

The background of the cover features a close-up of four warrior cat paws. From left to right, the paws are colored red, orange, blue, and brown. Each paw has a green eye visible. The paws are positioned as if they are about to pounce. The background is a dark, starry night sky with a hint of a forest silhouette.

ERIN HUNTER

ILLUSTRATED BY OWEN RICHARDSON

THE #1 NATIONAL BESTSELLING SERIES

WARRIORS

A row of six small, stylized cat head icons representing the different clans. From left to right, they are: a blue cat with a white 'M' (Moon), a blue cat with a white wave (Water), an orange cat with a white lightning bolt (Thunder), a white cat with a black spiral (Wind), a pink cat with a white star (Star), and a green cat with a white leaf (Leaf).

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

Updated and Expanded with All-New Art

The background of the cover features a close-up of the faces and eyes of several warrior cats. The cats' fur is depicted in vibrant colors: a bright red cat with a glowing yellow-green eye, a blue cat with a blue eye, and a brown cat with a yellow eye. They are set against a dark, starry night sky with silhouettes of trees in the background.

ERIN HUNTER
ILLUSTRATED BY OWEN RICHARDSON

THE #1 NATIONAL BESTSELLING SERIES

WARRIORS

A row of six small, stylized icons representing the six warrior cat clans. From left to right, they are: a blue cat face (Sky), a blue cat face (Water), an orange cat face (Thunder), a white cat face (Wind), a pink cat face (Moon), and a green cat face (Shadow).

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

Updated and Expanded with All-New Art

WARRIORS

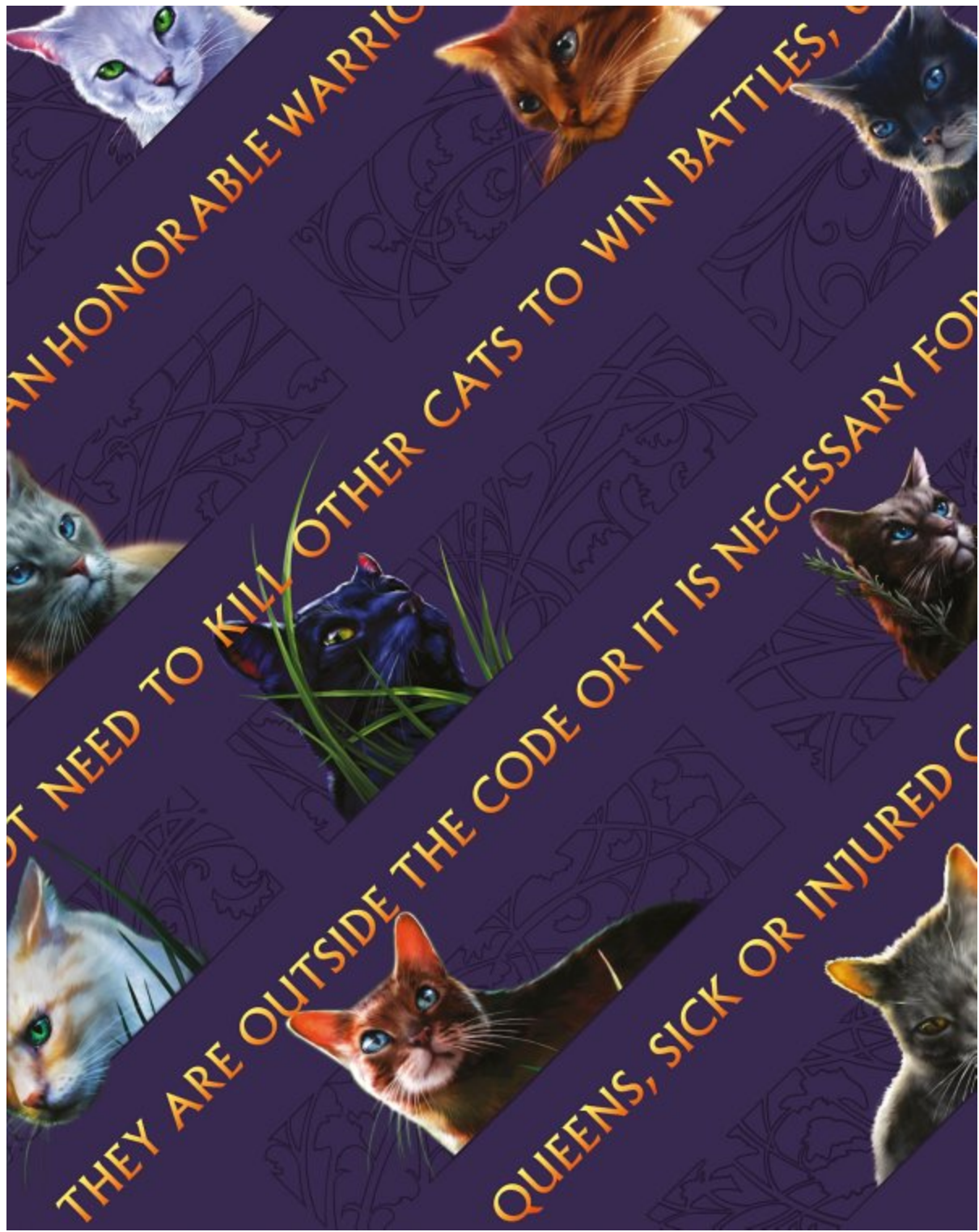


THE ULTIMATE GUIDE
UPDATED AND EXPANDED EDITION

ERIN HUNTER
ILLUSTRATED BY OWEN RICHARDSON

HARPER

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers





Dedication

Dedicated to the following Clanmates who have proven themselves
to be the ULTIMATE Warriors Fans!



Cameron Dresdner
Kelly Freer
Dailey Jackson
Ellie Lang-Ree
Cassidy Stoler
Danielle Truxhall
Audra Young

And to the winners of the Hidden Prophecy short story competition



Sarah Livingston
Neve Sugars-Keen



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The New Warrior Code

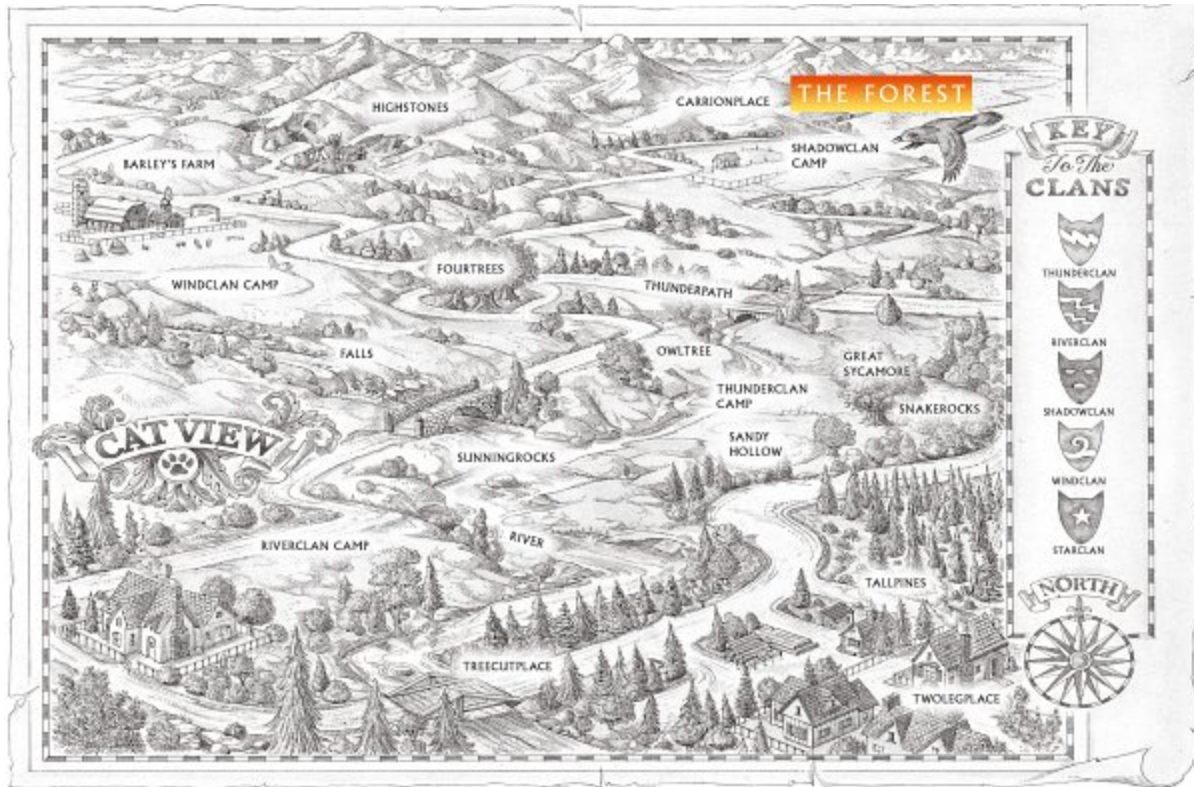
Firestar and Graystripe: The View from StarClan

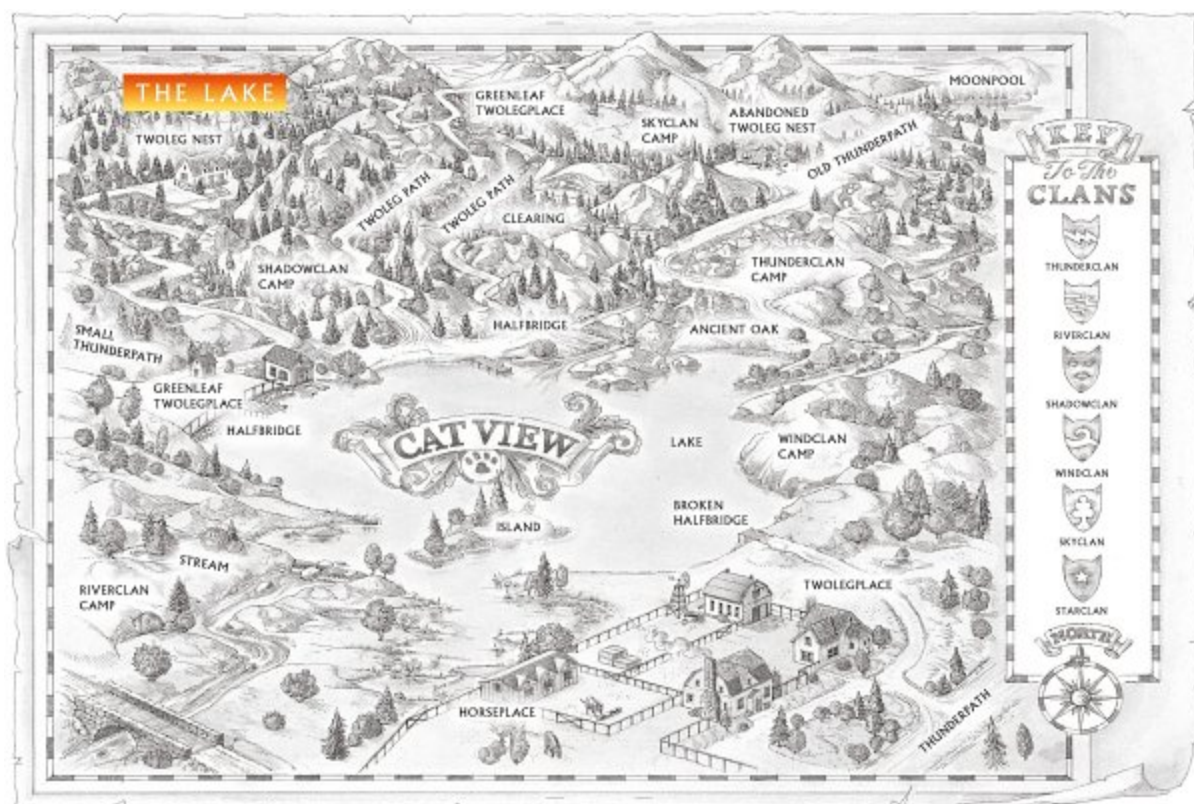
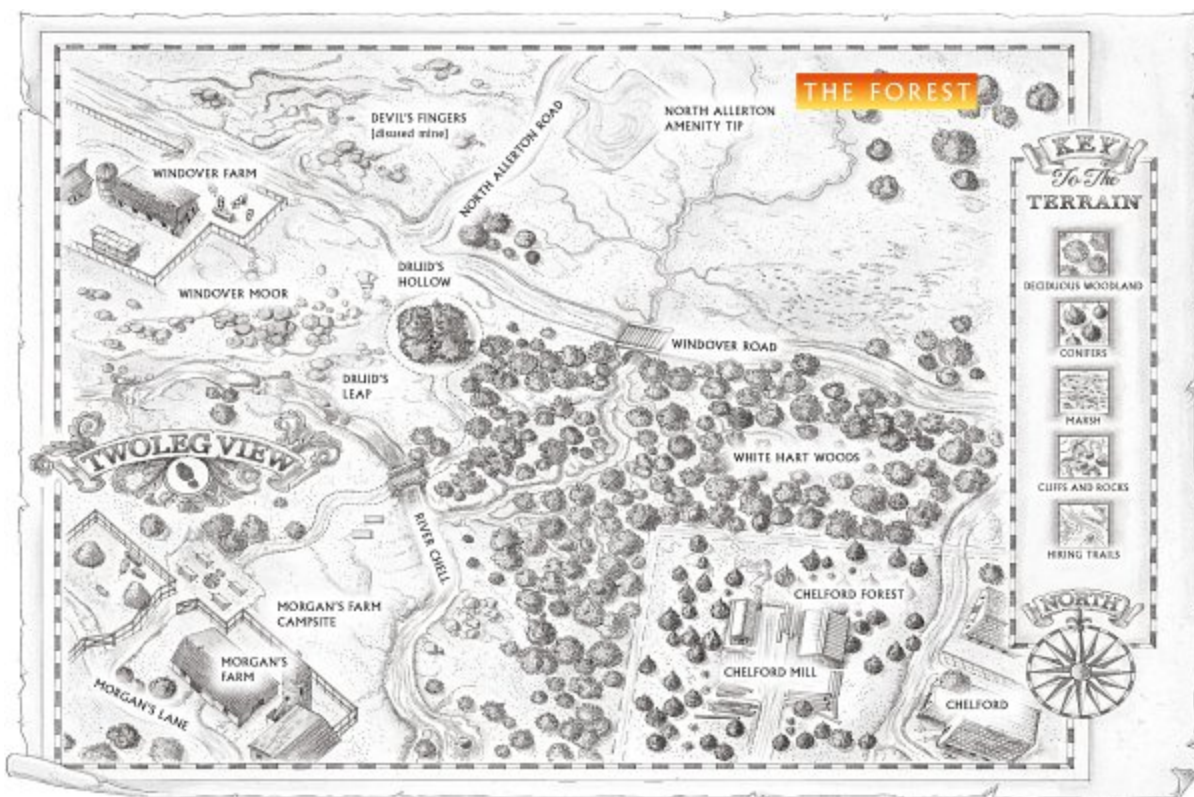
About the Author

