

## Chapter 6

### The View From Above

Silver Sky clutched tightly to the back of the big black raven, a hard task, indeed, when one does not have fingers. He thanked his lucky stars that Tula Sanni was a very patient bird. He glanced over at Rebecca, who was having much easier time of it as she climbed onto Tula Ulari's back.

"Ooh, this should be fun!" she squealed as she got comfortable, nestling into the soft feathers of the ravens back.

Tula Puck landed with a thud next to Tula Ulari. Having scouted out the beginnings of a flight path, he turned his attention to the pouch that held all of Rebecca and Silver Sky's stuff.

"Tula Quinn, do you think you can manage this?" he asked.

The fat raven waddled over to the bag and, clutching it in his talons, took off just to prove that he, too, would help out.

Sensing the imminent departure of new-found friends, Dr. Falltree and Miss Springfield approached the two toys.

"We think you should have these," said Miss Springfield, handing Rebecca the notepad and a small pencil.

"You two should keep a travel journal. Write down what you see and do. If we ever see each other again, you can share your stories," Dr. Falltree instructed.

"Thank you," said Rebecca, putting the items in her pocket.

At last, the ravens prepared to set off. The two voles scampered towards the bushes, as long black wings unfurled, raising a storm of leaves as they left the ground. The toys could feel the strong muscles of the birds beneath them as wings went first up and then down, pushing air away.

"Oh, I don't want to look," thought Silver Sky, clenching his eyes shut as the trees got farther and farther away. "A horse should always have four hooves on the ground!" He held on a little more tightly.

Rebecca was having a great time. She looked around as they rose higher and higher. Clutching her compass in one hand, and feathers in the other she tried to get her bearings.

Far to the north were mountains. Mountains could be seen to the south, as well, and that was the direction in which they were heading. Below she could see many streams and rivers snaking across the land, which was dotted here and there with lakes. The town they were leaving looked small, and tiny cars could be seen moving along narrow, twisting, gray ribbons of roads.

"Are you taking us all the way?" she asked.

Tula Ulari chuckled. "No," he replied. "We can't fly that far! But we will take you somewhere where you can decide your best path."

"Where's that?" Rebecca queried.

"You'll see," he answered cryptically.

Rebecca sat quietly. The only sound in the air was rush of wind through feathers. Looking below she caught their reflection in a small lake as they flew over head. She

looked over at Silver Sky, eyes still tightly closed, muttering under his breath about how horses were not meant to fly.

In the distance she spotted Tula Puck. He had flown ahead to keep an eye on the path, looking for danger or places to rest. He flew in next to Tula Ulari.

“Eagles,” he said, simply.

“Where?” was the curt reply.

“I’m not sure,” admitted Tula Puck. “I saw the nest, but not the eagles.”

“Then we can only guess at a path,” sighed Tula Ulari.

“Why are you worried about eagles?” asked Rebecca.

The raven thought for a moment. “Eagles are very territorial. They won’t like us flying near their nest. They might attack us, or they might just chase us away,” he answered.

Rebecca scrunched herself closer to the raven. She didn’t like the sound of that!

The ravens decided to fly to the east of the nest, giving it plenty of space and hoping the eagles would be on the other side. They picked up speed, wanting to get through the area as quickly as possible.

It was without warning that the two eagles descended upon the group, sending a spray of black feathers floating towards the ground as one of the eagles clipped Tula Quinn’s wing.

“What was that?” asked Silver Sky, suddenly very alert.

“Hold on!” shouted the ravens to their passengers.

As quickly as they could they dove for the trees. In the distance, the eagles circled for another attack, gaining on the ravens fast. Tula Ulari and Tula Sanni, carrying their passengers, followed Tula Puck who was looking for the fastest way to the trees. Poor Tula Quinn, still carrying the toys pack, was falling behind.

Rebecca could hear the screech of the angry eagles as they approached. She looked back just as one of the eagles ran into Tula Quinn, forcing him to drop the pack, which the other eagle plummeted to catch.

The other ravens, not yet noticing Tula Quinn’s predicament continued to dive towards the trees below. Tula Puck was aiming towards a dense patch in the forest below, hoping the eagles would call off their chase soon.

Silver Sky called to Tula Quinn, encouraging him to fly harder, forgetting his own fear of heights. Rebecca cheered as Tula Quinn redoubled his efforts, huffing and puffing to catch up with the rest of the ravens just as they plunged into a forest of white barked birch trees. Above, the eagles fought over their newly acquired pack.

The ravens continued flying as long as they could through the trees, finally stopping to perch high in a birch tree only after going many miles past the eagles. Tula Quinn was in bad shape. Huffing and puffing, he wobbled on the branch they were perched upon.

“I lost your bag. I’m sorry,” he said, hanging his head low.

Rebecca walked, carefully, over and gave him a hug.

“You tried,” she said simply. “That’s all you can do.” As she spoke she noticed that the exhausted raven was missing many feathers and was bleeding from his left wing. Pulling some of the papery bark from the tree, she made a bandage to stop the blood from flowing.

They rested there for the night, Silver Sky staying as close to the trunk of the tree as his precarious position would allow him.

“It’s more solid here,” he said to a skeptical Rebecca as he looked towards the ground, which seemed quite a ways down.

“I wonder where we are?” asked Rebecca.

The four ravens were fast asleep. Rebecca thought better of waking them up to ask questions.

Silver Sky sat thinking for a minute. He didn’t like being high up the tree, but he knew that to discover where they were would require getting higher. He’d survived the long flight here, and that’d been from much higher. Maybe heights weren’t as bad as he had thought.

“We could climb higher and get a look,” he tentatively suggested. “There is still some light out. If we get high enough, we should be able to see over all these trees.”

Rebecca thought about that, scratching her chin. Testing the limb above her, she decided to give it a go. Climbing was harder for Silver Sky. Trying to coordinate four legs is a touch more difficult than two arms and two legs, after all.

After much grunting and stretching, they cleared the tops of the other trees. Before them, glowing in reds, pinks and purples, were the southern mountains, tall and imposing. Their peaks were shrouded in clouds and the two toys could not see their tops. They stretched off to the west and east so far that the end could not be made out.

Rebecca rubbed her eyes, straining to take in the scene. “Oh my,” she said.