

IvyClan's Destiny

Part 1

A small kit blinked in the bright sunlight that filtered through the nursery roof's cracks. Her mother, Lillystream, smiled as her father beamed proudly from the nursery entrance. "She's beautiful..." he murmured. The sunlight dappled her fur, making it shine brilliantly. "What will we call her?" Firestorm asked. The kit gave a small yawn and snuggled closer to her brother Flamekit.. "I like... Dapplekit..." Lillystream mewed quietly. Firestorm nodded and turned to leave. "I like that too..." he added, before bounding across the camp to find fresh kill for his mate. "Dapplekit..." Lillystream echoed.

6 moons later...

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather here beneath the High Rock for a clan meeting!" Sandstar's voice rang throughout ThunderClan's camp. Slowly, the clan cats made their way to the rock, in which their leader stood proudly. Firestorm looked around the find his kit- who would become an apprentice. Lillystream sat next to him, pressing her fur against his. She purred. "Where's Dapplekit?" She asked. Firestorm gulped nervously. "I... I... she must be around here somewhere..." he mewed. Lillystream turned to him furiously. "You don't know where our kit is?!" She demanded. "She was- But- I-..." Firestorm was lost for words. "No... I thought she was beside me. I turned to talk to Sandstar... and she was gone! I thought she had gone to you!" He mewed defensively. "Well go *find* her!" Lillystream snarled.

Firestorm leaped to his paws, racing to the nursery. "Dapplekit?" He hissed. A tabby queen raised her head sleepily. "Not in here..." she yawned, before dropping her head. "Thank you..." Firestorm replied, racing to the Apprentices Den. "Dapplekit?" He called. There was no reply.

"Flamekit and Dapplekit, would you please join me on the High Rock?" Sandstar called. Flamekit excitedly bounded atop the High Rock. "It is a proud day for-...." She was cut off by a yowl. "WAAIIIT!" Sandstar looked around for the source of the sound, only to find Flamekit looking at her anxiously. "Wait..." he repeated. Sandstar looked to him worriedly. "What could be the matter?" She asked. "It's Dapplekit... she isn't here yet. We can't start without her..." Flamekit panted.

Lillystream's eyes widened as Sandstar made her way towards her. "Lillystream... where is your kit?" She asked. Lillystream looked around uncomfortably. "She... is with her father... yes. They... should be here any minute." She mewed awkwardly.

Dapplekit nudged her way through the bramble of the camp's entrance. If she could only sneak her way to the nursery, her apprentice ceremony would be starting any moment. To her horror, she found that the meeting had begun, and every head of camp was turned towards her. She kept her nervousness low, and padded towards the High Rock. She gave a weary glance at her mother, who glared back at her. *I am so dead!* Dapplekit thought.

Her father burst through the crowd of cats towards Dapplekit. His face was angry, but his eyes looked relieved. "Get up there... we'll talk later..." he growled. Dapplekit gulped and bounded onto the High Rock, Sandstar followed her. "Thank Starclan... she was starting without you!" Flamekit whispered. Dapplekit purred her thanks and turned to face the crowd. Murmuring washed over the camp. "*She isn't ready to be an apprentice yet!*" "*Sandstar is out of her mind to let her get away with his!*" "*It's that rotten Firestorm! He turned that kit into a disloyal...*" Dapplekit refrained from listening anymore. Flamekit looked at her sympathetically.

"This is a proud day for Thunderclan. By naming apprentices, we show that Thunderclan will survive and remain strong. Flamekit and Dapplekit, from now on until you receive your warrior names, will be known as Flamepaw and Dapplepaw." Sandstar called across the camp. Flamepaw beamed proudly, but Dapplepaw only looked at her paws. She knew she'd be in trouble for sneaking out of camp.

"Sunpelt, you are ready for an apprentice. You will be Flamepaw's mentor. I know you will pass on your wisdom and great battle skills to Flamepaw, and teach him the skills that will make him a brave warrior of Thunderclan." Sandstar mewed, taking a step back as Flamepaw raced to his mentor and touched noses with her. His eyes sparkled as their noses touched, with the knowledge that Sunpelt would make a wonderful mentor. "Firestorm, you are also ready for an apprentice. You will be your kit, Dapplepaw's, mentor. I *know* you will pass on your loyalty and *obedience* to Dapplepaw, and teach her the skills that will make her a brave warrior of Thunderclan."

With a sudden jolt of her gut, Dapplepaw made her way towards her father. Touching noses with him, she saw that Firestorm looked proud and less angry, but she knew that didn't have any effect on the punishment she'd be getting later. "FLAMEPAW!FLAMEPAW! FLAMEPAW!" The clan chanted, but nobody chanted Dapplepaw's name. She prepared to race off, when Sandstar called her name. "Dapplepaw... I'd like to see you in my den... *now*." She mewed sternly. "Yes, Sandstar..." Dapplepaw mewed in reply, entering the den at the base of the High Rock.