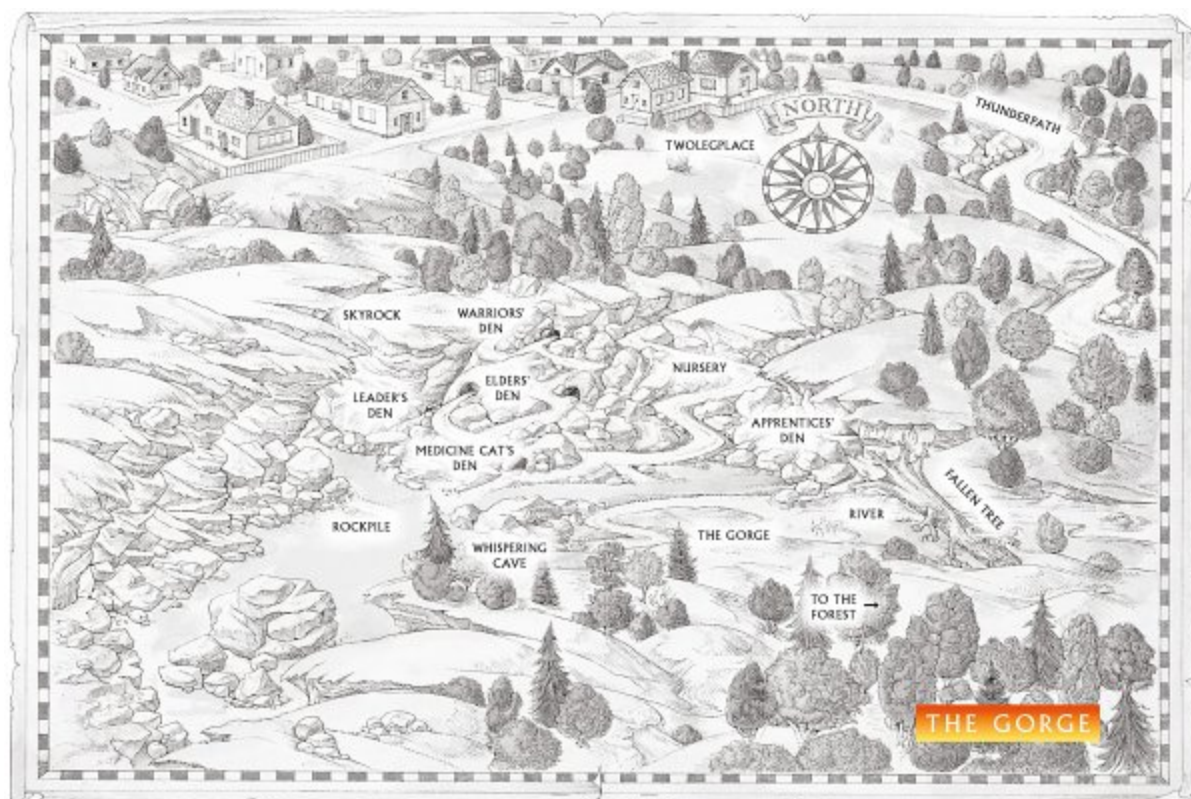
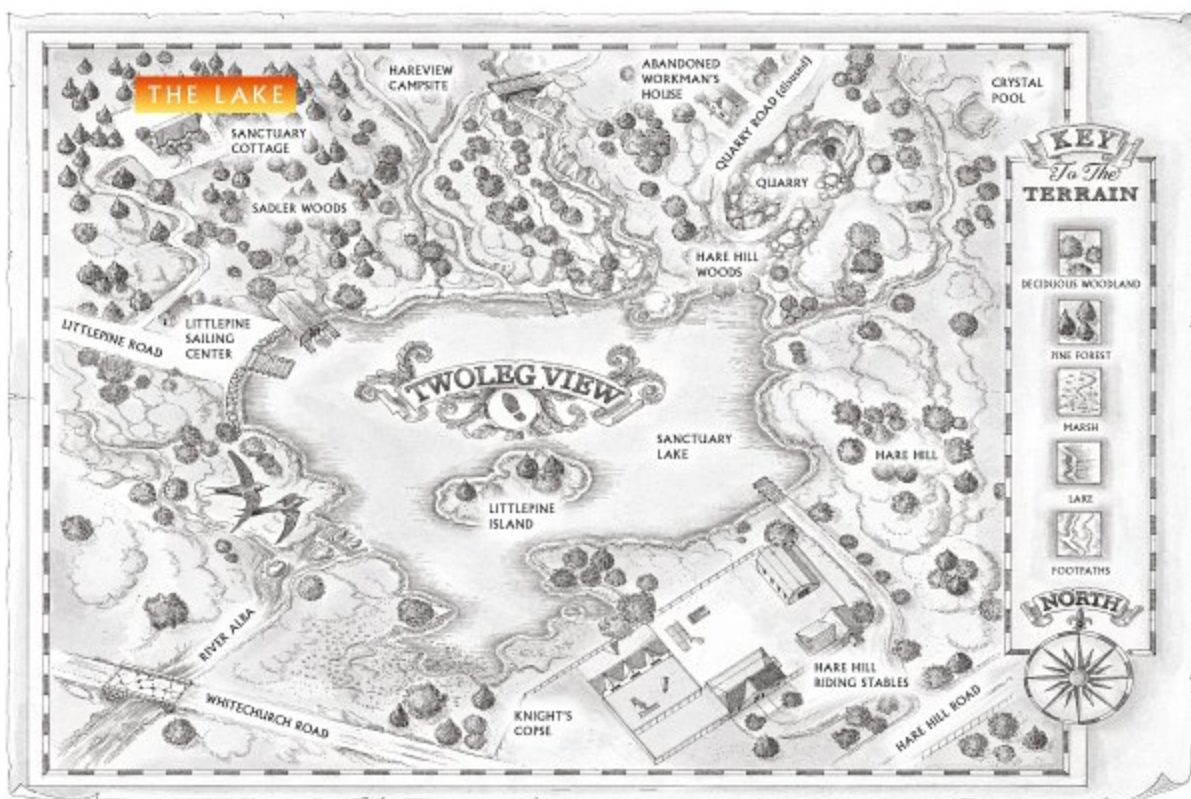
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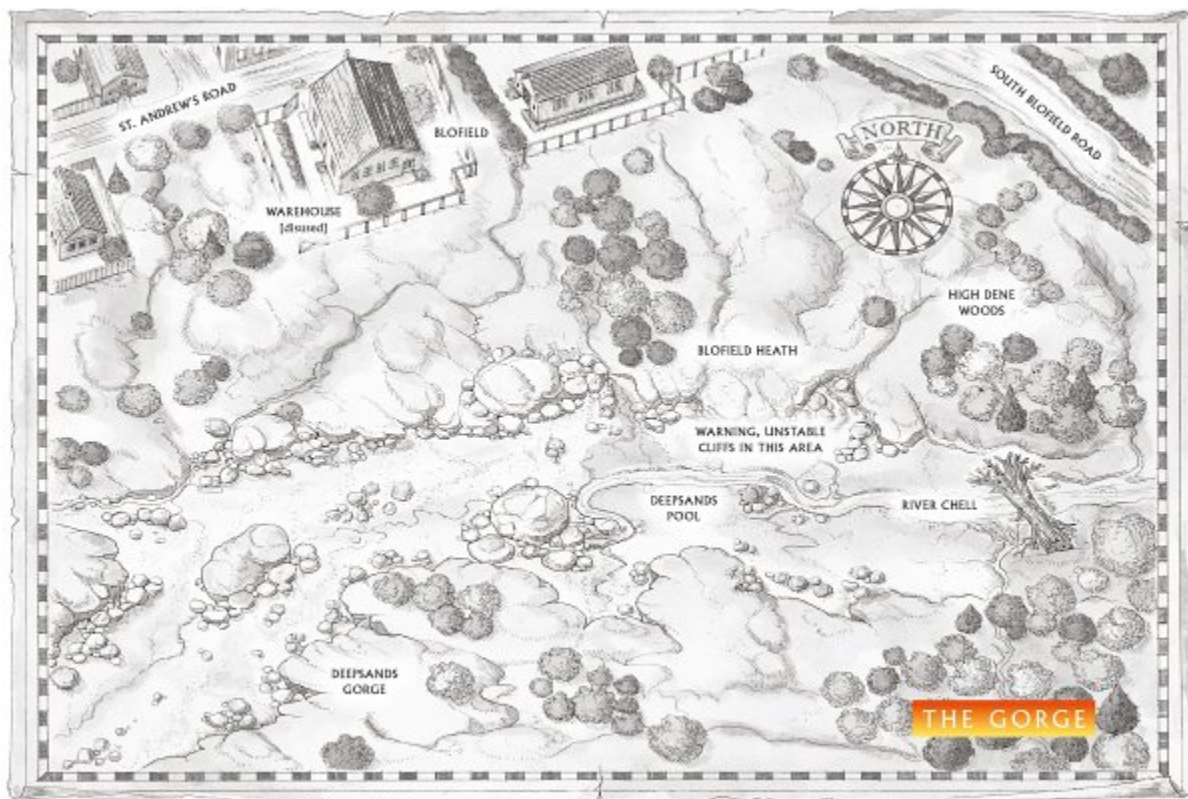
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Maps











Introduction

THERE WERE FOUR Clans that lived in a forest. Each Clan defended a territory that best suited its hunting skills: Fleet-footed rabbit chasers lived on the moor below broad open skies; glossy-furred cats who were happy to get their paws wet in search of fish settled beside the river; stalkers of mice and squirrels made their home among dense trees and tangled undergrowth; and bold, cunning cats who had a taste for frogs patrolled the marshes fringed by brittle pine trees.

But no . . . there were originally *five* Clans. One Clan was forced out when Twolegs took over its territory. That Clan, the tree-hunters, created a new home far, far away in a sandy gorge.

And before those five Clans, there was a community of cats living deep in the mountains, beneath an endlessly tumbling waterfall. These cats had left their home beside a lake after a hard-won decision to find somewhere else to live, free from the starvation that plagued them as they competed with badgers, foxes, and eagles for ever-decreasing prey.

Those four Clans that lived in the forest? They ended up beside the very same lake when Twolegs rampaged through their territories, flattening trees to make space for a new Thunderpath. With their distant ancestors lost from memory, the Clans believed they were the first cats to settle there, forging new paths among the trees and across the windy hills.

Everywhere the cats have been, there are layers upon layers of history—some known, some long-forgotten, and some discovered in the most unexpected ways—laid down by the paw steps of many generations. What shaped the lives of these proud and noble warriors? Come, walk among them for a while, and listen to their stories. . . .



ThunderClan



Introduction to ThunderClan: Bluestar Speaks

LIKE ALL OF the Clans, ThunderClan has been shaped by the nature of its home, by the dense forest and prey-rich thickets that lie between its boundaries. My warriors are the most skilled predators of any Clan, able to make themselves silent and invisible in order to hunt the tiny furred and feathered creatures that live among us. They can stalk over fallen leaves and brittle twigs without making a sound, and from a standstill they can pounce with enough strength to bring down a full-grown rabbit. We are descended from the cats who were most adept at hunting beneath the trees, who were undaunted by branches blocking out the sky and the need to fight enemies at close quarters when there was no open space in which to escape an attacker. This battling in close quarters gave us courage and confidence in our abilities to feed and defend ourselves, and we knew the forest was the right home for us.

It was the warrior code that let us grow as a Clan and maintain our beloved forest territory. No Clan guards the code as passionately as ThunderClan. To our dying breath, we know it will protect us from injustice, cruelty, and needless battles. The code tells us to check our boundaries daily, and prohibits trespassing or hunting on another Clan's territory, and we follow this. The other Clans might call us cowards for avoiding constant border skirmishes, but we would fight for our territory as fiercely as any of them—just not when a more peaceful answer can be found by obeying the code that we share.

