

IvyClan's Destiny

Part 5

Dapplepaw gingerly touched her paw to the ThunderPath and took a small step forward. "Dapplepaw, don't be mouse-brained! We don't have time to hesitate! You'll be crow-food by the time you take your third step! Let's go!" Scourge called from the other side of the ThunderPath.

Dapplepaw shook her head vigorously and stepped back towards the forest. She couldn't do it. She'd get hit by one of the monsters for sure. "Dapplepaw, if you don't cross now, I'll have to leave you here!" Scourge called, already turning away. Dapplepaw desperately closed her eyes and raced across the ThunderPath.

The ThunderPath was cool and hard under her paws. She kept her eyes closed until she felt the familiar feel of grass. "Well done, Dapplepaw!" Scourge congratulated her. "Thanks..." she replied, panting. She had never run so fast in her life!

So, Scourge and Dapplepaw set off, again, towards BloodClan. "It's not much longer, now." Scourge assured her. She nodded in reply. Excitement washed over her. She'd be in a new place with new cats. Maybe she'd make a friend. "*A friend and soul mate are in your future.*" said Flamepaw's distant voice. *So it isn't Scourge who was to be my soul mate, thank StarClan!* Dapplepaw thought in relief.

Suddenly, Dapplepaw fell, and everything grew black. Images flashed in her mind. A large black tom slashing his claws at another tom, bright purple eyes in the darkness, dead kits, blood... so much blood, she saw herself laying by a tree in pain, the black tom with bright purple eyes creeping up on her. Then suddenly, it changed. She saw herself and the black tom laughing, kits curled around them. She saw the black tom padding away from her older self, his head and tail drooping. She saw Scourge and her father fighting, Firestorm digging his claws into Scourge's neck. She also saw the black tom with her father, they seemed to be arguing. She saw her mother, dead, in the middle of the ThunderPath. She

saw a She kill a kit... the kit was her. She was going to die, and she knew it.

But that didn't explain the black tom and her older self...

Dapplepaw opened her eyes and let out a wail of pain. "S-Scourge!" She cried. She saw that Scourge was sitting by her side, desperately licking her head. "Dapplepaw, are you alright?!" He exclaimed. "Scourge... don't let me die. Please..." she sobbed. Scourge let out a mew of surprise. "Of course I won't, Dapplepaw... I won't let you die." He whispered. "Are you hurt? What happened?" Scourge asked, raising his voice in alarm. "I... I'm not sure. I think I've just received a message from StarClan." She mewed feebly. *Or Flamepaw...* she wanted to add.

If it was only a message, then why did she feel so weak? She could hardly raise her head. Scourge had insisted she try and rest as he carried her to a comfortable spot under a tree, but she was too scared to close her eyes. She thought she might witness herself being killed again.

Scourge came back from hunting with a rabbit and squirrel. He laid the squirrel in front of Dapplepaw. "Eat up," he ordered. "You'll need all your strength for the trip back." He mewed. "The trip *back*?!" Dapplepaw mewed in surprise. "Yes, I'm taking you back to ThunderClan..." Scourge mewed sadly. "I'm not going back... I'm staying with you, Scourge!" Dapplepaw insisted. "No, Dapplepaw, stop! I can't have you getting hurt like that again!" Scourge hissed.

Dapplepaw couldn't believe it. If Scourge took her back to ThunderClan... what would be of her destiny? Would she ever meet her soul mate? Or the black tom? "*Make sure to let the Panther run free, Dapplepaw...*" said Flamepaw. Even though that made absolutely no sense, Dapplepaw was so happy to hear her brother's voice again. Let the Panther run free... what could that mean?

As the sun sank, Scourge continued to go with his plan of taking Dapplepaw back to ThunderClan, despite her pleading. "I can't go back! They won't take me!" She insisted. Scourge only shook his head. "You'll be safer back in the forest than here..." he mewed. "Get some sleep..." he ordered, but Dapplepaw refused. She could be obedient when she wanted to, but on the other hand, she could be completely stubborn. She didn't want to go back... mainly because the place she saw the she-cat kill her was by the ThunderPath... and what if she saw that her mother lay dead when she got there? She wouldn't be able to face that.

Should she tell Scourge about what she saw? It probably wasn't a great idea. "Are there any... black toms in BloodClan?" Dapplepaw asked as Scourge lay by her side. "Sure, plenty of them." He muttered. "Okay... any with bright purple eyes?" asked Dapplepaw. Scourge snorted, and Dapplepaw took that as a no. "Where have you seen a tom with purple eyes?" he chuckled. "A... message from StarClan... what's the tom's name?" asked Dapplepaw. She was so sure Scourge knew who she was talking about, but he was keeping it a secret. "I'm telling you Dapplepaw, you're mouse-brained! It's impossible to have purple eyes. Now go to sleep." He hissed.

Dapplepaw knew he was lying, and she was determined to make him tell her who the tom is. She laid her head on her paws and closed her eyes. Maybe she'd have better luck tomorrow. "Goodnight, Scourge..." she whispered. "Yeah, 'Night." he muttered back.

As she closed her eyes, she heard her name being called by a familiar voice, but none she could recognize. The voice seemed to sing her name until she fell asleep. It was soothing and relaxed her.

When she woke up, she saw she wasn't under the tree with Scourge anymore. She was in an unfamiliar camp. The black tom lay outside a den. "Dapplepaw..." he mewed, smiling. He got to his feet and padded over to her, licking her ear. The tom looked so familiar, and her heart raced as he approached her. She was happy to see him, but she didn't know why. "Pantherheart..." she heard herself say. "You're home!"

When she awoken for real, Scourge wasn't by her side, instead he stood over her looking confused. "Who's home?" he asked, then suddenly burst into laughter. "You talk in your sleep!" he laughed. Dapplepaw's eyes widened. "What else did I say?!" She demanded, feeling her ears grow hot. "Oh, nothing much, except the fact when you talk about how much you love me." Scourge sighed, licking his paw and wiping it across his ear. "Are you serious?!" Dapplepaw exclaimed, burying her face in her paws. "No, I'm only kidding." Scourge chuckled. "Don't worry, I know you do anyway." he added quickly. "What?!" She demanded. "I do not!" she hissed swiping her paw at Scourge. "Do, too!" Scourge laughed, dodging her paw and leaping to his paws.

"You're more of a father-!" Dapplepaw snapped before she could stop herself. "I'm more like a what?" Scourge asked, his eyes widening. "Nothing..."

Dapplepaw murmured. "What's that? You want me to be your step-father, Dapplepaw? I'd be happy to!" he teased.

"You need some fatherly guidance..." Flamepaw insisted. *Not you, too!*
Dapplepaw groaned in her head.