

## BAEN BOOKS

### TEACHER'S GUIDE TO *A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP* BY DAVID WEBER



#### Contents:

- recommended reading levels
- biographical material and links
- background of the book and plot summary
- character sketches
- guides for segments of the book which include plot summaries of each chapter and may also include some of the following:
  - prepare to read . . .
    - vocabulary
    - focus questions or initiating activity
  - quiz/reading comprehension questions—multiple choice/short answer questions to testing reading comprehension
  - reflection and discussion questions—may be used to initiate classroom discussion, as short writing assignments, or as test questions
  - suggested activities/inquiry-based exploration—suggestions for activities and projects

**Recommended reading levels:** *A Beautiful Friendship* is appropriate for a young adult audience. Classroom use of the book is probably most appropriate for middle school students.

#### Biographical information on David Weber:

David Weber is a popular, best-selling author of science fiction and fantasy. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1952. He graduated from Hillcrest High School in Simpsonville, South Carolina in 1970 and received a bachelor's degree from Warren Wilson College. Weber also did graduate work in history at Appalachian State University. He started

writing poetry and short fiction when he was in the fifth grade. His mother was an advertising copywriter and trained him in that craft. Before becoming a full time writer of fiction, he worked in advertising, public relations, and war-game design. His first novel, *Insurrection*, was published in 1990. This book, a collaboration with Steve White, grew out of Weber's experience as a game designer. He has written over fifty solo and collaborative novels and contributed to numerous anthologies of short fiction. He is best known as an author of science fiction with military themes, but he has also written fantasy, "space operas," and alternate history. Weber and his wife Sharon, along with their children, dogs and cats, live in Greenville, South Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

Biographical resources on the web:

- Weber has provided an interesting biographical sketch on his website, *David Weber*, <http://www.davidweber.net/biography>.
- "David Weber," *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Weber](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Weber).

**Suggested class activity:** Have your students read the autobiographical information on Weber's website before they begin the book. Ask them to make notes as they read. Have the class discuss the several different influences that led Weber to become a writer. They also might want to explore some of the interviews available on YouTube and Baen's website (<http://baen.com/interview.asp>) in which Weber discusses his development and interests as an author.

#### For further information on David Weber and his work:

- Weber's website contains a wealth of material that students may enjoy exploring in addition to his biographical details: photos, a bibliography, discussion forums, FAQs, downloads, and information about upcoming appearances (<http://www.davidweber.net>).
- David Weber's page at Amazon.com contains a brief biographical note, a list of books available, and a forum for reader comments ([http://www.amazon.com/David-Weber/e/B000APBAFE/ref=sr\\_tc\\_ep?qid=1308078796](http://www.amazon.com/David-Weber/e/B000APBAFE/ref=sr_tc_ep?qid=1308078796)).
- There are several interesting interviews with Weber available at Baen's website (<http://baen.com/interview.asp>) and on YouTube.

#### Bibliographies:

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<sup>1</sup> The sources for the information contained in this biographical sketch are David Weber, "Biography," *David Weber*, <http://www.davidweber.net/biography> (accessed June 13, 2011) and "David Weber," *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Weber](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Weber) (accessed June 13, 2011).

You can find bibliographies of Weber's work at his own website (<http://www.davidweber.net/books>), at the website *Internet Speculative Fiction Database* (isfdb.org) ([http://www.isfdb.org/cgi-bin/ea.cgi?David\\_Weber](http://www.isfdb.org/cgi-bin/ea.cgi?David_Weber)), at the website *Fantastic Fiction* (<http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/w/david-weber>), at the website *SFBookcase* (<http://www.sfbookcase.com/author.asp?author=David+Weber>), and on *Wikipedia* ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Weber](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Weber)).

## **Background:**

Published by Baen Books in 2011, this story fills in some of the background for Weber's best-selling Honor Harrington adult science fiction series. The protagonist, Stephanie Harrington, is one of Honor's ancestors. It is also the first book in a planned young adult series dealing with the Star Kingdom of Manticore. Students may be interested in delving into the wiki for its heroine, Stephanie Harrington ([http://honorverse.wikia.com/wiki/Stephanie\\_Harrington](http://honorverse.wikia.com/wiki/Stephanie_Harrington)), and exploring other facets of what has come to be called the "Honorverse" in which the book is set ([http://honorverse.wikia.com/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://honorverse.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page)).