When we lived in the forest beside Twolegplace, our greatest border quarrel was with RiverClan over Sunningrocks. When cats first came to the

forest, these rocks were an island in the middle of the river, accessible only to those peculiar cats who were willing to swim to it. But the river changed its course, and the rocks were soon attached by dry land to ThunderClan territory. The only logical conclusion was that they should be absorbed into our borders. RiverClan, those fish-eating mouse-brains, insisted this was unfair and tried bitterly to reclaim Sunningrocks. We won more of those battles than we lost, which speaks for itself. When my warriors know they are in the right, they will fight like lions.

But we also know what it is like to be without the boundaries of a Clan. Living so close to Twolegplace in the forest, we met more kittypets than the other Clans, and had more rogues passing through. I tried to teach my Clan to treat these strangers as cats just like us before judging them for where they were born. Compared to some of the dark-hearted warriors clawing at our borders, there are better cats who have no belief in StarClan at all. Cats can learn to follow the warrior code, but they cannot always learn to have the compassion or courage that comes from faith.





• BLUESTAR •

Bluestar



• CLAN •



• POSITION • Leader

• TRAITS • Wise Guarded Commanding Ambitious

• MENTORS • Stonepelt Sunstar

• APPRENTICES • Frostfur Runningwind Firestar

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“My Clan is all I have now. I will give every breath in my body to serve it.”

–BLUESTAR, *BLUESTAR’S PROPHECY*

LEADER OF THUNDERCLAN before Firestar, Bluestar was a proud and deeply committed warrior. Once known as Bluefur, her early life was scarred by tragedy. Her mother was killed during a raid on WindClan and her sister, Snowfur, later died on the Thunderpath. Isolated in her grief from her own Clanmates, Bluefur fell in love with a RiverClan warrior named Oakheart, but their brief relationship ended when Bluefur realized she could not be loyal to ThunderClan while her heart lay elsewhere. Unbeknownst to Bluefur, she was already expecting Oakheart’s kits.

Bluefur paid the highest possible price for her leadership, giving up her three tiny kits in order to become deputy instead of Thistleclaw, whom she feared would destroy ThunderClan with his dark-hearted ambition. Oakheart raised Stonefur and Mistyfoot, the two kits who survived, in his own Clan. Bluefur told her Clanmates that her litter had been stolen by a

starving badger, and then overcame her sadness to become deputy and leader as she had hoped.

When Bluestar was an apprentice, the ThunderClan medicine cat Goosefeather had delivered a prophecy to her: “You will blaze through the forest like fire; only water can destroy you.” During her leadership, as ThunderClan struggled against its rivals, Bluestar looked to another source of fire—the red-pelted kittypet Rusty—to save her beloved Clan. But Bluestar’s murderous deputy Tigerclaw continued to rage against ThunderClan even after becoming leader of ShadowClan. He set a pack of ravenous dogs to raid the camp, and Bluestar gave up her ninth life to lead the dogs over the edge of the gorge, dying for the last time in water, just as Goosefeather had foretold. StarClan showed enough mercy that Stonefur and Mistyfoot pulled Bluestar to RiverClan’s shore, and her final moments were spent making peace with her surviving children before she went to join her lost daughter, Mosskit, in StarClan.



Pinestar



• CLAN •

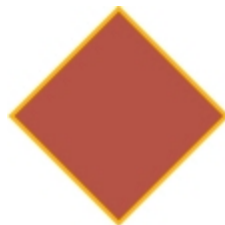


• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Calm
Peaceful
Regretful
Fair-minded

• MENTORS •
Mistpelt

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I have been honored to serve you this long. The rest of my life will be spent as a kittypet, where I have no battles to fight, no lives depending on me for food and safety.”

–PINESTAR, *BLUESTAR'S PROPHECY*

PINESTAR WAS THE leader of ThunderClan when Bluekit (later Bluestar) was born. He was fiercely protective of ThunderClan's borders and prey, but preferred a show of strength via patrols and words rather than actual conflict. Pinestar was a calm, fair-minded leader, resigned to doing battle with RiverClan over Sunningrocks, and confident in the abilities of his deputy, Sunfall, to organize the Clan's daily routine. When his medicine cat Goosefeather found a sign that warned WindClan was on the verge of destroying ThunderClan, Pinestar reluctantly agreed to take action, though he knew how much this would cost his Clanmates in injuries and even death.

Pinestar led the attack on WindClan himself, and the battle turned out to be as bloody as he had feared, with the death of Bluepaw's mother, Moonflower, at the claws of WindClan's warrior-turned-medicine cat, Hawkheart. The battle was lost, and Pinestar grew increasingly disillusioned with the violence of Clan life. He roamed beyond the borders of ThunderClan, crossing into Twolegplace and observing the easy lives of the kittypets who didn't have to risk their lives for food and shelter.

Pinestar was befriended by a kittypet named Jake, who was intrigued by the cats in the woods and had once traveled with Talltail, a warrior from WindClan. Pinestar started to take food from a Twoleg, and gradually life outside the Clan became more and more appealing. Before long, he was spotted on one of his Twolegplace visits by a ThunderClan apprentice

named Lionpaw. Embarrassed, Pinestar lied that he was engaged in a long battle with a kittypet, and was just pretending to be one himself in order to pass unchallenged through Twolegplace.

But yet another invasion of Sunningrocks by RiverClan made Pinestar realize that he could not spend his last life fighting for every paw step of territory and every mouthful of food. Shaken by a deadly accident and alarmed by dreams that encouraged him to hurt his kit with Leopardfoot, Tigerkit, Pinestar handed over leadership of his Clan to Sunfall, then left to live with his adopted Twolegs. Pinestar believed he had served his Clan loyally and well for eight long lives, and he deserved some peace at the end.



Goosefeather

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Intelligent
Hot-tempered
Lazy
Negative

• MENTORS •
Cloudberry

• APPRENTICES •
Featherwhisker

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I was only interpreting the signs from StarClan.”

–GOOSEFEATHER, *BLUESTAR'S PROPHECY*

GOOSEFEATHER WAS A medicine cat during Pinestar's leadership of ThunderClan. Goosefeather was a naturally skilled medicine cat, but by old age he became better known for his laziness and sour temper. He took an interest in Bluefur and her sister, Snowfur, because their mother, Moonflower, was his littermate.

Goosefeather had a habit of interpreting omens in the darkest way, and in the end, it was his doom-laden prophecy that led to the battle with WindClan, and Moonflower's death. Goosefeather interpreted the flattened fur on a vole from the fresh-kill pile as a sign that WindClan would crush ThunderClan, kill all the warriors and destroy their territory. This left Pinestar with no option but to attack WindClan first. A second omen—a shred of catmint on the vole's flank—was seen by Goosefeather as a warning from StarClan that they must invade the very heart of WindClan, inside their camp, and destroy their supply of herbs. It was a bold plan and ultimately disastrous, leading to death and defeat for the ThunderClan

warriors. Goosefeather was unrepentant, insisting that his omens were correct.

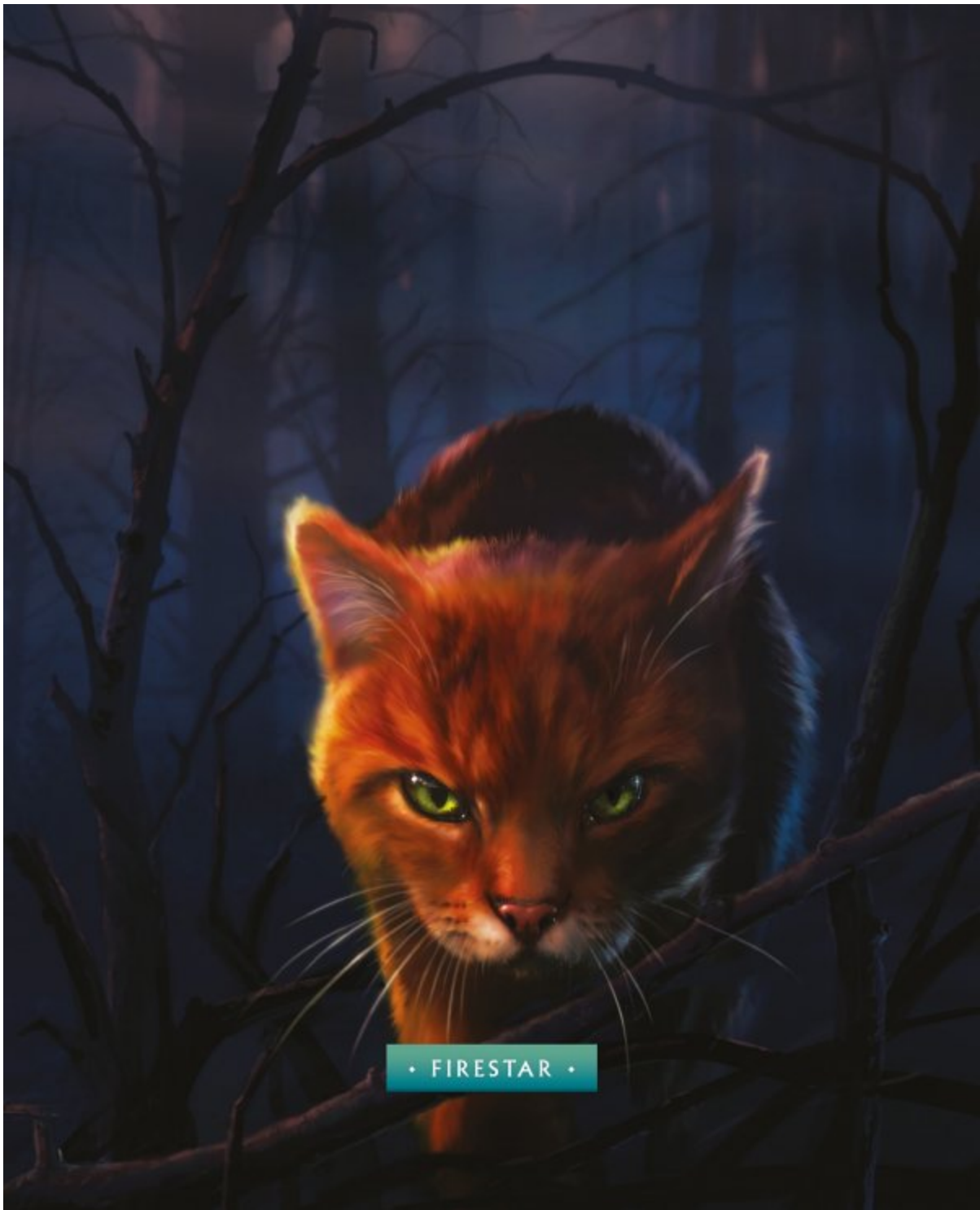
Soon after the battle with WindClan, a branch was struck by lightning and fell, burning, between Bluepaw and a threatening fox. Rain swiftly extinguished the fire, and Bluepaw and the woods were saved. To Goosefeather, this was a prophecy: Bluepaw would blaze through the forest like fire, quenched only by water. Bluepaw had no inclination to take his words seriously, not after he had prompted the battle that killed her mother.



From that moment on, Goosefeather retreated into a world of sinister omens, convinced ThunderClan was on the brink of destruction. His Clan turned more and more to his apprentice, Featherwhisker, instead. Goosefeather's final act of madness was to react with horror whenever he was in the presence of Tigerkit, Pinestar and Leopardfoot's sole remaining

son. He feared what Tigerkit would become so deeply that he had even refused to offer Leopardfoot aid during her kitting. He confided to Bluefur that Tigerkit should never have been born, and he urged Bluefur to become deputy instead of the ambitious warrior Thistleclaw, whatever it took. Whether he interpreted omens correctly or not, Goosefeather shaped the future of ThunderClan by setting Bluefur on the course of her destiny.





Firestar

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Loyal
Brave
Kind

• MENTORS •
Bluestar

• APPRENTICES •
Cinderpelt
Cloudtail
Bramblestar

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Fireheart, you are the fire who will save ThunderClan. You will be a great leader. One of the greatest the forest has ever known.”

–BLUESTAR TO FIREHEART, *A DANGEROUS PATH*

THIS BRAVE, BIGHEARTED ThunderClan leader started life as a kittypet named Rusty, and lived with housefolk for his first six moons. He inherited his father Jake’s fascination with what lay beyond the Twoleg nests, in the woods where wild cats were rumored to live. A chance encounter with a ThunderClan apprentice named Graypaw led to an introduction to Bluestar, who saw in the young kittypet’s flame-colored pelt echoes of a recent prophecy: “Fire alone will save the Clan.”

Renamed Firepaw, and then Fireheart, the young ginger cat trained hard to become one of ThunderClan’s most trusted warriors, and later, Bluestar’s deputy. But his path was darkened by a feud with Tigerclaw, the former deputy who was driven out of the Clan when Fireheart uncovered his plot to kill Bluestar.

Firepaw’s closest friends in the moons following his arrival were Graypaw, Ravenpaw, and the young medicine cat, Spottedleaf. After Spottedleaf’s death during a ShadowClan raid, he grew close to a feisty she-

cat named Sandstorm, and after Fireheart became leader and took on the name Firestar, she gave birth to his daughters, Leafkit and Squirrelkit.

Firestar led ThunderClan during the Great Journey from the forest to the lake and helped to establish all four Clans in their new homes. His untiring faith in StarClan gave him strength to fight against illnesses, drought, Twoleg disturbances, and border clashes. He gave each of his nine lives for the sake of others—most of all his final life, lost in the battle against the Dark Forest. A blaze of lightning marked the moment that Firestar joined his warrior ancestors—ancestors not by blood, but by heritage, honor, and tradition.

