

To Josh, who can testify to
what a responsible driver I am.



CHAPTER ONE

“Five more days until Granny Tabby arrives!”

Catty Corner was counting the days until her grandmother arrived to take Catty on their annual grandma-granddaughter road trip! Catty’s big bushy tail and fuzzy ears bristled with excitement. Just like Catty, Granny Tabby was half-cat and always picked the most cat-tastic destinations. Last year they went to Sunny’s Salmon Factory

and got to go on a tour and have all the free samples they could eat. This year, it was Catty's turn to pick the destination. They were going to visit the World's Largest Ball of Yarn. It was only a day's drive away from Catty's house. In addition to the giant ball (which you could *climb!*), there were rides and snacks and all sorts of fun yarny attractions. Catty couldn't wait!

Catty was in the kitchen with Mom and Dad. As she marked off another day on the refrigerator calendar, she imagined herself climbing through a giant yarn ball like a cave explorer, trusty yarn-whip at her side.

Mom ruffled her hair. "Since you're older now, your dad and I thought you might want to invite some friends along on your trip," she said.



Catty gasped. She had two best friends, Jo and Bebe. They were like pom-poms and glitter, they made everything more fun. But road trips with Granny Tabby were a special tradition. Granny Tabby and Catty would sing along to the radio and change the words to make the songs silly. Catty usually felt topsy-turvy in moving vehicles, but whenever Granny was driving, Catty was safe and calm. Granny Tabby felt like a warm old blanket, the kind that didn't need bells and sparkles. Catty wanted to share almost everything with Jo and Bebe, but she wasn't sure if her road trip with Granny Tabby was one of those things.

"I don't know," said Catty. "I'll think about it."

"Don't worry, Kitty Cat," said Dad, giving her a cuddle. "I know us adults can be embarrassing, but I'm sure Jo and Bebe will get a huge kick out of Granny Tabby."

"Embarrassing?" said Catty.

Dad was trying to be helpful, but now Catty had another worry. What if Jo and Bebe didn't *like* Granny Tabby? What if they thought her singing was goofy and her homemade sweaters were *cringe*?

For the rest of the afternoon, Catty felt like her brain was doing zoomies. At last she climbed up into her favorite cat tree with her Scratch Pad. Catty's Scratch Pad used to belong to her mom, and before that to Granny Tabby. When Catty's thoughts got more tangled than the world's biggest

ball of yarn, writing them down usually helped her straighten them out.

Catty wrote in her Scratch Pad:

 Jo + Bebe = Fun
 Grandma Tabby = Fun
 Jo + Bebe + Grandma Tabby =
DOUBLE FUN! Right?

Catty decided she was being silly. A road trip with her favorite grandma and her favorite friends? What could go wrong?

Just before dinner, Catty asked permission to call Jo and Bebe.

For some reason, talking on the phone made Catty nervous. What if she said the wrong thing or what if she called the wrong number?

The phone rang three times before Jo's mom picked up. "Hello?"

Catty took a big gulp of air.

"Hello?" Jo's mom said again before Catty could answer. "If you're looking for Dopey Dan's Discount Furniture, you've got the wrong number. I told them to fix that typo on their website!"

Catty let the words tumble out before Jo's mom could say anything else. "Hi! Hello, this is Catty. I'm not looking for Dopey Dan, I was hoping I could speak to Jo, please?"

"Oh!" said Jo's mom. "Catty, honey! Of course." And then she yelled so loud it made Catty's ears ring: "JO! PHONE FOR YOU!"

After a second, Jo breathed into the phone like she'd just run up and down the stairs ten times. "Catty! Is this our first

phone call? I love talking on the phone. It's almost as good as talking in real life. Well, maybe better, because on the phone I can take you anywhere and—"

"Hey, Jo." Catty didn't like to interrupt, but sometimes that was the only way to get a word in with Jo. "I actually have something to ask you and Bebe, so maybe we can talk about why talking on the phone is your favorite afterward?"

"For sure! I can't wait to talk more about talking." She gasped. "Bebe! I can add her to our call so we can all three talk at the same time."

"No way!" Catty said. "How do you even know how to do that?"

"Like I said, I love talking on the phone. Hang on for just a minute, okay?"

"Yup."

Catty waited for just a moment and then, Jo was back. "Okay, time for roll call! Jo?" she asked and then immediately chirped, "Here!"

Catty laughed.

"Catty?" Jo called.

"Here!" Catty confirmed.

"And last but not least," Jo said. "Bebe?"

Bebe cleared her throat dramatically. "I have arrived!" Then she added, "Hey, Catty!"

"Now that we're all here," Jo said, "what's your big question, Catty?"

Catty pushed all her doubts aside and just blurted it out. "Do you two want to come with me and my Granny Tabby on an overnight trip to see the World's Largest Ball of Yarn?"



For a moment, the phone was so quiet that Catty worried her friends had hung up on her. Or even worse—what if they thought the World’s Largest Ball of Yarn sounded like the world’s biggest waste of time?

A screech like a howler monkey made Catty almost drop the phone. It was Jo of course. “A road trip with my besties?” she sang. “Sign me up! If my mom says it’s okay, that is.”

“That actually sounds like a lot of fun,” said Bebe. “Yarn is totally trending right now. I wonder if there’s a gift shop.”

“I’m sure there is,” Catty said, unable to hide her excitement. “There’s even a slide that goes down the ball!”