**Plot Summary:** Stephanie Harrington and her parents have emigrated to the frontier planet of Sphinx. Almost twelve terran years old when the story opens, Stephanie chafes at her parents' restrictions. Restless and intelligent, she sets out to solve a mystery. Who is stealing celery, of all things, from the gardens and greenhouses of Sphinx? Her investigation leads her to an astonishing discovery: a previously unknown sentient species native to the planet. The treecats are small six-legged animals, something like a cross between a bobcat and a lemur, that use tools and live in clans in the tree canopy. Stephanie develops a strong bond with one of the treecats, Climbs Quickly. She finds that the secretive treecats are not only highly intelligent, they are telepaths as well. While the treecats debate whether to trust or flee from the humans, the humans are divided about how they should be treated. Stephanie quickly learns that there are people who want to exploit the 'cats as pets or research subjects. There are also humans who think it would be more convenient if all the treecats were destroyed, leaving the planet for human ownership. Can humans and treecats live in peace and share the planet? Can Stephanie and Climbs Quickly trust anyone to have the best interests of the 'cats at heart?

## **Major Characters:**

- Stephanie Harrington is a young girl, almost twelve terran years old when the story opens. An intelligent, only child, she is impatient to explore her new planet, Sphinx.
- Richard Harrington is Stephanie's father. He has degrees in both Terran and xenoveterinary medicine.
- Marjorie Harrington is Stephanie's mother. She is a plant geneticist.
- Climbs Quickly is the treecat, a member Sphinx's sentient native species. He is a scout who observes the humans on the planet. Stephanie and her family call him Lionheart.

- Sanura Hobbard is a xeno-anthropologist who interviews Stephanie about her experiences with the treecats.
- Scott MacDallan is a medical doctor on Sphinx and the second person to develop a bond with a treecat.
- Irena Kisaevna is planning on marrying Dr. MacDallan.
- Karl Zivonik is Irena's nephew.
- Swift Striker is the treecat who has bonded with Dr. MacDallan. MacDallan calls him Fisher.
- Aleksandr Zivonik is a landowner and early settler of Sphinx.
- Frank Lethbridge is a Sphinx Forestry Service ranger and a friend of MacDallan's.
- Arvin Erhardt is cargo pilot on Sphinx who is murdered by Dr. Mariel Ubel.
- Mariel Ubel is the lead scientist of a BioNeering research group on Sphinx. She accidentally releases a deadly pathogen into the environment, poisoning and destroying the heart of a treecat clan's home range. She tries to cover up the incident by sabotaging the air car of the only three witnesses, murdering them all.
- Gary Shelton is Chief Ranger of the Forestry Service on Sphinx.

The Honorverse wiki ([http://honorverse.wikia.com/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://honorverse.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page)) contains a useful link with short descriptions of most of the characters in the “Honorverse” (<http://honorverse.wikia.com/wiki/Category:Characters>) as well as links for geography, political groups, and star nations that students might find useful as they navigate the book.

## **GUIDE TO chapters 1—7**

### **Prepare to Read . . .**

- Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary and terms:
  - the prefix hexa-
  - martyred
  - xeno-botany
  - biosystem hierarchies
  - internship
  - furled
  - arboreal
  - sentient
- Focus question/initiating activity: Investigate with your students what accounts for what we call “years” and “seasons” on earth. Ask them to think about this when reading chapter 1 and deduce how Earth and Sphinx are different.

### **Chapter Summaries:**

- Chapter 1: Stephanie Harrington and her parents have emigrated from the planet Meyerdahl to Sphinx. Compared to the well-settled Meyerdahl, Sphinx is a

frontier planet. The human settlers still know little about its indigenous life forms. Stephanie is almost twelve terran years old. She is intelligent, curious, and restless. She is also frustrated at her father's attempts to protect her and keep her close to home. She is interested in xeno-botany and the biological systems of her new planet. She wants to explore the planet, but her parents want to be sure she is safe. Stephanie and her family are "genies," humans who have been genetically engineered to adapt more efficiently to high gravity planets.