Even after his death, Firestar continued to watch over his beloved ThunderClan and the cats of all the Clans. He appeared a number of times in visions to help to guide his living Clanmates, delivering prophecies to the ThunderClan medicine cats and to Bramblestar. Firestar even had a paw in the fight when the Dark Forest rose against the Clans once again. Living or dead, Firestar will always do all he can to protect the Clans.



Spottedleaf



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Loving
Comforting
Spiritual
Devoted

• MENTORS •
Thrushpelt
Featherwhisker

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I was and always will be a medicine cat. That comes first, more than any cat that walks the forest, more even than Firestar.”

–SPOTTEDLEAF, *FIRESTAR'S QUEST*

SPOTTEDLEAF WAS THE medicine cat in ThunderClan when Rusty the kittypet, who would one day become Firestar, first arrived. She saw in him the same qualities that Bluestar did: courage, spirit, unwavering loyalty to doing the right thing. But Spottedleaf also saw Rusty as a warm, sensitive cat who was not limited by his expectations of her role as medicine cat and who viewed her more than anything else as a friend. If things had been different—if Spottedleaf had been a few moons younger, an apprentice warrior rather than a medicine cat—their relationship would have become even closer.

Instead, Spottedleaf died before she and Fireheart could find a way to express how they felt about each other, which left her frustrated and lonely in StarClan, missing the friend she had left behind. She refused to let go of the connection she had shared with Fireheart, and walked in his dreams, guiding and supporting him in his early days of leading ThunderClan.

When Firestar left to rediscover SkyClan, Spottedleaf knew she had lost him to Sandstorm. In her heart, she understood that the young she-cat was a far better choice, able to walk side by side with Firestar, bear his kits, and share responsibility for the Clan over the coming seasons. Spottedleaf grieved for missed chances, for a life that could never have been, but she still watched over Firestar and her former Clanmates as they moved to the lake and built new lives far from her forest home.

In the Clans' great battle with the Dark Forest, Spottedleaf gave her life in the stars to save Sandstorm, one last gift to her beloved Firestar.



• GRAYSTRIPE •

Graystripe

• CLAN •



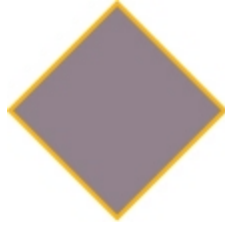
• POSITION •
Deputy

• TRAITS •
Playful
Devoted
Trustworthy
Stubborn

• MENTORS •
Lionheart

• APPRENTICES •
Brackenfur

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I would give my life for you.”

—GRAYSTRIPE TO FIREHEART, *FIRE AND ICE*

AS AN APPRENTICE, Graypaw’s boldness and bravery led him to be the first Clan cat to approach Rusty the kittypet, who went on to become Firestar. This boldness would lead him into trouble more than once—but it was the same courage and impulsive generosity that moved him and Fireheart to catch food for RiverClan when the river was poisoned, and to travel far beyond the territories to rescue WindClan after they had been chased out by ShadowClan.

Like Bluestar, Graystripe fell in love with a RiverClan cat: Silverstream, daughter of Crookedstar. Silverstream died giving birth to Graystripe’s kits, Stormkit and Featherkit, and when ThunderClan failed to treat these kits with the kindness that Graystripe hoped for, he took them back to their mother’s Clan. It tore him apart to leave his Clan—and his best friend, Fireheart—but he believed that RiverClan was the only place where they’d be truly welcomed. Stormkit and Featherkit thrived, eventually taking the warrior names Stormfur and Feathertail, but Graystripe returned to ThunderClan when he realized that his loyalties were not to his kits’ Clan,

but to his own. Many ThunderClan warriors were suspicious of him, as he had chosen to leave the Clan, and Graystripe worked hard to prove his true allegiance. When ThunderClan deputy Whitestorm was killed in the battle against Scourge, Firestar named Graystripe the Clan's new deputy.

When Twolegs began to destroy the forest to make way for a new Thunderpath, they set traps for the cats in their way. Graystripe was captured while risking his life to free others, and he was taken away to live with Twolegs. Although treated kindly, he never forgot that he was a warrior and always yearned to find the Clan he had lost.

While imprisoned by Twolegs, he met a kittypet named Millie who loved him enough to travel with him all the way to the lake where the Clans had made new homes. Graystripe was welcomed like a returning hero, but it was Millie's determination that got them out of Twolegplace, and her untiring encouragement that helped Graystripe find his lost Clanmates. Millie quickly learned to hunt for prey and fight as well as any warrior, but she refused to take a warrior name or be ashamed of where she had come from. Because of this, some cats always questioned her loyalty to the warrior code—though never within earshot of Graystripe.



Graystripe and Millie served their Clan loyally for many years and raised three kits, who grew to become Briarlight, Blossomfall, and Bumblestripe. After their kits became warriors, they retired to the elders' den, where Millie eventually passed away by Graystripe's side.

Graystripe thought then that his adventures were over, but he rose to a new challenge when an impostor took over Bramblestar's body and began to sow dissent within the Clans. Graystripe defied the impostor and was exiled from ThunderClan, returning only after the impostor was exposed and Squirrelflight became acting leader.

Despite the Clan's new leadership, Graystripe was shaken by how it had been torn apart during the impostor's reign. He decided to take time away from the Clan and traveled to what had once been the Clans' territories in the forest, where he sought wisdom from StarClan at the Moonstone.

Realizing he still had strength and wisdom to contribute to his Clan, Graystripe returned to ThunderClan and joined the cats traveling into the Dark Forest to fight the impostor, who had been revealed as former ThunderClan warrior Ashfur. Victorious but mortally wounded at the end of the fight, Graystripe went back to the living world to say his goodbyes, then returned to StarClan to be reunited with his two great loves, Silverstream and Millie; with the two daughters who had gone before him, Briarlight and Feathertail; and with his beloved friend, Firestar.



Sandstorm

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Proud
Loving
Loyal
Fierce

• MENTORS •
Whitestorm

• APPRENTICES •
Sorreltail
Honeyfern

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You’ll never be second-best for me. My love for you belongs here and now, in the life we share—and it will last for all the moons to come.”

–FIRESTAR TO SANDSTORM, *FIRESTAR’S QUEST*

WHEN RUSTY THE kittypet first joined ThunderClan, Sandpaw sided with fellow apprentice Dustpaw in tormenting him. But the former kittypet, who would eventually come to be known as Firestar, soon made a very different impression on her, as she began to appreciate his courage and loyalty to his adopted Clan. He slowly came to realize how important she was to him as well, and Sandstorm’s friendship and support were especially important to Firestar as he prepared for the battle against BloodClan. Firestar was determined to save the forest from Scourge and had heard StarClan’s prophecy that he was the only one who could do so. But Sandstorm was the cat who made Firestar believe that he was doing the right thing by fighting the cats from Twolegplace and that he would be able to defeat them.

Sandstorm was a proud and committed warrior and her courage equaled Firestar’s on the journey to rebuild SkyClan in the sandy gorge far from the forest. Sandstorm took on the role of medicine cat to help the scattered Clanmates, and she matched Firestar blow for blow in the battle against the

rats, even though she had only a single life to lose. She was an excellent mother to Squirrelflight and Leafpool, and stood by her daughters when the truth came out about Lionblaze, Hollyleaf, and Jayfeather.

Sandstorm had a quick temper and a strong sense of what was right, which Firestar respected. Next to his deputies and his medicine cats, Sandstorm was the cat he consulted most often before making any decisions for the Clan. She spoke up for the cats in ThunderClan who shied away from the traditional warrior lifestyle, in particular Daisy, who came from the horseplace by the lake. Sandstorm defended Daisy's wish to stay in the nursery and help other queens, instead of joining border or hunting patrols.

Sandstorm would have loved to have had more kits, but she knew that Firestar had enough demands made on him by the rest of the Clan. She shared his sense of responsibility to all of the cats who lived in the hollow, and never wished that their lives could have been different.



Brightheart and Cloudtail

• CLAN •



BRIGHTHEART

• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Loving

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



CLOUDTAIL

• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Compassionate
Stubborn

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You’re still beautiful to me. You always will be.”

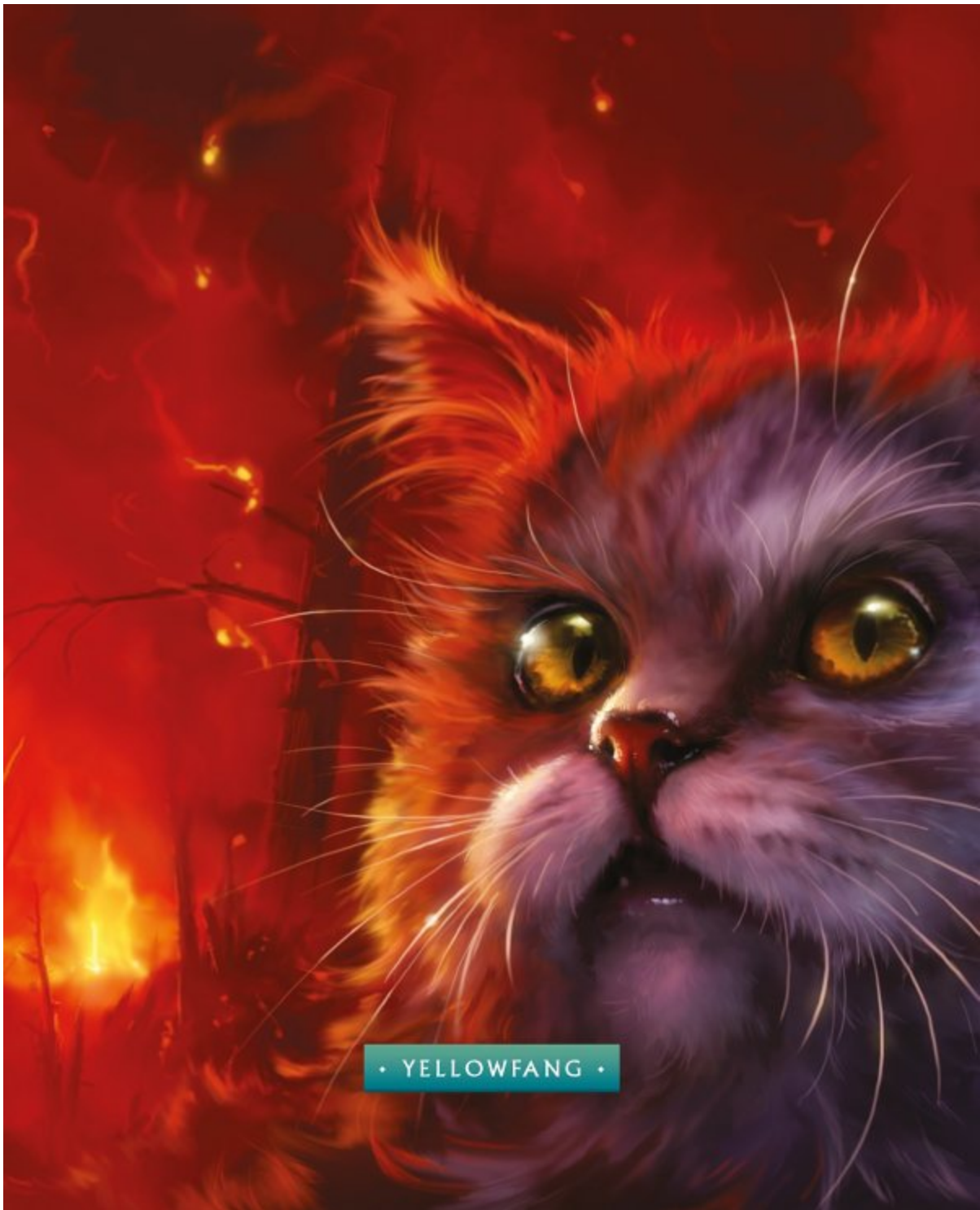
—CLOUDTAIL TO BRIGHTEART, *A DANGEROUS PATH*

BRIGHTEART’S RAVAGED FACE reminded every cat of the attack from Tigerstar’s half-trained pack of dogs. But Brighthouse only remembered when she saw her reflection in a pool of water—so she avoided drinking from anything except fast-flowing streams. She tried hard to forget the horror and pain of the mauling, and to ignore the flinches that came from strangers seeing her for the first time. Far from being treated like an invalid, Brighthouse hunted and fought alongside her Clanmates and spent time with every apprentice, training them in specialized battle skills to use if one of their own eyes were injured. She possessed the true beauty that comes from courage, loyalty, and devotion.

Happily, despite her scars, Brighthouse’s life turned into everything she ever dreamed of: She and Cloudtail had two litters of kits, and their daughter Whitewing’s own kits, Dovewing and Ivypool, played a critical part in saving the Clans from the Dark Forest.

Cloudtail never flinched from Brighthouse’s scars. He knew how it felt to be different. Cloudtail was the son of Firestar’s kittypet sister, Princess. She gave him up to be raised as a ThunderClan warrior. As an apprentice, Cloudpaw struggled at first; he even went back to the kittypet life until StarClan—and Fireheart—gave him a second chance.

Cloudtail made the long journey from the forest to the lake, helped establish his Clan in a new home far from anything they had known before, and risked his own life to save his Clanmates from badgers, storms, and illness—all without believing in StarClan. But he did believe in the battle between good and evil, and he fought as fiercely as any warrior against the cats of the Dark Forest, with loyalty to the warrior code and to his Clanmates.



