

# IvyClan's Destiny

## Part 9

"What eyes, Dapplepaw?" Scourge had asked before Dapplepaw raced off into the forest. "I'll be right back!" she called over her shoulder. "Just stay there!"

Dapplepaw raced through the forest, the damp ground squished under her paws. "Wait!" she cried out after the Tom. She could just barely make out his black pelt in the green of the forest as she raced after him. Dapplepaw knew it was foolish to chase after a stranger, but she felt this was right. It was like she knew the Tom was harmless.

Suddenly the Tom stopped and turned to Dapplepaw. His purple eyes flashed brightly as he laid eyes on her. "Can I help you?" he asked, giving a slight smirk. Dapplepaw panted as she caught up with him. "Um..." she began, but she was lost for words. "You're eyes... they're just... familiar, I guess. I must have thought you were someone else." Dapplepaw lied. The Tom laughed. "Oh really," he purred, amused. "I was pretty sure I was the only cat around with bright purple eyes, but maybe I was wrong."

"I think I've seen you before, in a dream or a... or a message from StarClan." Dapplepaw mumbled, looking away from the Tom. "I wish StarClan would stop setting me up with She's I don't even know." The Tom joked. "I'm Pantherpaw, and you are-?" he mewed, looking Dapplepaw in the eyes. "M-my name's... Dapplepaw, are you a BloodClan apprentice?" asked Dapplepaw, her eyes widening. She might not be the only apprentice after all. Pantherpaw laughed. "No, I'm more of a loner... it really is a long story. My whole family lives out here."

"There are more of you?" asked Dapplepaw incredulously. Pantherpaw nodded. "Yes, my family and I live just beyond this forest." he said. "You should probably be getting back to your mentor, yes? I wouldn't want you to get scolded over me."

"Oh, that's okay." Dapplepaw insisted. "No, you really should go now, Dapplepaw." Pantherpaw argued. He nudged her toward the direction she

came. "Will we ever meet again?" Dapplepaw asked. She wasn't about to let a new friend slip away from her *that* easily. "I'll come and visit someday." Pantherpaw mewed before slipping into the trees.

Dapplepaw raced back to where Scourge stood. Her heart raced as she thought of Pantherpaw; the tom with the purple eyes. Those eyes...

"Dapplepaw!" Scourge exclaimed, racing to her. "Where have you been?" he demanded. "I was only meeting Pantherpaw, he's my new friend." Dapplepaw mewed sheepishly. "Pantherpaw? He's an apprentice now, is he?" Scourge said amusingly, but not really to anyone in particular. He stared into the forest curiously. "And what, exactly, did Pantherpaw have to say?" he asked, now facing Dapplepaw. He flicked his tail in curiosity. "He was just telling me about his family, is all." said Dapplepaw peering into the forest as if she could spot his family greeting him. She longed to race after him again, but she knew that'd be a mistake.

There was just something about that Tom... something that made her long for him, but she'd only just met him. *I'm such a mouse-brain...* Dapplepaw thought. "*No you're not, Dapplepaw. Think of it as 'love at first sight', Sis.*" Flamepaw said to her from StarClan. "Love at first sight?!" Dapplepaw exclaimed aloud. Scourge looked to her curiously. "Come again?" he mewed, tilting his head. "Oh, it's n-nothing." Dapplepaw stammered. She hadn't meant to say it out loud; it just slipped from her mouth.

"Scourge... can you tell me more about Pantherpaw?" Dapplepaw asked as they made their way back to BloodClan camp. As the sun began to set, the forest around them grew colder. "Why do you want to know, Dapplepaw? Do you have a thing for the purple-eyed loner?" Scourge joked, purring. "What? No! I'm just curious, is all." Dapplepaw insisted.

Scourge pondered for a moment before saying, "His family is particularly secretive. I don't actually know much. I've always wondered why the family gave their kin Apprentice and Warrior names. They're strange, that family."

"*They're strange, that family...*" Scourge's words rang through Dapplepaw's head. "Oh..." was the only thing she could manage to say. It was all so peculiar and she wanted to know more. Tomorrow, she'd go and find Pantherpaw, but what would Scourge say? She'd fake it and say she was going hunting. She hadn't done anything like that since the day of her Apprenticeship Ceremony. She didn't

dare; which reminded her that she hadn't ever finished her punishment of cleaning the Elder's Den. Her heart sank. For the first time since she'd left ThunderClan, she felt bad about it.