- Chapter 2: The People, an intelligent, indigenous species, are keeping watch on the human colonists. They are fascinated by the differences they find between themselves and the humans, whom they call the "two-legs." Unlike the People, the two-legs are "mind-blind." They cannot telepathically "hear" the thoughts and emotions of other beings. They can, however, fly, build, and kill wild animals with a strange implement. The old songs of the People tell them that the two-legs have visited their homeland before, but the information is vague.
- Chapter 3: Stephanie is trying to figure out a problem. Why have some of the settlers' crops gone missing? And why is the only thing stolen celery? When she plots all reports about missing celery on a map, she finds that the thefts are widespread. This proves to her it's not just one kid playing a practical joke. Most of the thefts are from the colonists' experimental greenhouses. Since the thefts are escalating, they may prove a problem for some long-term research projects. She deduces from the fact that the thieves have been able to evade infrared alarms that they use more of the lower end of the spectrum than human eyes. She decides to set a trap using ultraviolet.
- Chapter 4: Climbs Quickly and his people are excited by the ability of the humans to grow plants in the cold season in specially located gardens as well as "transparent plant places." Since the People need plant as well as animal food to remain healthy, many of their sick and old have died during the long winters. They have also found one plant grown by the two-legs particularly compelling. What they call "cluster stalks" sharpen the People's mind-voices and deepen the texture of their memory songs. Climbs Quickly plans to use a coming thunderstorm as cover to explore the mystery of these cluster stalks. Stephanie plans to use it as an occasion to sneak outside to catch a celery thief. Stephanie catches Climbs Quickly on camera. Startled, he reaches out to her mind-glow to try to judge her intentions. He is astonished by the strength of her emotions at seeing him. It is the first time any of his People had ever come face-to-face with a two-leg, and it is the first time any human has made contact with a tool-using, sentient, alien race.
- Chapter 5: Climbs Quickly confesses to his clan that he let one of the two-legs see him. They find it hard to accept his impressions of the strength and clarity of Stephanie's mind-glow. They relieve him of his responsibility to watch over the Harringtons. He understands their decision, given the danger the two-legs represent. The clan had long ago decided that their only true safety lay in avoiding the two-legs entirely. Climbs Quickly doubts the wisdom of this policy, since there are more two-legs than ever, and their flying things and long-seeing things make hiding forever impossible. He finds that he has a mind connection with the young human and is able to tell where she is through her mind-glow.

- Chapter 6: Stephanie decides to learn all she can about the species she has encountered before she lets anyone else know they exist. She is concerned with how they might be treated. Her research reveals that no one has even reported a sighting, suggesting to her that they are deliberately avoiding humans, a rational action. Coordinating that sort of planet-wide avoidance also implies that they can communicate among themselves, so they must have language and some way to communicate over distances. She realizes that she has some sort of link with the treecat and can “feel” his location.
- Chapter 7: Stephanie’s mother has her suspicions aroused when Stephanie drops her sulking and complaining about the restrictions her parents have placed on her. She also notices that Stephanie no longer refers to the mysterious celery thefts. She concludes that Stephanie is Up To Something.

### **Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions:**

1. The Harrington family has recently emigrated from the planet Meyerdahl to (chap. 1)
  - a. Earth
  - b. Mars
  - c. Ceres
  - d. Sphinx
2. Why are Stephanie and her family called “genies”? (chap. 1)
  - a. It is short for “genius.” They all have extremely high IQs.
  - b. They are genetically engineered humans.
  - c. They come from humans who originally developed on the planet Gena.
  - d. They are descendants of humans who were voluntarily interbred to preserve superior genes.
3. What does Climbs Quickly call humans? (chap. 2)
  - a. the invaders
  - b. naked-faces
  - c. loud ones
  - d. two-legs
4. Stephanie is investigating some thefts. What is being stolen? (chap. 3)
  - a. celery
  - b. communications equipment
  - c. clothing
  - d. candy
5. The People particularly envy what structure built by the humans? (chap. 4)
  - a. heated swimming pools
  - b. amphitheatres
  - c. greenhouses
  - d. churches
6. Which of the following adjectives applies best to Climbs Quickly? (chap. 4)
  - a. arboreal
  - b. bipedal
  - c. enormous