The den was dark and damp. Dapplepaw sat down on the sandy floor, wrapping her tail around her body for warmth.

It seemed like ages before Sandstar entered the den, followed by her father. Sandstar padded to the back of the den, while her father sat next to Dapplepaw. Sandstar stood. "Dapplepaw... I am *very* disappointed in you." Sandstar began. Dapplepaw lowered her head in shame. "As am I," Firestorm added. "You snuck out of camp and were late for your apprenticeship ceremony. What influenced you to do so?" Sandstar asked, her tone becoming less stern. "I was just curious is all..." Dapplepaw mewed sadly. "*Curiosity killed the cat*." Firestorm hissed. Dapplepaw flinched and inched farther from her father. "Dapplepaw... it's *okay* to be curious. Even *I* am curious at times. But you cannot let it get in the way of your duties. So, I must punish you."

Dapplepaw's heart sank. Those were the words she was looking for. "Fine, go ahead! Banish me! Sentence me to *exile*!" She spat. Sandstar let out a soft chuckle. "I'm not going to banish you, Dapplepaw. Don't be ridiculous! But, you are going to receive the worst apprentice punishment off all time!" Dapplepaw's eyes widened and her legs shook. Sandstar looked simply amused. "You," she began dramatically. "must clean out the elders den, alone, for an entire moon!"

Dapplepaw chuckled. "Is that the best you got?" she snarled playfully. "No, it's the worst." Sandstar replied, her eyes widening. "Trust me, I know from experience. I was just like you as an apprentice, yes. I was very curious and I wandered too far from my mentor, Pinetail. I became dreadfully lost and it took them all Sun-Down to find me. My mentor and leader were so angry with me, they gave me the same punishment." She retold the memory as she gazed thoughtfully beyond Dapplepaw and Firestorm. Firestorm grunted. "Ha, I've had worse..."

Dapplepaw looked to her father in surprise, as Sandstar chuckled. "Oh yes, and what is that?" asked Sandstar. "Picking the ticks off the elders using mouse bile..." Firestorm groaned, obviously pained by the memory. Dapplepaw gave a loud "merow" of laughter and Sandstar rolled her bright green eyes in amusement.

Dapplepaw made her way to the Apprentices Den, dragging her tail in the dirt. Lillystream rushed to her angrily. "Dapplepaw," she snarled. "You are in so much-..." She was cut off by Sandstar's soothing voice. "Leave her be, Lillystream. She's been punished enough." She emerged from the Leader's Den. "You can sleep in the Warrior's Den tonight, if you feel comfortable doing so Lillystream."

The bright moonlight casted long shadows behind the arriving ShadowClan cats. The attack would take place at exactly Moon-High; the time the foolish ThunderClan cats would least expect it. Deathfang could already see that the ThunderClan guard was beginning to look tired.

Dapplepaw lay still in her nest of freshly picked grass. A piece of stray grass tickled her snout. She sneezed and brushed it away with her tail. She wasn't tired, even though it was almost Moon-High. The thought of beginning training the next morning was too much, so she tried thinking about her punishment. It still wasn't enough to bring down the excitement that continually built up inside her. Suddenly, a soft rustling could be heard coming from behind the Apprentices Den, followed by a loud "ATTACK!!!"

Dapplepaw leaped to her paws as her bedding stuck to her hind legs. Shaking off the moist grass, she raced out of the Apprentices Den. She spotted Flamepaw huddling close to another apprentice she, Dawnpaw. Dapplepaw raced to them. "What's going on?" She asked. Dawnpaw gave a sharp snarl. "Get back to your nest, kit. You aren't ready for this kind of battle." She hissed. Dapplepaw flinched at these words and took a step towards the apprentice. "And who are *you* to tell me so?"

Dawnpaw simply chuckled. "Kit, I'm almost 13 moons old. You're hardly 6. It's your first night as an apprentice, and it's my *last* night as one. So, therefore, I'm practically a warrior, and you'll do as I say." She hissed, flicking her tail impatiently.

There was a loud yowl, and Dapplepaw was attacked from behind. A searing pain washed over her as she was tossed backwards. She hissed and

turned to face her attacker. Another apprentice was ready to leap at her, claws unsheathed. Before the apprentice could move, Dapplepaw leaped at her, biting her neck. Her attacker yowled in pain, and rolled Dapplepaw onto her back. The apprentice launched himself onto her, clawing her belly. "What's wrong kit? Don't know how to fight?" He sneered. Dapplepaw laughed. "What is it do you think I am doing if I don't know how to fight?" She snarled, pushing the tom off her. Dapplepaw launched herself onto the tom and pinned him to the ground, only to be knocked off him by another ShadowClan warrior. She gave a gasp as the wind was knocked out of her. The warrior grabbed her by the neck fur and swung her against a tree. Pain seared in her back. Dapplepaw grunted as she tried to get to her feet.

