us

grow cold

now

some of us

grow hard

now

their beat gone

thrum gone

light in their eyes

breath in their snout

gone.

I guess life isn't *more* for everyone.

That FatRat moves

a little bit closer.