- d. cold-blooded
- 7. What are some of the characteristics of Stephanie's new planet? (chap. 1)
- 8. Why do the People say that humans are "mind-blind"? (chap. 2)
- 9. What is the Elysian Rule? (chap. 3)
- 10. What conclusions about the People's intelligence does Stephanie draw from the fact that they haven't been detected? (chap. 6)

Answers:

- 1. d
- 2. b
- 3. d
- 4. a
- 5. c
- 6. a
- 7. It has very long seasons, it snows a lot, and it is a "heavy gravity" planet.
- 8. Human beings cannot hear and read the "mind-voices" of others. They aren't empaths or telepaths.
- 9. A rule adopted over a thousand years earlier that absolutely forbids the use of any lethal measure against a complete unknown without evidence that it poses a clear physical danger to humans.
- 10. Avoiding detection over the whole settlement area implies that they can talk to each other, have a common language, and some way to communicate over distances.

**Suggested Activity/Inquiry-Based Exploration:** Stephanie and her family are "genies," genetically engineered humans. Have your students explore the problems and possibilities involved in modification of the human genome. Weber offers some glimpses of both in chapter 1: what are they? You might divide your students into teams to debate the pros and cons of genetic engineering. Some useful resources:

- A free lesson plan on genetic engineering for grades 9-12 is available at the Discovery Education website (<http://www.discoveryeducation.com/teachers/free-lesson-plans/genetic-engineering.cfm>)
- Paul Arnold, "Pros and Cons of Genetic Engineering in Humans—Parts 1 and 2," at brighthub.com (<http://www.brighthub.com/science/genetics/articles/22210.aspx> and <http://www.brighthub.com/science/genetics/articles/22211.aspx>)
- Danielle Simmons, "Genetic Inequality: Human Genetic Engineering," Nature Education, at Scitable: by nature education (<http://www.nature.com/scitable/topicpage/genetic-inequality-human-genetic-engineering-768>)
- Linda MacDonald Glenn, "Ethical Issues in Genetic Engineering and Transgenics," at actionbioscience.org (<http://www.actionbioscience.org/biotech/glenn.html>)

## **GUIDE TO chapters 8—14**

### **Prepare to Read . . .**

- Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary and terms
  - exuberance
  - innate
  - countermanded
  - capitalize
  - nodal
  - quarantine
  - enzymes
  - struts
  - fervently
  - presentiment
  - dynamo
  - exultation
  - pathetic
  - unadulterated
  - inextricable
  - plethora
- Focus question/initiating activity: Investigate some instances of colonization in world history. How have the native people generally been treated by the colonizers? Why?

### **Chapter Summaries:**

- Chapter 8: Stephanie uses her new hang glider to explore without technically breaking her word to her parents that she would not go into the countryside alone. She hopes to pinpoint a location for the treecats, then return with her father to gather further evidence of their existence. Stephanie forgets to check the weather before she sets out on her flight, and she is caught in a storm. She realizes that she has to land quickly or she will die. Climbs Quickly senses her terror and rushes to help her.
- Chapter 9: She crashes in a tree, breaking an arm and some ribs, and is caught in the remnants of her glider. Climbs Quickly finds her and is relieved that she is still alive. They both realize she needs to get on the ground. When she tries to let herself down one-handed using her counter-grav unit, it fails, and she crashes to the ground and loses consciousness.
- Chapter 10: Climbs Quickly scouts the area for dangers. He catches the scent of a death fang, the animal the two-legs call a hexapuma, in the area. He realizes that he needs help and sends out a distress call to his sister, Sings Truly. While he waits for help from his clan, Climbs Quickly is able to draw off the worst of Stephanie's despair through their empathic link. The hexapuma finds them, and Climbs Quickly challenges it on his own, trying to buy her time. Stephanie has a

high-tech vibro blade knife with her, and she struggles to her feet to try to kill the huge animal. While the hexapuma is closing in to kill the treecat, Stephanie charges it and plunges her blade deep into its flank. Before it can lunge to kill her, the treecat clan explodes from the trees and finishes it off.