Yellowfang

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Wise
Compassionate
Ornery
Regretful

• MENTORS •
Deerleap
Sagewhisker

• APPRENTICES •
Runningnose
Cinderpelt

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“A medicine cat has no time for doubt. Put your energy into today and stop worrying about the past.”

–YELLOWFANG, *RISING STORM*

YELLOWFANG WAS THE exiled ShadowClan medicine cat discovered on an early solo patrol by Firepaw, who would one day become Firestar. His act of kindness in giving her a piece of fresh-kill was punished by Bluestar because he had also eaten some himself, breaking the warrior code by not bringing it back to the prey pile. As a result, Firepaw was ordered to feed and care for Yellowfang in her first moons in the Clan, where she was viewed with suspicion because of ThunderClan’s long rivalry with bloodthirsty ShadowClan. In spite of Yellowfang’s simmering anger at being treated like a prisoner, she formed a strong bond with the young kittypet-turned-warrior, a connection that lasted beyond her death.

Yellowfang was cranky, stubborn, impatient—and the most loyal cat you could ever meet. Her whole life was a quest for loyalty—to ShadowClan, to her role as their medicine cat, to the son that she bore in secret, and then to ThunderClan after her exile. Yellowfang’s biggest mistake was her love for Raggedstar, leader of ShadowClan, despite

knowing that medicine cats are forbidden from having mates or kits. When Yellowfang's bitter, neglected son, Brokenstar, became ShadowClan's leader and made the forest run red with the blood of kits too young to fight, Yellowfang's loyalty to what she knew to be right led to Brokenstar exiling her and forcing her across the border to ThunderClan.

She blamed herself wholly for Brokenstar's brutality, and when he was finally defeated during a raid on the ThunderClan camp, she persuaded Bluestar to let him stay there, blind and captive. Just a few moons later, Yellowfang discovered that Brokenstar had plotted with Tigerclaw and some rogues against the Clan that had given him food and shelter. Wracked with guilt, Yellowfang fed deathberries to her own son: It was the only solution she could find for a problem she believed she had caused. Her loyalty to ThunderClan was proven beyond all doubt when she died saving her adopted Clanmates from a fire that swept through their camp. Fireheart grieved as if he had lost his own mother.



Cinderpelt

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Caring
Determined
Wise
Passionate

• MENTORS •
Firestar
Yellowfang

• APPRENTICES •
Leafpool

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“We cannot change our destiny. We just have to have the courage to know what it is, and accept it.”

– CINDERPELT, *TWILIGHT*

CINDERPELT WAS A medicine cat who should have been a warrior. She was Fireheart’s first apprentice, but when she was struck by a monster on the Thunderpath, she injured her hind leg so badly that she had to give up all her hopes of hunting and fighting for her Clan. In spite of her disappointment, she trained fiercely as Yellowfang’s apprentice and became a skilled and reliable medicine cat. She fought hard to save Silverstream’s life at the birth of Graystripe’s kits and was always haunted by her failure. Cinderpelt tried to make amends by helping two sickly ShadowClan cats who sought refuge in ThunderClan’s territory; this forged a strong, lasting friendship with one of them, Littlecloud, who went on to become ShadowClan’s medicine cat.

Cinderpelt didn’t have the same sensitivity to StarClan that other medicine cats have had; for example, she interpreted a vision of a tiger she saw in some burning bracken as a warning that Brambleclaw and Squirrelflight would unite—fire and tiger—to destroy ThunderClan. In fact,

those cats' quest to the sun-drown-place saved the Clan by finding them a new home.

But StarClan did not blame Cinderpelt for her mistake. They understood that she should never have been a medicine cat. Her warrior ancestors gave her one more test before deciding to give her a second chance: Led by Bluestar, they told Cinderpelt when she would die and then let her live with that knowledge even though her apprentice, Leafpool, was on the brink of leaving the Clan to be with the WindClan warrior Crowfeather. Cinderpelt went on in the shadow of her own death with such courage and dignity, resisting the temptation to beg Leafpool to stay, that she proved herself worthy of a second life, returning to ThunderClan at the moment of her final breath as one of Sorreltail's kits, Cinderheart.





Leafpool

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Loyal
Spiritual
Thoughtful
Peaceful

• MENTORS •
Cinderpelt

• APPRENTICES •
Hollyleaf
Jayfeather
Puddleshine

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Destiny isn’t a path that any cat follows blindly. It is always a matter of choice, and sometimes the heart speaks loudest.”

–LEAFPOOL, *SIGN OF THE MOON*

UNLIKE CINDERPELT, LEAFPOOL was always destined to be a medicine cat. From birth, she had a special sensitivity to other cats, particularly her sister. For a while it seemed that, young as she was, Leafpool knew what lay around every corner and over every horizon. She knew that the Clans had found their new homes when they reached the lake; she knew that Brambleclaw would make a strong and loyal deputy for ThunderClan; she even knew that blood would spill blood before the Clans were truly settled around the lake—and she watched as Brambleclaw killed his half brother, Hawkfrost, to save Firestar.

But the one thing Leafpool did not foresee was falling in love with a WindClan warrior, Crowfeather. Like Yellowfang before her, she broke the warrior code and bore kits: Lionkit, Hollykit, and Jaykit. To keep Leafpool’s secret, Squirrelflight raised the kits as her own, even convincing her mate, Brambleclaw, that they were his. Leafpool suffered the pain of watching her kits grow up without them knowing she was their mother.

When her secret was discovered by Hollyleaf and blurted out at a Gathering of all the Clans, Leafpool had to give up her role as ThunderClan's medicine cat and become a warrior instead. To add to her agony, her kits hated her for lying to them, especially Jayfeather, who became medicine cat in her place. But Leafpool served her Clan with quiet loyalty until Jayfeather realized that her skills and experience were too precious to lose and invited her to return to the medicine den. Once again accepted as a medicine cat, Leafpool shared her skills with any cat that needed them, mentoring Puddleshine of ShadowClan and acting as medicine cat for SkyClan when they had none. This generosity would eventually lead to her noble death. After dreaming of kits in danger, she saved one of the Sisters—a group of traveling she-cats—and her newborn kits. Leafpool was killed when the cave where she was protecting the kits collapsed.

StarClan put Leafpool on trial, challenging her breaking of the warrior code by having kits, and it became clear that Leafpool regretted nothing: she treasured the kits she had borne and was proud of her life serving the Clans as a medicine cat. In the end, StarClan agreed that the good she had done outweighed her mistakes, and allowed her to join them.



• SQUIRRELFIGHT •

Squirrelflight



• CLAN •



• POSITION •

Deputy

• TRAITS •

Feisty
Passionate
Scrappy
Expressive

• MENTORS •

Dustpelt

• APPRENTICES •

Foxleap
Rosepetal
Stormcloud

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Being a good deputy doesn’t mean blindly following orders. It means standing up for what I believe, and this time, I believe I’m right.”

–SQUIRRELFIGHT, *SQUIRRELFIGHT’S HOPE*

IF LEAFPOOL WAS like water—calm, deep, reflecting the stars—then Squirrelflight was fire. She had enough energy to scorch every tree in the forest, and a tongue that could leave scars in beech bark. She was passionately loyal to her Clan and incapable of doing anything but what she believed to be right—including taking on her sister’s kits and making their Clanmates believe they were Squirrelflight’s own.

Squirrelpaw was still an apprentice when she insisted on joining Brambleclaw on the quest to sun-drown-place, following the message from StarClan that they must “listen to what midnight tells you.” Midnight turned out to be a wise, old badger who steered the cats toward their new home by the lake. Squirrelpaw proved herself to be a brave, feisty companion to the other cats on the quest, demonstrating the courage of her father, Firestar, and the fiery determination of her mother, Sandstorm. On the journey, she

grew closer to Brambleclaw and began to see a special appeal in the ThunderClan tom.

Once the Clans had settled by the lake, Ashfur fell in love with Squirrelflight, noticing something behind the mischief and the fire, when Brambleclaw saw only a quarrelsome nuisance. But Ashfur failed to appreciate the strength beneath her impulsive ways. Squirrelflight needed someone to match her fire, not contain it, and that cat was always going to be Brambleclaw.

Squirrelflight watched Brambleclaw raise Lionblaze, Hollyleaf, and Jayfeather as his own, a fair and devoted father. When the truth came out that the kits were Leafpool's, Brambleclaw couldn't forgive Squirrelflight for lying to him. Squirrelflight accepted his anger as her punishment. But she never stopped being unwaveringly loyal to her Clan and fought like a lion in the battle against the Dark Forest. When Brambleclaw became leader after Firestar's death, there was only one cat he could choose to be his deputy: Squirrelflight, his former mate, the cat he knew he could trust to his very last breath. Working side by side as leader and deputy, Squirrelflight and Bramblestar eventually came to love each other once again and raised two kits of their own, Alderheart and Sparkpelt. Their relationship was always tempestuous, as Squirrelflight was likely to do what she thought was right rather than what her leader ordered.



When Bramblestar seemed to lose a life and was revived with a drastically changed personality, she learned that an impostor was controlling his body. Fighting the impostor, she was exiled from ThunderClan, only to return as acting leader when the impostor was exposed. Squirrelflight identified the impostor as the spirit of Ashfur, who had never given up his obsession with her. Ashfur kidnapped her and took her to the Place of No Stars, but she continued to fight him even there and managed to escape and to bring the real Bramblestar through to the living world again. No matter what obstacles she has faced, Squirrelflight has always fought fiercely for her Clan and for those she loves.





• BRAMBLESTAR •

Bramblestar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Resolute
Careful
Devoted
Loyal

• MENTORS •
Firestar

• APPRENTICES •
Berrynose

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Guide my steps wisely, warriors of the past. And warriors of now.”

– BRAMBLESTAR, *THE LAST HOPE*

TIGERSTAR’S SON WAS destined to be torn between the courage and ambition he inherited from his father and loyalty to the Clan his father had tried to destroy. Brambleclaw was the first cat chosen by StarClan to go on the quest to find Midnight, and Firestar’s trust in him sent a clear signal that Brambleclaw should not be judged for Tigerstar’s sins. Though a young warrior, Brambleclaw led the other cats through Twolegplaces and across mountains to the sun-drown-place. On the return journey, he kept his band of warriors together even after Feathertail’s tragic death, and inspired the Clans to set out in search of a new, safer home.

But Brambleclaw was also walking with Tigerstar in his dreams, and scheming with his RiverClan half brother, Hawkfrost, to take over the weaker Clans. At the last moment, faced with the possibility of Firestar dying in a trap set by Hawkfrost, Brambleclaw realized where his loyalties lay. He killed Hawkfrost, fulfilling the prophecy that “before all is peaceful, blood will spill blood,” and turned his back on Tigerstar’s attempts to corrupt him.

Brambleclaw's next great challenge was becoming a father to Lionblaze, Hollyleaf, and Jayfeather, a challenge that he relished as he watched the kits grow. His heart was broken when he learned that Crowfeather of WindClan was their real father, and Squirrelflight had lied. But he kept a check on his rage. Deep down, Brambleclaw knew that Squirrelflight had followed the only path she could to keep her sister's kits safe. He missed her wisdom and generosity, and he wanted no other cat as deputy when he became ThunderClan's leader.

Eventually, Bramblestar admitted that he still loved Squirrelflight. He raised two more kits with her and continued to lead ThunderClan through many troubles until he died of an illness and—with StarClan strangely absent from contact with the Clans—was not able to take up his next life. Instead, his body was taken over by a malicious spirit and the real Bramblestar was trapped in the Dark Forest. Bramblestar was almost lost forever when the living cats decided that they must kill his possessed body to save the Clans. But the impostor escaped and, taking Squirrelflight as his prisoner, traveled back to the Dark Forest, where Bramblestar and Squirrelflight reunited and were able to escape to the living world.



Ashfur



• CLAN •



• POSITION • Warrior

• TRAITS •
Manipulative
Vindictive
Obsessive
Cruel

• MENTORS • Dustpelt

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I’ll make Squirrelflight suffer. She’ll pay for betraying me, along with every cat she’s ever cared about.”

– ASHFUR, *A LIGHT IN THE MIST*

ASHFUR WAS DEEPLY obsessed with Squirrelflight and bitterly hurt when she passed him over in favor of Brambleclaw. Love was the defense he would offer for his dramatic—and terrible—actions on top of the cliff in the midst of a thunderstorm, when he threatened to kill Squirrelflight’s kits to punish her. There was no way he could have expected the reaction he received, which was Squirrelflight telling him that the three cats meant nothing to her because she was not their real mother.

Now Ashfur had an even more powerful weapon to use against Squirrelflight: the chance to reveal to the Clan that she had been lying to them about Lionblaze, Hollyleaf, and Jayfeather.

This was too great a risk for Hollyleaf, who tracked Ashfur to the border with WindClan and fatally wounded him. It was a tragic end for a troubled cat. But even when admitted to StarClan by cats who believed that his only fault was loving too much, Ashfur continued to plot against Squirrelflight and Bramblestar. After working for years to sever the connections between StarClan, the Dark Forest, and the living Clans, he was able to take over Bramblestar’s body when Bramblestar lost one of his lives.

Even though he’d achieved all he’d schemed for, Ashfur was still dissatisfied. Every loving gesture Squirrelflight made was torture to him, because he knew it was meant for his rival.

Furious at the emptiness of his victory, the impostor tyrannized ThunderClan and seeded conflict in every Clan, blaming “codebreakers” for the loss of the connection of StarClan. When he was finally exposed, he fled to the Dark Forest, where an alliance of living and spirit cats fought against him and reopened the passages between StarClan and the Dark Forest. Finally, Ashfur was defeated, killed by the brave Bristlefrost, who gave up her own life to save the Clans from this dark warrior who blamed love for his legacy of hate.