Dapplepaw realized neither she nor Scourge had said anything for a while and looked up to see him looking at her. "What?" she asked Scourge, pausing to nudge him with her paw. "You're a very strange Apprentice, Dapplepaw. I admire you're curiosity and perseverance." he purred. "Thanks Dad-!" Dapplepaw cut herself off. Had she really almost called Scourge "Dad"? She felt her ears grow hot. "Umm... sorry." she mewed, embarrassed. Scourge smirked as he walked through the camp entrance. "I don't mind." he replied quickly before padding off.

"He doesn't mind..." Dapplepaw echoed to herself before padding to the Fresh Kill Pile. It was surprisingly stocked. *Must be a lot of cats in BloodClan...* she thought as she pulled a sparrow from the pile and padded to the very edge of the camp before she got comfortable on muddy camp floor. She took a large bite from the sparrow and masticated it, careful of the bones.

A large tabby approached Dapplepaw, his eyes narrowed disapprovingly. "So... the rumors are true." snorted the tabby bitterly. Dapplepaw looked up at him, still chewing her Sparrow. "Nice to meet you, too." she replied sarcastically after swallowing. "Another disrespectful tyrant, I see." He growled, turning away.

Dapplepaw immediately looked to find Scourge leaping at the tom, but he was nowhere to be found. She felt a little uneasy being around the other cats without him there to protect her, but she needed to face this alone or she'd have Scourge following her around constantly, and that's the last thing she wanted if she wanted to see Pantherpaw again.

Suddenly, cats began pouring into the camp, but not many. The sun had set and the first few warriors of SilverPelt appeared in the sky. At last, Scourge appeared; clumps mud and dirt clung to his pelt. He padded to the center of the camp and cleared his throat. "Cats of BloodClan," he called. "I have an announcement and I expect you all to listen and respect it!"

There were a few scattered sniggers from around the camp, but everyone else was silent. Scourge shot furious glances to random cats, as if they we're responsible. "We have a new She-cat in BloodClan! She is to be my apprentice and treated with *respect*." Scourge said, snarling the word "respect". The Tabby

that had approached Dapplepaw earlier gave a cough to show he thought that statement was ridiculous. “Ha!” he bellowed. At this, the entire clan burst into hysterical laughter. There must have been at least 18 cats in BloodClan. We’re they all loners?

“Scourge... you don’t expect us to treat the kit-...” the Tabby began. “SHUT UP! SILENCE YOURSELVES AND LISTEN TO ME!” Scourge bellowed. His breathing grew heavy. “IF YOU HAPPEN TO LAY A PAW ON THIS APPRENTICE I’LL KILL YOU WITH A SINGLE CLAW! ARE WE CLEAR?!”

Dapplepaw’s eyes widened; she hadn’t ever seen Scourge this angry, but she hadn’t known him for long. The clan was silent and the only noise to be heard was crickets chirping in the forest. Scourge was kneading his claws in the dirt in anger, his breathing still loud and heavy. Dapplepaw looked to the Tabby, but his face was expressionless. The silence grew awkward and Dapplepaw couldn’t take it. She felt the eyes of the clan shift from Scourge to her.

She cleared her throat and padded over to Scourge, standing next to him. She looked small and scrawny compared to the large tom, but she held her head high. “Hello,” she mewed, her voice cracking at first. “My name is, Dapplepaw... I hope-!” she was cut off by Scourge resting his tail atop her muzzle. “Let them be the first to speak, Dapplepaw.” he hissed quietly so only she could hear. Dapplepaw gave a vague nod to show she understood.

The clan remained silent for a few heartbeats before the large Tabby spoke. “I am DeathTail...” his voice was low and deep. He took a single step forward and bowed his head. “Welcome to BloodClan.” he mewed. DeathTail’s eyes flashed a bright yellow as he gazed upon her. ScarClaw padded to Dapplepaw, “You’ve done well, apprentice.” he mewed. It was obvious he was trying to hide a purr, but it escaped. He quickly hid it by giving a fake cough.

Dapplepaw beamed as Scourge laid a paw upon her head. “I name Dapplepaw an apprentice of BloodClan. I hope you *all* may help in her during her training to become a warrior.” Scourge called. *Wow... my second apprenticeship ceremony!* Dapplepaw thought amusingly. It was a bit different than what she was used to back at ThunderClan, but BloodClan was alright. She knew she’d be happy here.