- Chapter 11: Richard and Marjorie Harrington put two and two together and figure out that Stephanie is gone. Climbs Quickly is desperately hurt, his right “true-hand” mangled. Stephanie manages to make a tourniquet and get it around the limb. The other treecats can feel Stephanie’s love and concern for Climbs Quickly, and they are astonished at the strength of the link between the human and the treecat. The clan debates whether they should pursue more contact with the two-legs. Sings Truly argues that they should use contacts to learn more about the humans and enlist them as friends and allies.
- Chapter 12: Her parents find Stephanie in the small clearing surrounded by protective treecats. Climbs Quickly is near death, and Stephanie’s father vows to help him in any way he can. They take the treecat back to their home, and Richard assures his daughter that he will live, although he will probably lose a limb.
- Chapter 13: Over a year after her first encounter with a treecat, Stephanie, her parents, and Climbs Quickly meet with Chief Ranger Gary Shelton. Stephanie and her parents call the treecat Lionheart. The Sphinx Forestry Service denies Stephanie’s request for a junior internship spot. They simply don’t have the manpower to nursemaid a bunch of interns in a wilderness that is extremely dangerous and still largely unknown.
- Chapter 14: Acknowledgement of the treecats’ sentience was a slow process. The xeno-anthropologists and xeno-biologists wanted to study Stephanie and Lionheart, but her parents strictly limited their access. They also grounded Stephanie for three months after her adventure. None of the humans understand exactly how the treecats communicate or whether or not they are empaths or telepaths. The Harringtons are concerned about the fate of the treecats, since there was an infamous case where the humans on a colonized planet wiped out a sentient species of amphibians called the Amphors.

### **Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions:**

1. Stephanie goes to find the treecats (chap. 8)
  - a. in her family’s air car
  - b. on foot
  - c. by hang-glider
  - d. on a stolen air-scooter
2. Climbs Quickly finds Stephanie (chap. 9)
  - a. through their empathic link
  - b. by her scent
  - c. by sight
  - d. because other treecats have spotted her and call him
3. After the crash, Stephanie is in greatest danger from (chap. 10)
  - a. the storm
  - b. an angry gang of treecats

- c. a falling tree
  - d. a hexapuma
4. Which of the treecats argues that they should use contact with humans to learn more about them and enlist them as friends and allies? (chap. 11)
- a. Sings Truly
  - b. Broken Tooth
  - c. Song Spinner
  - d. Short Tail
5. How does Stephanie save Climbs Quickly's life? (chap. 11)
6. Who were the Amphors and what happened to them? (chap. 14)

Answers:

- 1. c
- 2. a
- 3. d
- 4. a
- 5. By stabbing the hexapuma with her vibro blade and by getting a tourniquet around his severed forelimb.
- 6. The Amphors were an intelligent species of amphibians that were native to a planet called Barstool. The colonial government didn't want the inconvenience of an intelligent species on the planets that might have rights, so they declared them animals. The species was virtually exterminated within thirty years.

## **GUIDE TO chapters 15—21**

### **Prepare to Read . . .**

- Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary and terms
  - proviso
  - fidgety
  - trepidation
  - aerobatics
  - marathon
  - valid
  - nanotechnology
  - pathogen
  - traipsing
  - inveigling
  - grimace
  - laceration
- Focus question/initiating activities: Investigate the question of what the relationship between body mass and animal intelligence is, if any.