Lionblaze



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Impulsive
Proud
Determined
Loyal

• MENTORS •
Ashfur

• APPRENTICES •
Dovewing

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Remember that no warrior needs to be a hero. The most heroic actions
take more than one cat.”

– LIONBLAZE, *SIGN OF THE MOON*

“THERE WILL BE three, kin of your kin, who hold the power of the stars in their paws.”

Firestar received this prophecy from Skywatcher, the last surviving link to the original SkyClan cats. When Squirrelflight and Brambleclaw announced the arrival of their kits, Firestar knew they must be the cats of the prophecy. Each kit had unique abilities. Lionblaze seemed the most likely to play a role in saving the Clan: from the start he was exceptionally strong and skilled at fighting. So strong that Tigerstar sought him out in his dreams, training him to be even more fearless and ruthless. But when he realized the old cat only wanted revenge on Firestar, Lionblaze rejected Tigerstar’s thirst for blood. He didn’t need Tigerstar’s mentoring; Lionblaze soon realized he had a unique ability to fight any battle and escape without a scratch. As a warrior, he was invincible.

His heart was less so and he fell in love with Cinderheart. But when she learned about the prophecy, she saw herself as a distraction from

Lionblaze's greater destiny. Lionblaze had to fight one of the hardest battles of his life to make Cinderheart understand that they could choose their own destinies—together. After helping to defeat the invading Dark Forest, Lionblaze lost his invincibility; suddenly he could be wounded in battle. But he remained a skilled warrior, and he and Cinderheart raised two litters of kits together: Hollytuft, Sorrelstripe, Fernsong, Flywhisker, Spotfur, and Snaptooth.

When the impostor in Bramblestar's body took over ThunderClan, Lionblaze was exiled as a "codebreaker" for being half-Clan by birth. As a cat who had always striven to be the best ThunderClan warrior he could, this rejection felt horrifying, and he became an active member of the rebellion, working against the impostor. When Squirrelflight became temporary leader of ThunderClan, he was her deputy, and briefly acting leader, before recognizing that his anger was clouding his judgment and ceding the position to Graystripe. In this, as in everything, Lionblaze's focus was not on his own advancement, but on protecting his Clan.



• HOLLYLEAF •

Hollyleaf



• CLAN •



• POSITION • Warrior

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Ambitious
Clever
Devoted

• MENTORS •
Leafpool
Brackenfur

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“If we start ignoring the warrior code, then we are no longer warriors!”

– HOLLYPAW, *THE SIGHT*

FROM THE MOMENT she opened her eyes, Lionblaze’s sister was the thinker, the politician. She was sensitive and cunning and aware of all the different consequences that might come from a single action. For her, the warrior code lay at the root of every choice a Clan cat had to make, and she was willing to tread the hardest paths to defend it. Even before she heard the prophecy, Hollyleaf was determined to serve her Clan in the best way she could. She started training as a medicine cat with Leafpool, but Leafpool soon realized that Hollyleaf’s heart lay in the life of a warrior, defending her Clanmates with tooth and claw rather than repairing the damage done in the battles of other cats. So Hollyleaf dedicated herself to becoming the most skilled warrior ThunderClan had known, training harder and longer than the other apprentices, even her brother, Lionblaze.

When she learned that she and her littermates might one day be more powerful than StarClan, Hollyleaf began searching for the way she would fulfill her destiny. Lionblaze had his unconquerable fighting ability, Jayfeather had the gift of sight in his dreams and the ability to walk in

StarClan whenever he chose. Hollyleaf found her strength in her absolute faith in the warrior code, and her courage to defend it to her dying breath.

Hollyleaf was utterly broken by Squirrelflight's revelation that she and her brothers had been born to different cats. Was Hollyleaf nothing but a sordid secret, hidden from her own Clanmates? She was terrified that Ashfur would tell the rest of the Clan and that she'd be driven out for being an aberration, a demonstration of what happened when the warrior code was trampled over. Hollyleaf knew she had to make Ashfur keep the dreadful secret, whatever it took. She tracked him like prey to the WindClan border, where she struck, he slipped, and when he fell into the stream with blood streaming from the wounds in his throat, she knew he was beyond saving. There seemed no point in telling Firestar what had happened. She was being punished enough by her conscience—the warrior code said no cat must kill another—and by her fear that the truth would emerge anyway.



When she and her brothers discovered that Leafpool was their mother, and Crowfeather, a WindClan warrior, was their father, Hollyleaf was overwhelmed by the size of the secret she was trying to keep. The only way

she could master it was by revealing everything herself, announcing the truth to a startled Gathering of the Clans, and disgracing Leafpool forever.

Then came her escape into a tunnel that collapsed behind her, leaving her dead to her Clan and everything she had ever known. But the silence of the underground caverns, the quiet, undemanding friendship of Fallen Leaves—a spirit cat who had died in the tunnels generations before—and her endless concern for her former Clanmates sent Hollyleaf back to the hollow, to the place where she had been born. The place where she belonged. She fought to the death saving her Clan from the cats of the Dark Forest, her last desperate plea for a forgiveness that had already been granted.



• JAYFEATHER •

Jayfeather



• CLAN •



• POSITION • Medicine cat

• TRAITS •

Wise
Calm
Cold
Sharp

• MENTORS •

Brightheart
Leafpool

• APPRENTICES •

Alderheart

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I’m here to heal you. If you want sympathy, go to the nursery.”

– JAYPAW, *DARK RIVER*

DESPITE BEING BORN blind, able to see only in his dreams, Jayfeather was confident in his ability to also navigate his world when awake. He shared his littermates’ courage and curiosity, which led to an adventure with fox cubs that nearly took all of them to StarClan prematurely. Jaypaw saw no reason why he couldn’t train to be a warrior alongside them, and he was bitter and angry when Firestar insisted on apprenticing him to Brightheart, the one-eyed warrior, in the hope that she could help the blind apprentice become a warrior too. After his disastrous first battle and a dream visit from Spottedleaf, ThunderClan’s former medicine cat, Jaypaw realized that it was his destiny to become a medicine cat and was apprenticed to Leafpool. His memory for herbs and his connection with StarClan made him unusually gifted from the beginning, but Jaypaw still chafed at what he saw as a second-best future, limited to the confines of the territory.

He found freedom by walking in other cats’ dreams, which is how he learned about the prophecy Firestar had received so many moons ago. The discovery that he was expected to have more power than StarClan gave

Jaypaw the confidence to challenge his ancestors and also to interfere with the destiny of the Tribe of Rushing Water in the mountains. Jaypaw learned from their ancestors, the Tribe of Endless Hunting, that something dark and terrible loomed for all of the Clans—and that the chance of survival depended on him and his littermates.

In addition to his many moons of influence and care over his Clan as ThunderClan's skilled, if prickly, medicine cat, Jayfeather's destiny became entangled with that of the mountain cats when he walked with the Ancient Clan cats, who had once lived beside the lake, as a long-ago sharpclaw named Jay's Wing. He fell in love with Half Moon and helped guide the cats to the mountains when their home by the lake was threatened. Knowing that he had to return to his own Clan, many seasons and fox-lengths away, Jayfeather made Half Moon the first ever Teller of the Pointed Stones for the mountain cats and gave to her the seeds of a faith in something more than what the cats could see around them—a faith that would be passed on for every generation to come.



• CINDERHEART •

Cinderheart



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Determined
Passionate
Hopeful
Insightful

• MENTORS •
Cloudtail

• APPRENTICES •
Ivypool
Finchlight

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I will never forget who I was before. Thank you for living my first life.”

– CINDERHEART TO CINDERPELT, *THE FORGOTTEN WARRIOR*

CINDERHEART WAS BORN to Sorreltail at the exact moment a badger took the life of Cinderpelt. Perhaps in recognition of Cinderpelt’s thwarted destiny and of her unceasing loyalty to her Clan as their medicine cat, StarClan allowed her spirit to return in the body of tiny Cinderheart.

Cinderheart became a warrior apprentice alongside her littermates, training hard to learn how to hunt and fight—and never knowing about her connection to the former medicine cat.

Following an accident in which she fell from a tree while saving another apprentice, Cinderheart’s peace began to be disturbed by vivid dreams where she walked through a forest she didn’t recognize—and yet it was completely familiar. She knew the names of the cats who lived there and could identify the scents of herbs that clung to her pelt. The images felt as real as memories, but she tried to ignore them until Jayfeather walked with her in the dreams and gently showed her that they *were* memories—from her former life as ThunderClan’s medicine cat. Cinderheart was torn between her ambition to be a warrior and serve her Clan by hunting and

fighting, and her responsibility to make use of the medicine skills she had somehow been born with. She felt trapped by the destiny that seemed to have been forced upon her.

Only Lionblaze could convince Cinderheart that she could choose her own path. Cinderpelt had lived one life, but this was Cinderheart's life now. And when Cinderheart chose to spend that life as a warrior, alongside Lionblaze, she felt the spirit of the medicine cat lift softly away from her and take its place in StarClan.





Ivypool



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Sharp
Durable
Observant
Intelligent

• MENTORS •
Cinderheart

• APPRENTICES •
Snowbush
Twigbranch

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Fight loyally, and with courage. That is all your clan asks of you.”

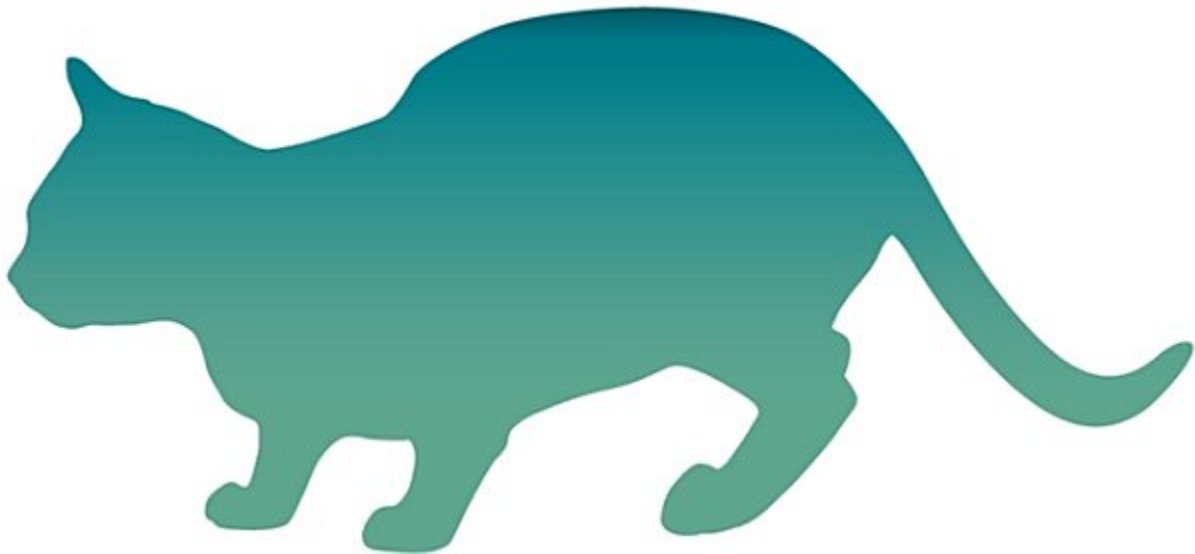
–IVYPOOL, *THE LAST HOPE*

LIKE SQUIRRELFIGHT AND Leafpool, Ivypool and her sister, Dovewing, were closer than hairs on a vole’s pelt. But their paths began to diverge when, as an apprentice, Dovepaw went on the quest to free the water. When Dovepaw came back, she had distant horizons in her eyes and a connection with cats in other Clans that seemed to stretch the limits of the warrior code.

Feeling unwanted and left out, Ivypaw continued to train hard, even though Dovepaw always seemed to hear and see things much faster than Ivypaw could; on the occasions when Ivypaw did make a catch first, she knew it was because Dovepaw had let her. When a mysterious dark brown cat with ice-blue eyes visited Ivypaw in a dream and offered to train her to be a better warrior than she ever imagined, Ivypaw immediately said yes. Her new mentor, Hawkfrost, led her nightly into a forest of shadows and black rivers, where cats that Ivypaw recognized from other Clans were taught to fight harder, run faster, attack with more cunning than their daylight mentors allowed. Here, Ivypaw shone. She began training

apprentices of her own and was singled out for praise by Hawkfrost time after time.

But when Tigerstar laid bare the true purpose of training these cats—to destroy the Clans from within, using cats from past and present—Ivypool, by this time a warrior, swore never to return. Unbeknownst to Ivypool, Jayfeather had followed her into her dreams and discovered her involvement with the Dark Forest. He and Lionblaze saw the potential of recruiting Ivypool to spy for them; to Dovewing's dismay, her sister agreed and risked her life by going back to the Dark Forest to learn when the attack would happen. Despite suspicions from older cats, Ivypool maintained the illusion of loyalty right up until the final charge through to the living Clans. Then she fought with immense courage against cats who she knew had no hesitation over killing to secure a victory.



Hawkfrost cornered Ivypool at last, hissing vengeance for her betrayal, but Hollyleaf leaped forward at the final moment, taking Hawkfrost's death blow and saving Ivypool's life.

