

Prologue

“Just hurry up,” Vulturewing snarled. “StarClan is waiting.” Pinepaw followed after his mentor, heading for the Moonstone. As they walked through Mothermouth, Sheeptuft, WindClan’s medicine cat, took the lead in front of Vulturewing and Pinepaw, gesturing his apprentice, Lunarpaw, forward. Vulturewing hissed at the medicine cat, but didn’t attack him. Pinepaw saw the glint of his claws as they slid out of his paws. The apprentice brushed his tail over his shoulder and Vulturewing looked at him in a way that he was about to claw his ear off.

Once they reached the Moonstone and its glow in the moonlight, Sheeptuft stepped forward. “Today, I’m making Lunarpaw into a full medicine cat.” Lunarpaw looked as shocked as everyone. Tanglepatch’s eyes stretched wide. “He’s barely had training!” he blurted. Sheeptuft glared at him as Lunarpaw stepped forward. “I, Sheeptuft, medicine cat of WindClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down on this apprentice. She has trained hard to understand the ways of a medicine cat, and with your help she will serve her Clan for many moons.” Lunarpaw’s eyes glowed with pride. “Lunarpaw, do you promise to uphold the ways of a medicine cat, to stand apart from rivalry between Clan and Clan and to protect all cats equally, even at the cost of your life?”

Lunarpaw’s response was proud. “I do.”

“Then by the powers of StarClan I give you your true name as a medicine cat. Lunarpaw, from this moment you will be known as Lunarheart. StarClan honors your kindness, and we welcome you as a full medicine cat of WindClan.”

“Lunarheart!”

“Lunarheart!”

“Lunarheart!”

The medicine cats chanted her new name. Vulturewing didn’t join in, and Pinepaw kicked his flank hard with his back leg. Vulturewing winced and returned the favor. Pinepaw staggered at his strength.

“Now we speak with StarClan,” Dolphintail of RiverClan announced. The medicine cats sat down around the Moonstone and touched noses to the cold stone. Despite the fact Pinepaw had been going there since his apprenticeship, he still shivered at the touch.

The ThunderClan medicine cat apprentice woke in StarClan’s hunting grounds. Gorgewater, the old medicine cat, who was mysteriously found dead by the Thunderpath, was there waiting for him. Pinepaw dipped his head abruptly.

“G-Gorgewater,” he stuttered, “i-it’s an honor.” The old medicine cat nodded at the young apprentice.

“Pinepaw,” he whispered, “there is a prophecy.” Pinepaw tilted his head, asking him to continue. “‘A cat of magic will save all from someone of power,’” Gorgewater whispered.

“A cat of magic?” Pinepaw questioned. “Cats don’t have magic.”

“Some do,” Gorgewater murmured, then started to vanish.

“No!” Pinepaw exclaimed. “Please explain! I don’t understand!”

“You will someday.”

“Pinepaw! Pinepaw!” Vulturewing was harshly nudging him awake. “We’re going back to camp.”

Once they arrived, all the ThunderClan cats were crowded around a bloody body as the deputy, Coldfang, stood on the HighRock, looking unfazed at the dead body.

“Who-Who died?” Vulturewing actually sounded concerned. Twigtail, his mother, looked back, tears falling through her fur.

“Moonstar,” she choked. Pinepaw ran forward to grieve for the dead leader.

“No!” His voice broke. He looked at Twigtail. “Why? Why did he have to die?” Twigtail didn’t respond. She just dipped her head in grief.

Moonstar’s daughter, Yewleaf, stepped forward and announced to the crowd, “We must have vigil

for my father.” Her voice cracked on the last word. Coldfang rolled his eyes.

“Vulturewing, you’re coming with me so that I can receive my 9 lives.” Vulturewing dipped his head respectfully and walked back out of camp. *I have the feeling more is behind Moonstar’s death,* Pinepaw thought. *It might be related to the prophecy...*