### **Chapter Summaries:**

- Chapter 15: [pp. 151—174] Stephanie and Lionheart go to a meeting of the new flying club organized by her hang-gliding teachers. The club will be divided into two teams in order to set up competitions, including relay races and distance marathons. Stephanie has a confrontation with another club member, Trudy Franchetti, who questions the story of Stephanie’s meeting with Lionheart. She outrages Stephanie by referring to Lionheart as a “pet” and insisting that she is going to acquire a treecat of her own. Lionheart intervenes empathically to lessen the fury of the confrontation.
- Chapter 16: [pp. 175—187] Dr. Sanura Hobbard, a xenoanthropologist, is coming to talk to Stephanie about her experience with the treecats. Dr. Hobbard is the head of the Kingdom of Manticore’s commission charged to study the new species. Stephanie is disappointed, since she and Lionheart had planned on visiting his family that day. Stephanie isn’t sure how much she can safely share with Dr. Hobbard, since she isn’t sure who or what may pose a danger to the treecats. When Dr. Hobbard asks her whether they’ve made any progress in locating the rest of Lionheart’s clan, Stephanie evades her question.
- Chapter 17: [pp. 188—206] Stephanie tries to arrange a meeting with Dr. Scott MacDallan, who has been “adopted” by a treecat named Swift Striker, called Fisher by his human. Fisher saved Dr. MacDallen’s life when he slipped and fell in some rapids. MacDallan is a medical doctor who emigrated to Sphinx because of the dire need for doctors in the wake of the Plagues. MacDallan is engaged to Irena Kisaevna. Her nephew, Karl, was at the hang-gliding club when Stephanie had her confrontation with some of the other kids. He has told MacDallan and Irena how much he admires the way Stephanie handled it. MacDallan fears his meeting with Stephanie will trigger suspicion. MacDallan talks to his friend Frank Lethbridge, a Sphinx Forestry Service ranger. MacDallan explains why he thinks the tree cats are both intelligent and telepathic. It goes back to an incident in which the lead scientist of a BioNeering research group negligently released a deadly pathogen into the environment, poisoning and destroying the heart of a treecat clan’s home range. She tried to cover up the incident by sabotaging the air car of witnesses, murdering them. When MacDallan investigates, she almost kills him, too. A tree cat called the Stray flung himself directly onto the muzzle of her rifle just as she fired, saving the man’s life by giving up his own. From what Lethbridge heard of Stephanie’s first encounter with the treecats and the hexapuma, he assures MacDallan that he can trust Stephanie. She is intelligent, courageous, and dedicating to protecting the treecats.
- Chapter 18: [pp. 207—215] Stephanie and Climbs Quickly visit his clan. Some in the clan argue that the two-legs pose such a great danger that the People should move their range far into the forest away from them. Others are wary of encouraging bonds between the People and humans. Climbs Quickly and Sings Truly discuss the problems and opportunities of their encounter with the humans and the best way ahead. They believe the safest course is to find worthy two-legs with whom more of the People can bond.
- Chapter 19: [pp. 216—241] Irena Kisaevna and Scott MacDallan come to the Harrington’s for dinner. Climbs Quickly and Swift Striker, the treecat who has

bonded with MacDallan, get acquainted. They compare notes and discover that Darkness Foe, Swift Striker's name for MacDallan, isn't quite as "mind-blind" as other two-legs. He has something like an echo of a mind-voice. After dinner, MacDallan and Stephanie discuss their concerns for the treecats and their frustration with people who insist on looking on them as lower animals instead of intelligent beings. MacDallan suggests that the people who have been adopted by treecats should band together to learn more about them and protect them. One of their concerns is to keep the colonists on Sphinx from thinking of the treecats as competitors for land and mineral rights on the planet. MacDallan thinks they should work to see that when the public lands are finally sold, the treecats are guaranteed enough of the planet for them and their descendants. Another concern is what might happen to the cats if anyone confirms that they are genuinely telepathic. MacDallan worries that black-ops genetic labs will try to capture and experiment on the cats to see how their telepathy works. He admits that he knows that the treecats are excellent telepaths because he himself has the "sight," which runs in families from the Scottish Highlands.

- Chapter 20: [pp. 242—257] MacDallan is uneasy about Stephanie's solo trips to visit the treecats, so he suggests that her parents provide her with a handgun. Frank Lethbridge has volunteered to teach her to use it. Her parents reluctantly agree and decide to get training with guns themselves. Stephanie turns out to be a natural shot.
- Chapter 21: [pp. 258—270] Tennessee Bolgeo, a distinguished xeno-anthropologist, has come to Sphinx on a grant to study the treecats. He joins Dr. Hobbard on her next visit to Stephanie and Lionheart. Lionheart is suspicious of him on sight, and Stephanie doesn't like him either. Their feelings turn out to be justified: Bolgeo is a fraud. He is a con man working for Tamerlane Ustinov, president and CEO of Ustinov's Exotic Pets, Inc. He also has patrons in the Star Kingdom itself and in genetic labs. He wants to capture treecats and sell them to whoever is willing to pay. Stephanie expresses her concerns about Bolgeo to MacDallan. He suggests they both need contact with him for further evaluation.