After the battle, Ivypool continued to be deeply committed to her Clan and to her sister. Dovewing chose to leave ThunderClan to be with her mate in ShadowClan, and though Ivypool was hurt and angry at first, the connection between the sisters remained strong. Ivypool became mates with Fernsong, and they agreed that Fernsong would spend time in the nursery after their kits were weaned so that Ivypool could continue to act as a warrior even while being the mother to a young family. When the impostor

began to exile cats from ThunderClan, Ivypool and Fernsong considered leaving as well, but in the end decided to stay in the Clan so that they could remain with their now-grown kits.

One of these kits, Bristlefrost, came to Ivypool for advice on getting to the Dark Forest. She wanted to rescue the SkyClan cat she loved, Rootspring, from Ashfur. Ivypool was afraid of what might happen to Bristlefrost in the Place of No Stars, but she respected her daughter enough to give her the best advice she could. Bristlefrost sacrificed her own life and her chance at an afterlife in StarClan to defeat Ashfur, and Ivypool mourned her daughter, but understood that she, like Ivypool herself, had gone into battle willing to risk death to defend the Clans.



Briarlight



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Caring
Determined
Playful
Cheerful

• MENTORS •
Thornclaw

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I’m fed up with being treated as if I’m special! I just want to be like every other cat.”

– BRIARLIGHT, *BRAMBLESTAR’S STORM*

BRIARLIGHT WAS THE eldest of Millie and Graystripe’s kits, born in the same litter as Blossomfall and Bumblestripe. As a young apprentice, she was bold and adventurous, like her littermates. She also had a healthy curiosity about Jayfeather’s skills as a medicine cat. Near the end of her apprenticeship a storm hit the woods, sending a huge, loose-rooted beech tree crashing down into the hollow. Dovewing heard the tree start to fall and Firestar ordered an evacuation of the entire camp. The blind elder Longtail was killed because he returned to his den to retrieve Mousefur’s fresh-kill. Briarpaw chased after him, trying to fetch him back, but was also caught by the crushing branches.

She survived, but her spine was broken, leaving her hindlegs numb and paralyzed. At first Briarpaw believed her future to be utterly bleak and pointless, and she even refused to eat, unwilling to take prey that could feed the cats who hunted and patrolled for the Clan. It took stern words from Jayfeather to remind her that a Clan cares for all its cats, including kits and elders who are unable to hunt for themselves. If Briarpaw gave up on life, she would be betraying the warrior code itself.

So Briarpaw started to work hard within the confines of her injury, strengthening her front legs until she could drag herself around the camp and doing breathing exercises to keep her chest strong and clear. Briarpaw helped Jayfeather by sorting and storing herbs, she kept kits entertained, she

soothed the elders when they were troubled by bad dreams. And when her littermates received their warrior names, Briarlight was given one too, a reflection of her fierce-burning spirit, in recognition of the unimaginably difficult and unique apprenticeship that she had served.



Alderheart



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Loyal
Loving
Nervous
Kind

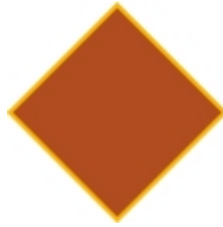
• MENTORS •
Jayfeather
Molewhisker

• APPRENTICES •
Flipclaw

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“From now on, let us face new threats as StarClan intended—five Clans united.”

– ALDERHEART, *THE RAGING STORM*

ALDERPAW, SON OF ThunderClan’s leader Bramblestar and deputy Squirrelflight, began his training as an anxious but eager warrior apprentice, but StarClan had other ideas. Jayfeather had a vision showing Alderpaw should become a medicine cat, and he soon found his paws in this new role. At his first half-moon meeting, Alderpaw dreamed of a sandy gorge, a warning that SkyClan needed help. Alderpaw led a patrol to SkyClan’s gorge, joined on the way by Needle paw, an apprentice of ShadowClan. The cats of the gorge, led by the powerful Darktail, were nothing like Alderpaw had expected and, to his dismay, they turned out to be rogues who had driven SkyClan away. Alderpaw and the others escaped but the rogues followed them to the lake.

In their escape, Alderpaw and Needle paw were separated from the other cats and discovered two abandoned kits who they believed would fulfill the prophecy “Embrace what you find in the shadows, for only they can clear

the sky.” The kits were separated by the Clans, and Alderpaw vowed to look after Twigkit in ThunderClan.

Darktail and his rogues took over ShadowClan and RiverClan, but Alderpaw, now Alderheart, continued to have visions of the real SkyClan. He knew StarClan wanted him to help the missing Clan find the lake but was unable to convince the embattled Clan leaders to spare cats for a search party. Twigpaw left in search of SkyClan, and Alderheart feared his vision might have led to her death. But at last she returned, bringing SkyClan; they helped to defeat Darktail’s rogues. After Darktail’s death, many cats thought SkyClan should return to the gorge, but Alderheart helped resolve the conflict and the five Clans were united at last.

But Alderheart’s faith was shaken when the Clans lost contact with StarClan and the impostor pretending to be Bramblestar began punishing “codebreakers.” After Jayfeather was exiled, Alderheart reluctantly began to train Flipclaw, who had no aptitude for medicine cat duties, and was soon exiled himself. Once the false Bramblestar was exposed, Alderheart returned to ThunderClan.



Twigbranch



• CLAN •



• POSITION • Warrior

• TRAITS • Courageous Spirited Honest Resilient

• MENTORS • Ivypool Sandynose Sparkpelt

• APPRENTICES • Flywhisker

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You will make a great warrior one day. But first you need to decide which Clan you want to fight for.”

—SANDYNOSE TO TWIGPAW, *DARKEST NIGHT*

AS TINY KITS, Violetkit and Twigkit—who would grow into loyal and determined warriors—were discovered in a nest beneath a Thunderpath by Alderpaw of ThunderClan and Needlepaw of ShadowClan. The apprentices took the kits to the Clans, where it was theorized they must be the subject of the prophecy “Embrace what you find in the shadows, for only they can clear the sky.” The kits were separated: Violetkit to ShadowClan, Twigkit to ThunderClan.

While Violetkit struggled in ShadowClan, Twigkit was surrounded by love, raised by Lilyheart with the ThunderClan queen’s kits as playmates. But like her sister, she felt a need for a connection she was missing. When Twigkit learned she was the subject of a prophecy, she was terrified: if she wasn’t special enough, would ThunderClan make her leave? Determined to prove herself, Twigkit set out to find needed herbs and fell into the lake, where she heard her mother’s voice, urging her to swim. Desperate to learn

about the mother she never knew, as an apprentice she searched for clues about what had happened to her, only to be convinced at last that she must be dead.

Alderheart dreamed of SkyClan, seeing a cat who resembled the sisters. But ThunderClan, busy battling Darktail, was unwilling to give up warriors to search for the lost Clan. Twigpaw set off on her own. After a long and perilous journey, she found SkyClan and her father, Hawkwing, and led them to the lake. Hawkwing was everything Twigpaw had dreamed of in a parent, and, after the Kin's defeat, she and Violetpaw joined SkyClan.

Twigpaw grew close to a SkyClan apprentice, Finpaw. But at her warrior ceremony, doubt overwhelmed her: she loved her family, but felt she belonged in ThunderClan. Finpaw, unwilling to lose her, changed Clans to stay with Twigpaw, and they eventually became mates.

When Ashfur took over ThunderClan as the impostor, both sisters prepared to fight tyranny once more. Despite her loyalty, Twigbranch was declared a "codebreaker." She attempted to atone, but was exiled anyway. Joining the rebels, she worked to expose the impostor, then argued that he must not be killed, helping to ensure that Bramblestar could return to his body and lead ThunderClan again.



Bristlefrost



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Resolute
Loyal
Clever
Impressionable

• MENTORS •
Rosepetal

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



She had done what she had always wanted to do, from the time she was a tiny kit. She had saved her Clan. She had saved all the Clans.

—A LIGHT IN THE MIST

BRAVE AND BOLD, Bristlepaw saved SkyClan apprentice Rootpaw from drowning when she, too, was only an apprentice. She was so promising that she was allowed to complete her training early and, after two assessments, become a warrior before her littermates. Eager to prove herself, Bristlefrost strove to please her newly resurrected leader, the false Bramblestar, and was soon allowed to perform some of the Clan deputy's duties while the impostor kept Squirrelflight by his side. Appealing to her loyalty to ThunderClan, the impostor convinced Bristlefrost to be his "eyes and ears," reporting cats who were not following the code or were showing signs of rebellion.

Bristlefrost found the idea that an impostor was inhabiting Bramblestar's body hard to believe, until she realized that the cold-eyed tyrant controlling her Clan could not be the leader she had admired. The real Bramblestar, she knew, would never have taken pleasure in hurting his Clanmates. While pretending to follow his orders, she began to conspire with the rebel cats and act as a spy from her place at the false Bramblestar's side.

Bristlefrost promised Squirrelflight that she would protect their leader's body in the hopes that one day the real Bramblestar could return to it. And so, when some of the rebels attempted to assassinate him, Bristlefrost had to defend the impostor. Afterwards, she lost the confidence of many of the

rebels, while the impostor appointed Bristlefrost deputy, even though she had never mentored an apprentice. Despite her inexperience, Bristlefrost did her best as deputy, but was relieved when Squirrelflight took over as acting leader and made her simply a warrior again.

As the Clans began to repair the damage the impostor had done, love blossomed between Bristlefrost and Rootspring, the SkyClan friend whose life she had once saved. But as neither could imagine leaving their Clan, they decided they could never be mates. Bristlefrost's resolve was shaken after Rootspring was pulled into the Dark Forest and she realized how much she loved him. She dreamed her way into the Dark Forest to help him. Together, she and the cat she loved fought the impostor, Ashfur, and the spirit cats he had rallied around him, and in the end Bristlefrost sacrificed herself—not just her life, but her spirit and her chance to join StarClan—to kill Ashfur and save the Clans.

Bramblestar's Nine Lives: The Return of Heroes



THE WATER IN the Moonpool was so cold that Brambleclaw gasped in shock when it touched his nose.

“You’ll get used to it,” Jayfeather mewed beside him. “Either that, or your nose will go numb.”

“Great,” muttered Brambleclaw, trying to lie more comfortably on the stones. Inside, he was quivering with excitement as well as exhaustion from making the long journey to the pool so soon after doing battle with the Dark Forest. Grief for Firestar dragged at his pelt and stung his eyes, but this was a moment that Brambleclaw had always known would arrive someday: his own ceremony of nine lives and the start of his leadership of ThunderClan.

“Stop wriggling,” Jayfeather hissed. “Close your eyes and wait for StarClan to come to you.”

Brambleclaw tucked his forepaws under his chest and let his muzzle fall a little deeper into the Moonpool. The shock of icy water briefly did battle with a heavy wave of tiredness that washed over him. He let himself slip into sleep, but almost at once the sound of whispers made him sit up and look around. What was disturbing him? He was supposed to be sharing tongues with StarClan!



He was still in the rocky hollow that held the Moonpool, round and silver in the moonlight, but now the slopes were filled with rows and rows of cats, glowing and murmuring. *StarClan!* Brambleclaw felt himself gaping as he saw cats so familiar they tore at his heart: Sorreltail, Ferncloud, and his mother, Goldenflower. . . . Soft footsteps sounded beside him, and he turned to see Jayfeather. The medicine cat's blue eyes were clear and bright and focused on Brambleclaw.

"You can see!" he exclaimed.

Jayfeather nodded. "In my dreams, yes." He flicked the tip of his tail. "Not that it makes much difference. Now, are you ready?"

Brambleclaw nodded, trying to ignore the nervous moths that had started whirling in his belly. Jayfeather seemed so old and calm, as if being among the ancient, long-dead cats was as natural as being among his living Clanmates. Brambleclaw looked at the medicine cat and felt a flash of pride. *I raised you as my son*, he thought. *You have done so well, in spite of everything.*

There was a flicker of orange at the far side of the shore, and a cat stepped out of the ranks of StarClan. His eyes shone as green as the forest, and his fur was the color of flame. Brambleclaw felt his eyes fill. "Firestar!" he breathed.

The orange cat trotted lightly over the stones to meet him. Firestar looked young and strong, with no sign of the terrible, bloody battle he had fought until his dying moments. "Welcome to StarClan, Brambleclaw!" he announced.

"It is an honor to be here," Brambleclaw croaked, hardly able to speak through the lump of emotion in his throat.

Firestar lightly rested the tip of his tail on Brambleclaw's flank. "Do not grieve anymore," he mewed. "We always knew this time would come."

Brambleclaw winced. "But not so soon!"

The orange tom shrugged. "StarClan chooses the moment it wishes us to join them. My lives were long and full, and I had so much happiness. And I chose the best deputy I could have, knowing that you would one day succeed me." He stepped closer and touched his muzzle to Brambleclaw's head. "I give you a life with the courage to make the hardest decisions, not just for ThunderClan but for all the Clans. The lake needs four Clans; with this life, serve them all well."

A bolt of lightning seemed to shoot through Brambleclaw's bones, rocking him on his paws. Was this how difficult it would be to honor all of the Clans? He fought for breath until the searing force eased and he was able to open his eyes.

Firestar had stepped back, and in his place stood a cat with fur the color of ripe barley. She smelled of milk and warmth and safety, and Brambleclaw fought down an urge to curl up at her paws and whimper like a kit. "Goldenflower," he whispered. "Is it really you?"



The she-cat's eyes softened. "Yes, my son, it is. I am so proud of you, my love. And so honored to give you this life." She leaned against him, and Brambleclaw flashed back to the nursery, tiny and mewling at Goldenflower's belly, with nothing more sinister than a game of moss-ball ahead of him. "I give you a life for understanding the love of a mother," she meowed. "But then, you have already known what it is to love as a father. Keep that knowledge, feel its power, and use it to keep all of your Clanmates safe."

