## The Underneath



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There is nothing lonelier than a cat who has been loved, at least for a while, and then abandoned on the side of the road. An abandoned calico cat, about to have kittens, hears the achingly lonely howl of a chained up, abused hound dog deep in the bayou. She dares to find him in the forest and the hound dares to befriend this cat, this feline, this creature he is supposed to hate. They are an unlikely pair, about to become an unlikely family. Ranger urges the cat to hide underneath the porch, to raise Sabine and Puck there because Gar-Face, the man living inside the house, will surely use her or her kittens as alligator bait should he find them. But, they are safe in the underneath...as long as they stay in the underneath. Kittens, however, are notoriously curious creatures. And one kitten's one moment of curiosity sets off a chain of events that is astonishing, remarkable, and enormous in its meaning. In the tradition of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Flannery O'Connor, and Carson McCullers, Kathi Appelt spins a harrowing yet keenly sweet tale about the power of love (and its opposite, hate), the fragility of happiness—and the importance of making good on your promises.

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