### **Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions:**

1. How does Lionheart diffuse the tense situation between Stephanie and some of the kids at the hang-gliding club? (chap. 15)
2. Who is Mariel Ubel? Describe her involvement with the treecats. (chap. 17)
3. What is Climbs Quickly's name for Stephanie? (chap. 18)
4. What particular gift does Scott MacDallan have that helps convince him that the treecats are telepathic? (chap. 19)
5. What new skill does Stephanie learn in this section of the book? (chap. 20)
6. Who is Tennessee Bolgeo? What is his interest in the treecats? (chap. 21)

### **Answers:**

1. He uses his link with her to help her overcome her anger.
2. Ubel is a scientist with the BioNeering research group on Sphinx. She accidentally releases a deadly pathogen into the environment, poisoning and

- destroying the heart of a treecat clan's home range. She tried to cover up the incident by murdering three witnesses. She also tries to kill Scott MacDallan when he tries to investigate.
3. Death Fang's Bane
  4. He has the "sight," a type of empathic or telepathic ability found in some families from the Scottish Highlands.
  5. She learns to shoot in order to protect herself.
  6. Bolgeo is a con man who is posing as a xeno-anthropologist. He intends to capture and exploit some of the treecats.

## **GUIDE TO chapters 22—29**

### **Prepare to Read . . .**

- Familiarize yourself with the following vocabulary and terms
  - anarchist
  - zealous
  - scofflaw
  - ecstatic
  - *quid-pro-quo*
  - connivance
  - irreparable
  - probationary
  - holographic
  - escalating

### **Chapter Summaries:**

- Chapter 22: [271—279] Stephanie and her parents have lunch with Bolgeo, Hobbard and Chief Ranger Shelton. She is lured into the lunch by the opportunity to meet Shelton and pursue her interest in a Forestry Service internship. Bolgeo arranges for a newsman to take secret footage of Lionheart at the restaurant so that he can study it. The footage proves to him that the treecat was able to detect Bolgeo's movements even when he was more than a hundred meters out of sight.
- Chapter 23: [280—287] Dr. Hobbard is suspicious of Bolgeo and shares her concerns with Gary Shelton. He doesn't seem to have any field experience, and when she searches library records, she can't find any published papers under his name. She is particularly concerned that she introduced him to Stephanie and is afraid that will undermine Stephanie's trust in her. Bolgeo plants transponders in the Harrington's air cars to try to track Stephanie's visits to the treecat range. When that doesn't work, he hires someone to plant a transponder on her glider. He tracks her next visit to the treecats and gets GPS coordinates for the location.
- Chapter 24: [pp. 288—297] Climbs Quickly is awakened by a call from a Bright Water scout, Short Tail. There is trouble, and Climbs Quickly goes out to meet him without waking Stephanie. Short Tail has come for him because, in the last several days, three members of the clan have disappeared when they went out

from their nesting places. The fact that they did not even send a mind call for help or in warning is particularly worrisome. Some of the elders had suggested moving deeper into the mountains without telling Climbs Quickly or any of the two-legs, because they believe that the two-legs are responsible for what is happening.

Climbs Quickly immediately suspects that Bolgeo, whom he calls Speaks Falsely, is involved. He is frustrated again by his inability to communicate with Stephanie directly. He needs to find a way to let the two-legs know what is happening to his clan. Their best chance is to bring Stephanie to the clan and hope she realizes their concern.