"How *dare* you hurt a newly apprenticed kit?!" She heard her father snarl. Dapplepaw looked up to see her father launch himself onto the ShadowClan warrior, and the apprentice was nowhere to be seen.

"*ShadowClan retreat!!!*" The ShadowClan leader yowled as the warrior fled from Firestorm's unsheathed claws.

"And *stay out!*" Dapplepaw spat at the fleeing warrior who stopped and turned to look at her. "This isn't the end, apprentice. You'll see." He hissed before racing out of the ThunderClan camp.

The medicine cat raced around camp, tending to injured warriors and apprentices. Dapplepaw raced to Firestorm. "Firestorm! Are you okay? Where's mom?" She cried. Her father smiled at her proudly. "Not a day of training... and you've already defeated a ShadowClan apprentice." He purred. Dapplepaw's eyes shone with pride. "Yeah... I did, didn't I?"

Dapplepaw yawned and curled back up in her nest of grass. Burying her nose in her tail, she drifted to sleep.

"Dapplepaw.... Dapplepaw wake up." He father nudge her awake. "It's time for training, and it's already Sun-High." He mewed. Dapplepaw yawned and raised her head in surprise. She had already wasted a full morning of training. "What? We wasted good time!" She yelped, leaping to her feet. "Sandstar and I decided to let the apprentices sleep in. You had a rough night." Firestorm explained, licking her ear. "I told Sandstar what you did last night. She's very proud of you." Dapplepaw purred. "Really?" She asked. Her Father nodded. "Yes. Now, before we get to training.... You must bring the Elders fresh bedding." He mewed with a

slight smirk. Dapplepaw flicked her tail and raced out of the Apprentices Den.

Flamepaw sat with Dawnpaw as they ate their fresh kill. Dapplepaw padded to Flamepaw. "Aah, the kit finally awakens..." Dawnpaw snarled. "Good morning, Dapplepaw." He mewed happily chewing a vole. "Morning," she replied curtly, avoiding Dawnpaw. As Dapplepaw made her way across the camp to the Elders Den, Flamepaw caught up with her. "Where are you headed to?" He asked. "The Elders Den... I am being punished. I have to clean the Elders Den and bring them fresh bedding." Dapplepaw explained, flicking her tail in irritation. Riverpaw gave her a sympathetic glance. "Hey... Dawnpaw showed me the best places to get bedding... I made your nest for you. I could show you... if- if you wanted..." he murmured. Dapplepaw looked at in surprise. "R-really? You would do that for me?" She asked happily. Flamepaw nodded. "Sure, let me just go tell Sunpelt. Meet me by the camp entrance." He mewed, racing off to find his mentor.

Dapplepaw waited by the camp entrance for Flamepaw. She dug her claws into the dirt as hunger clawed at her stomach. She averted her eyes away from the Fresh Kill Pile.

At last, Flamepaw made his way to Dapplepaw. "Sorry it took me so long. Sunpelt was giving me a lecture again." He grumbled, looking at the ground. "What about?" Dapplepaw asked, looking amused. Flamepaw shook his head in embarrassment. "We should just go..." he mumbled sadly and began to walk out the entrance. "Flamepaw, wait! You can tell me! Honest!" Dapplepaw called to him. Flamepaw paused and spun around in his tracks. "She was warning me... warning me about *you!*" He snapped. Dapplepaw's heart sank. "Oh... she thinks I'm some disobedient kit, too..." Dapplepaw murmured, padding after Flamepaw. Flamepaw hissed angrily. "I don't care what they say, Dapplepaw. I will never think differently of you. You will *always* be my best friend and sister!"

Dapplepaw and Flamepaw made their way past the Training Hollow and towards Two Leg Place. Dapplepaw's stomach growled loudly, and Flamepaw giggled. "Maybe we should stop by the Sunning Rocks for some hunting." He mewed. Dapplepaw looked at him in surprise and let out a small "*mew*". "You know how to hunt?!" She exclaimed, her eyes wide. Flamepaw shrugged. "Only a few techniques.... I could teach you." He mewed. Dapplepaw purred. "That would be great!" She mewed.

