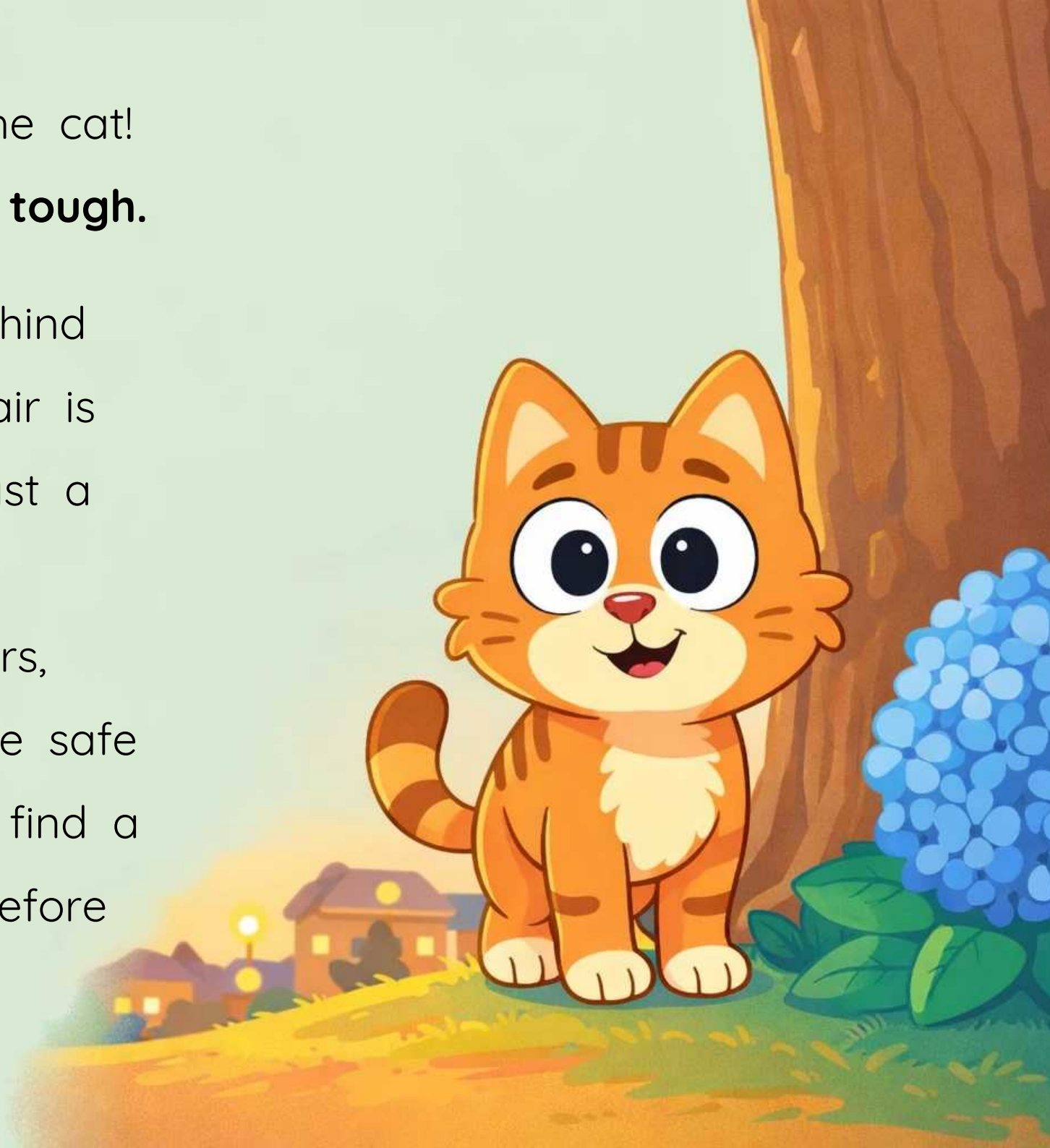


No Room for Pokey!



Hi there, I'm Pokey the cat!
Life on the streets is **tough**.

The sun is sinking behind
the houses, and the air is
turning cool. I trot past a
big tree and a bush
covered in blue flowers,
looking for somewhere safe
and warm. I need to find a
good spot to sleep before
it gets dark.





Oh, there's a nice looking box over there! But when I peek inside, it's already stuffed full of animals. 'What are you looking at, Pokey?' snaps Calico from deep in the pile. 'This box is taken,' says Gray Spot, pushing a paw against the edge.

'No need to be so **rough** about it,' I say. I **thought** they might share, but I move on.

Now I need to find another spot. I wonder if these trash cans are empty? **Though** even if one is full of garbage, that could be soft **enough** to sleep on.

I lift the lid of the nearest one and get a big surprise. Someone is already curled up inside!





'This is my trash can!' snarls Inky, teeth bared. 'But we could both fit,' I say, leaning over the rim hopefully.

'**Tough!** Find your own spot, Pokey!' Inky growls. I sigh and walk away. I **thought** the other cats would be kinder, but sometimes they're just too rude.

Just then, the sky turns dark. I feel drops of water on my head and look up at the clouds. Rain! I sit among the plants getting soaked, my mouth hanging open in shock.

Isn't my day **rough enough** already? I still haven't found a spot to sleep, and now I'm drenched!





I spot a hole near the roof of one of the houses. That might be **enough!** I scramble up the wall, gripping the ledge with my claws.

The rain makes everything slippery, but I keep going. One more stretch. If I can just get to the top, I will be dry and able to rest.

I made it! There's room up here for me and a lot more. **Through** the opening, I can see the rain hammering the streets below.

It is cold, but at least I am out of the wind. I curl up on the ledge and think about the other cats. Are they safe out there tonight?





Flash! Bang! Crack!
Lightning and thunder! A terrible **thought** hits me. Those poor cats in the box! And Inky in the trash can! I picture them huddled by the fence, scared and soaked. 'Get out of there!' I yell, even if they can't hear me.

The lightning has started a fire! The box is burning and the trash can has tipped over. **Through** the smoke and rain, I see Calico, Gray Spot, and Inky rushing up the path towards me.

'Quick, up here before there's more lightning!' I call from the gate. But where will they sleep now? Everything they **fought** over is gone.



'Can we come up here with you?' asks Gray Spot, gripping the railing in the pouring rain. I think about it. They were **rough** with me before, and maybe I should say no. But it's **tough** out here for a cat on the streets.

'Come on up, quick!' I say, reaching my paw down to help them climb.





Now we are all up here, squashed together under the roof. Calico, Gray Spot, Inky, and I, packed in tight. Floodwater swirls below, but we are safe and dry.

'I'm sorry we were **rough** to you before,' says Calico. 'Don't worry about it,' I say. 'We've been **through enough** tonight.'

Soon, we all forget that we **fought** over spots to sleep in. Tucked together under the roof, it's not so cold anymore.

Life is **tough** out here for cats on the streets. But tonight I have a **thought** that makes me smile. When we help each other **through**, everything is a little better.





No Room for Pokey!

Pokey the cat is searching for a cozy spot to sleep, but every place he tries is already taken! A box stuffed with grumpy cats, a trash can guarded by snarling Inky - nobody wants to share. Then the rain begins, lightning cracks the sky, and suddenly everything changes. Will Pokey find somewhere safe, and what will he do when the other cats need help too? This decodable reader practices the 'ough' phonogram in words like 'tough,' 'rough,' 'enough,' 'thought,' and 'through.'

Reading Skills: <ough>

enough, fought, rough, though, thought, through, tough

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