- Chapter 25: [pp. 298—309] Bolgeo has captured a dozen treecats and is keeping them, caged and drugged, in a warehouse. He set traps baited with celery juice. The traps were rigged with a proximity sensor that released a powerful gas that knocked the treecats out almost instantly. He wants to acquire fifty or sixty 'cats before he leaves Sphinx. Stephanie, realizing that Lionheart is terribly worried about something, goes back to his clan with him. While she is there, the cats receive a distress call from a memory singer a long way away. They realize they must get Stephanie to come with them so that she can see and report what is happening to the People. She, Climbs Quickly, and Sings Truly take off in her hang-glider, followed by many of the other cats from the clan.
- Chapter 26: [pp. 310—318] They find Water Dancer, the treecat who called for help. Her mate, Twig Weaver, has been caught in one of Bolgeo's traps and is unconscious. Stephanie uses her gravity pack to get up into the tree where Twig Weaver is trapped. She realizes the trap is a sophisticated device, possibly booby-trapped, and calls her father and Scott MacDallan for help. MacDallan contacts Frank Shelton and his partner Ainsley and gives them her GPS location so they had head her way. He then advises her to back off a little way and keep an eye on things, then he heads toward her location.
- Chapter 27: [pp. 319—331] Before anyone she has called could have had time to reach her, Stephanie hears an air car approach. She realizes that the cage must send sort of signal when it has captured a treecat. She gets the treecats with her to give her their carry nets and runs toward Twig Weaver. When she gets near the cage, the gas dispenser hisses, but the gas does not affect her. She ties the cage to the tree with the nets to defeat the cage's counter-grav unit and runs back to join the other treecats so that she will not be detected. Bolgeo shows up and attempts to retrieve the cage but finds he can't get it up to his ship using its counter-grav unit. He decides to land, put on his enviro suit, and retrieve the cage. Stephanie draws her gun and steels herself to use it if necessary.
- Chapter 28: [pp. 332—343] Bolgeo arms himself with a tranquilizer gun and goes to retrieve the cage. Climbs Quickly and the other treecats smell a death fang in the area. They explore and find that it is a very young, but well-grown, animal. They debate whether to drive the animal toward Bolgeo, which will probably cause his death. Causing the death of another is a grave choice, but one they think is justified. The huxapuma burst out of the forest near Bolgeo, coming straight at him. He hits with several tranquilizer darts, but they don't stop it. Panicked, he throws the gun at the beast and it lodges in the animal's mouth. Just before the

enraged huxapuma strikes at Bolgeo again, Stephanie shoots and kills it. Much as she hates the man, she doesn't want to see him torn limb from limb.

- Chapter 29: [pp. 344—332] MacDallan and Karl finally reach the area and find a terrified Bolgeo surrounded by treecats and a young girl with a very large gun. Shelton, who had been suspicious of Bolgeo all along, had managed to trace the warehouse. When notified of Bolgeo's apprehension, he moved on the warehouse and rescued the imprisoned treecats. Stephanie agrees to cooperate with Dr. Hobbard to help her learn about the treecats to try to keep them safe. Much to Stephanie's delight, Shelton informs her that the Forestry Service has just instituted the rank of probationary ranger. He presents her with a badge, making her part of the Service.

### **Quiz/Reading Comprehension Questions:**

1. Why does Bolgeo hire a newsman to take video footage of Climbs Quickly at the lunch he arranges? (chap. 22)
2. How does Bolgeo finally track down Climbs Quickly's clan? (chap. 23)
3. What do the treecats call Bolgeo? (chap. 24)
4. How does Stephanie prevent Bolgeo from "collecting" Twig Weaver? (chap. 27)
5. How does Stephanie finally get to join the Forest Service? (chap. 29)

Answers:

1. To learn more about the treecats' telepathic abilities so that he can figure out how to sneak up on them.
2. He hires someone to place a transponder on Stephanie's hang-glider.
3. Speaks Falsely.
4. She ties it to the tree with carry-nets from the treecats, preventing its anti-grav unit from taking it up to his ship.
5. Shelton gets the service to create a new rank: probationary ranger.

### **Suggested activities/inquiry-based exploration—**

1. Have your class discuss or write papers on the following question: One of Stephanie's firearms instructors tells her that there is an old saying that "some people need killing." Although she didn't finally kill Bolgeo, saving his life instead, do you think she would have been justified in killing him if that was the only way to keep him from harming the treecats?
2. One of the issues the book raises is what it means to be "people." The People make a distinction between "thinking" and "unthinking" creatures. What are some of the characteristics of a creature that the People use to assign them to one category or another? What are some of the things that suggested to Stephanie that Climbs Quickly and the other treecats were "people." Ethicists have traditionally used the distinction between a "person" and a "non-person" to answer questions about who/what deserves moral consideration. Some of the standard answers are language, tool use, a certain level of intelligence, or an ability to make moral

- choices. Have your students explore some of the traditional ways of making this distinction, then discuss what they think the standard should be. How do the treecats fit?
3. Have your students choose particular characters to discuss or write about. How realistic was the characterization? What were some of the character's virtues? What were some of their weaknesses? Did you like them or dislike them? Did their actions seem to flow naturally from who they were? Did they change over the course of the book? If the character made a moral choice, do you agree with that choice? Why or why not?