The heat from the early Leaf-Fall sun beat on Dapplepaw's back. There

were no shady trees at the Sunning Rocks. "Alright, crouch low like this... and keep quiet. I can smell prey." Flamepaw whispered. Dapplepaw crouched low, her belly fur touching the grassy floor of the forest. Flamepaw flicked his tail towards a small crack between two of the rocks. "There... there are mice in there." He whispered. As he said so, a small mouse inched its way out of the crack and into the forest, clearly not aware it was about to be hunted. Flamepaw flicked his tail, signaling for his sister to watch him. Dapplepaw watches him determinedly as Flamepaw waited as his prey grew nearer. At last, he pounced on the mouse, biting its neck. It wriggled for a heartbeat or two, and then lay limp. Flamepaw dropped the mouse at Dapplepaw's paws. "Why don't you give it a try?" He asked, making room for Dapplepaw in front of the rock. "Um... okay." Dapplepaw mewed nervously. She was sure Firestorm had wanted to teach her to hunt, but she was really hungry. On the other hand, he'd be surprised when Dapplepaw came back to camp with prey in her jaws. She crouched low to the ground, and opened her mouth to scent prey. She determinedly locked her eyes on the crack in the rock, and waited for the next unlucky mouse to come through.

After a nice meal, Dapplepaw and Flamepaw trudged up the hill towards Two Leg Place, where Dapplepaw needed to pick fresh bedding for the Elders.

"Dapplepaw, you have to pick the grass close to the roots, like this." Flamepaw mewed through a mouthful of grass. Dapplepaw nodded and clamped her teeth into a grass root and pulled it out of the ground successfully. Her eyes shown with pride as she spit it out into the pile Flamepaw had started. They'd have to get enough for all 5 of the Elder's nests.

"We'll have to take back the piles in loads, Flamepaw." Dapplepaw grumbled. This was a lot more work than she had imagined. "I guess you're right..." Flamepaw replied, licking his paw. "Do you think this will be enough?" asked Dapplepaw, flicking her tail towards the 3 piles of grass they had collected together. Flamepaw nodded, dropping his last pieces of grass onto the pile.

Dapplepaw sighed and looked back at the newly bedded nests she had made, with Flamepaw's guidance of course. She beamed proudly. This was way more work than she had imagined, but she could manage for the rest of the moon.

"Dapplepaw, where have you been all day?" Firestorm asked, padding up to her. "I thought we were going to do some training." He added. "I was..."

gathering bedding, cleaning the Elders Den, and hunting.” She mewed simply. It had been a long day, and she needed a rest. “Hunting?” He asked, cocking his head to the side. “Yes, Flamepaw taught me a few techniques he had learned earlier today. I caught three mice!” mewed Dapplepaw, her eyes shining brilliantly. “First your tearing apart ShadowClan apprentices without training... now you’re hunting?” her father mewed with pain edging in his surprised tone. “Well... yes. But it was only a few techniques! There is still so much more to learn, Firestorm! I want to know *everything* about being a warrior. I want to make Thunderclan proud!”

Firestorm shook his head. “Sandstar warned me of such incredible occurrences with you.” He murmured. Dapplepaw’s eyes widened. “Incredible occurrences?” She asked. Firestorm’s eyes looked saddened. “Nothing... you heard me say nothing. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?” He snarled. Dapplepaw flinched. “Yes s-sir.” she whimpered. Firestorm sighed and padded to the Warriors Den. “*Strange occurrences*”? I must ask Sandstar what he means...

Dapplepaw sat outside the Leader’s Den nervously. “Dapplepaw...? Is that you? Come in.” Sandstar called. Dapplepaw got to her feet and walked inside the dark den. “Sandstar... I must speak with you.” She mewed. “Is something the matter, Dapplepaw? Hmm... are you trying to get out of your punishment? It isn’t going to happen.” Sandstar laughed. Dapplepaw shook her head. “N-no... it’s about something my father had said. You see... when I told him I went hunting and caught three mice...” “You caught three mice? Without any training?” Sandstar asked her eyes wide. “Yes... yes you must be the one. Fighting and hunting without a single day of training. You are incredible. Sneaking out of camp as a kit and finding your way back without being seen. You must be the chosen one...” Sandstar spoke in a hushed without looking at Dapplepaw and in a voice, so she knew that her leader wasn’t exactly speaking to her directly. “He mentioned something about “Incredible occurrences”. What does that mean, do you think?” asked Dapplepaw, cutting Sandstar off her rambling. “Dapplepaw, you are the chosen one. We have gotten a message from StarClan regarding a chosen apprentice. A stealthy, incredible apprentice who’s pelt shines like dappled light from the sun. You, Dapplepaw, are that apprentice.”

Dapplepaw felt dizzy. This couldn’t be true. Flamepaw had taught her those techniques. It was nothing special. When fighting the ShadowClan apprentice, she had only copied his moves. Sandstar had it all wrong. She *couldn’t* be the chosen apprentice.