Warmth filled Brambleclaw from nose to tail-tip, making his legs tremble and a fire blaze in his belly that roared with the sound of tigers. Yes, he had known what it was to love this fiercely. He pictured Lionblaze, Hollyleaf, and Jayfeather, and knew that he would still give his life in a moment to protect them. *Now that is how it must be for all of my Clanmates.*

Bluestar took Goldenflower's place; Brambleclaw felt a pang of sorrow as he watched his mother walk back to the starry rows on the far side of the hollow. Bluestar followed his gaze. "She will be watching over you, always," she murmured. She took a deep breath. "Brambleclaw, you have walked a long and difficult path to reach this point. But you have proven your loyalty to ThunderClan more times than I can count. I am proud to see my Clan pass into your care." She reached up and touched his nose. "I give you a life for clear judgment of character, for the ability to see the value of some cats, and the threat posed by others." Her eyes clouded. "It is a gift I did not always possess myself," she admitted.

"But you found Firestar!" Brambleclaw reminded her.

The she-cat's gaze softened. "So I did." She pressed her muzzle against his. "Tread carefully in whom you trust," she whispered.

This life washed through Brambleclaw's mind like an ice-cold river, making his ears ring and dazzling his eyes with light. He felt a stab of loneliness, as if the life was reminding him that some decisions would be

his alone, and the fate of every cat in his Clan would depend upon him making the right choice.

The next cat to walk forward was a dusky brown she-cat with eyes the color of sunlit ice. Her pelt was glossy and the muscles rippled on her shoulders as she padded over the stone. For a moment Brambleclaw didn't recognize her, then his heart leaped and he gasped, "Mousefur?!"

The she-cat's eyes gleamed. "Indeed. Did you think I would always be old and patch-furred, even here? You never knew me when I was young and strong, Brambleclaw. But this is how I will be for the rest of memory." She stretched up to touch his cheek. "I give you a life for listening to your elders, for taking advice even when it is not expected. The oldest cats have seen the most, and there is precious little that is new, even beside the lake. Trust their wisdom, learn from their mistakes, and remember that without them, you would have no Clan to lead."

Brambleclaw's mind filled with countless murmurs and he was buffeted by unseen cats brushing past him on both sides. The hollow was overflowing with cats! He strained to hear what they were saying, but the whispers were too quiet and too numerous to pick anything out. Brambleclaw felt his legs start to tremble from all the memories that swirled around him, and he was grateful when a cat put its shoulder against his side to steady him.

"It's all right," said a deep voice. "Receiving nine lives is always hard, but you are fresh from a battle as well. Stay strong, it will soon be over."

Brambleclaw opened his eyes and looked up at the gold-striped tabby in front of him. The tom's shoulders were even broader than Brambleclaw's, and the way he held his head made Brambleclaw think of the lions that were described in nursery tales.

"I am Lionheart," rumbled the huge tom. "I died in a battle with ShadowClan before you were born, but I have watched you grow, and I know you will make a great leader for my precious ThunderClan. I give you a life to have the greatest pride in your Clan, to honor the legacy that has been left by the leaders who have walked this path before"—he paused and nodded to Bluestar and Firestar—"and to have the courage to lay down your own paw prints over theirs. This is your chance to shape ThunderClan's destiny. Use it wisely and make us proud."

Lionheart had to stoop to rest his muzzle on top of Brambleclaw's head. Brambleclaw was filled with a warm energy that made his fur stand on end.

He pictured all the ThunderClan cats around him, felt their support like a blast of wind that could power him upward, higher than the treetops, to do whatever he wanted to do. "Thank you, Lionheart," he whispered breathlessly.

The noble cat stepped back and dipped his head. "It is always an honor to bestow a life," he meowed.

A lightly framed cat whose pale gray fur was dotted with darker flecks trotted forward. Her green eyes were wide and earnest. Brambleclaw stared at her with a swell of grief. "Ferncloud!"

The she-cat nodded. "Oh, Brambleclaw, this is a bittersweet meeting for both of us. I am so sorry to have left you all behind. Please look after Dustpelt for me, and all my precious kits."

"I will," Brambleclaw promised. "They miss you so much."

Ferncloud's eyes darkened. "And I miss them. But tell them I am watching over them and will be waiting for them always." She gave herself a shake. "I have a life to give you, Brambleclaw!" She sounded almost kitlike with excitement. She reached up and nudged his chin with her nose. "My life is for understanding that it is not only warriors who play a part in protecting the Clan. She-cats who choose to live in the nursery do just as much as those who patrol borders and stock the fresh-kill pile. We raise every new apprentice, feed every small mouth, teach every kit the importance of the warrior code. Without us, the Clan would be as rootless as an upturned tree. Honor the mother-cats, Brambleclaw, for we give you all life."

Brambleclaw was plunged back into the nursery, his nose filled with the scent of milk and warm fur, soft moss enclosing him while his mother licked his ears. The small, shadowed space seemed full of more cats than he could recognize, all bending over him, watching him with warmth in their eyes and purrs rumbling from their bellies. Brambleclaw's chest swelled with gratitude for everything these she-cats had done for his Clan, bringing new lives into the world and nurturing them until they were strong enough to hunt and fight alone. "Thank you, all of you," he murmured, and the cats around him nodded and carried on soothing him until he felt an urge to drift off to sleep.

"Wake up, Brambleclaw!" said an amused voice.

Brambleclaw blinked open his eyes and saw a dark gray she-cat standing in front of him. Her blue eyes reflected the stars as she watched

him. "Cinderpelt!" Brambleclaw exclaimed.

The she-cat dipped her head. "It took me a while to reach StarClan, but I am here now," she meowed. Brambleclaw wanted to ask her what she meant, but she went on before he could speak. "I give you a life for offering second chances," she announced, pressing her muzzle to his. "If a plan fails, if a Clanmate disappoints you, if destiny seems the wrong way around, never despair. Have the faith to try again, learn from what happened before, and success may come. The best things come to those who wait, Brambleclaw. Trust me." Again amusement bubbled up in her voice, and Brambleclaw relaxed into the flood of energy that raced through him. Suddenly he felt strong enough to fight every battle twice, double the size of the fresh-kill pile, and train apprentices for twice as long as usual, until they had every skill, every battle tactic perfected.

Cinderpelt brushed her tail lightly along his flank, glanced at Firestar, then padded back to the ranks. Another gray she-cat walked forward, paler than Cinderpelt, with eyes the color of a dawn sky in newleaf. Brambleclaw's breath caught in his throat. This was not a cat he had expected to see.

The she-cat nodded as if she knew what he was thinking. "I walk with the Tribe of Endless Hunting now," she meowed, her voice echoing as if she was still among the vast mountains and tumbling waterfalls where the Tribe cats lived. "But tonight I have come here with my StarClan friends to give you one of your lives."

Brambleclaw bowed his head. "Oh, Feathertail, not a day goes by that I don't think of you. I am so sorry we left you behind."

Feathertail flicked her ears. "But I was part of the Tribe's prophecy, remember? The silver cat who would destroy Sharptooth? The mountains are where I belong, but I have never forgotten the Clans. I watch over you still, and I am so, so proud of you, Brambleclaw." She reached up and pressed her soft, stone-scented cheek against his. "I give you a life for exploring beyond the borders of your Clan, for seeing the possibilities that lie in unexpected places, and the untrodden paths that wait to be discovered. You are not trapped by your invisible boundaries. If you cannot find the answers within them, then look farther off. There is always hope somewhere."

The sharp, slicing wind that Brambleclaw remembered from his stay in the mountains whipped around him, buffeting his fur and rocking him on

his paws. He heard the keening cry of an eagle far above him, and his pelt felt damp from the mist thrown up by the waterfall. A pang of longing shot through him, for all the cats he had known and lost, for the long path he had followed in search of a new home for the Clans, for the sights he had seen far beyond the lake and the hills.

"I will be with you, always," Feathertail whispered to him as she faded away to sparkling, empty air.

Brambleclaw looked around. There was just one more life left to receive. Who would give it to him? What more did his leadership need? The starlit cats lined around the hollow were still and watchful. Even the ripples on the surface of the Moonpool had stilled. Everything seemed to be waiting.

Paw steps sounded behind Brambleclaw. He spun around and saw a small, black figure descending the spiral path that led down to the edge of the pool. Brambleclaw tipped his head on one side. Could it be . . . ? Surely not! "Ravenpaw?" he croaked. "Is that you?"

The tom stepped into the light cast by the StarClan cats on the other side of the hollow. The tip of his tail twitched nervously, and his blue eyes blinked several times before he answered. "Yes, it is I," he meowed. He took a deep breath. "Wow. I never expected to see those faces again." He stared at the starry cats, mouth open.

"It's pretty extraordinary, isn't it?" Brambleclaw agreed. He shifted his paws. "So, are you here because . . . well, because you're in your own StarClan now?"

There was a flicker of amusement in Ravenpaw's eyes. "You mean, am I a living cat, or like them?" He nodded at the StarClan ranks. "Oh, I'm one of them," he mewed. "But also not, because my life in the Clans was so long ago. I was so happy with Barley, and I miss him so much." His gaze clouded. "But I see him still, in our home of hay, and I know it won't be long before he is with me once more."

"I remember Barley," meowed Brambleclaw, picturing the sturdy, welcoming black-and-white cat who had given him and his Clanmates shelter at the start of the Great Journey. "He must miss you too."

Ravenpaw blinked. "I should hope so! Now, Brambleclaw, it is a long time since I set eyes on you, but I see why Firestar chose you to be his deputy. I am honored to give you your ninth life, and I am humbled to be part of the new leadership of ThunderClan." He looked at Firestar. "Your

Clan will grieve the loss of my dear friend for countless moons,” he murmured. “But I know his spirit will be with them all forever.”

Lifting his head, he stepped forward and rested his muzzle against Brambleclaw. His voice rang out clear around the rocks of the hollow. “I give you a life for speaking out against injustice, for pursuing the truth above all else. Lies bring shadows in which darker things can hide. Never fear the truth, Brambleclaw, however blinding it may be.”

A jolt of light shot through Brambleclaw, shaking him on his paws. His mind cleared as if all his thoughts had been sucked out by the wind, then filled with sunshine so bright he thought his head might blow apart. There was a sharp, dazzling pain before a sense of peace descended on him, all the way down to the end of his tail. Brambleclaw took a deep, shuddering breath.

“It is over,” Firestar whispered in his ear. “You have done well.” He raised his voice. “Welcome, Bramblestar!”

His new name echoed around the hollow, picked up and cast aloft by every cat that watched him. “Bramblestar! Bramblestar!”

Bramblestar drew himself up and dipped his head to them. “Thank you all,” he meowed. “I will do my best to live each of these lives according to the gifts you have made. Firestar, your Clan will never forget you.” He held the gaze of his green-eyed mentor. “And if I can be half the leader you were, I will be proud.”

Firestar nodded in return. “Go well, Bramblestar,” he ordered. “I will be with you always.”



ShadowClan



Introduction to ShadowClan: Blackstar Speaks

WHEN WE LIVED in the forest, the other Clans used to say that the hearts of ShadowClan cats had been chilled by the cold winds from the mountains, turning us cruel and cunning. But now that we live around the lake and share the breezes with all the other Clans, what excuse do they make for our skill in battle, our dedication to training as hard as we can, and our absolute loyalty to our Clanmates? Back in the forest, our readiness to invade other territories came from a lack of prey inside our own borders—lizards and frogs can only fill so many bellies in leaf-bare, and it seemed unfair that our neighbors and rivals had rabbits and woodland birds in every season.

And if our leaders took us into battle, what kind of warriors would we have been to refuse? ShadowClan cats are proud of who they are, proud to fight more bravely and tirelessly than any other Clan. Our first warriors were those who were most willing to take action to answer a complaint, to stand by the proof of claws and teeth rather than fine words. We settled on the outskirts of the forest because that gave us the independence we desired, the freedom to choose our own borders and pursue prey as far as we could run. The Carrionplace was a bonus, supplying us with rats, though we had to learn fast how to tell if they had been tainted by Twoleg waste and would give us bellyaches.

For many seasons, our Clan believed in keeping itself pure: strangers are not welcome, and kittypets have no place inside our borders. Tigerstar was an exception, since he was born and raised in ThunderClan, but if our ancestors were willing to give him nine lives, that showed they wanted him to lead us. We have allowed some rogues to join us too, but only after

proving their loyalty and courage. Inviting Scourge and his cats of BloodClan into the forest may have been a bad idea, but ShadowClan emerged victorious from that battle. Rowanstar's weakness in allowing power to slip from his paws and failing to stop the Kin from conquering ShadowClan, and then in his disbanding of the Clan entirely, was a shameful episode in our history, but ShadowClan rose triumphant once again. With StarClan's blessing on the new Tigerstar, ShadowClan became stronger than ever before. And now, beside the lake, we are still the most feared Clan, the cats who have the fiercest skills in stalking and fighting. These virtues have nothing to do with cold winds; they are bred within us, and will endure for as long as the warrior code survives.





Raggedstar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Sharp-tongued
Prickly
Determined
Devoted

• MENTORS •
Brackenfoot

• APPRENTICES •
Cloudpelt

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I will never be proud of defeat!”

– RAGGEDPELT, *YELLOWFANG’S SECRET*

RAGGEDSTAR WAS BORN in ShadowClan to the warrior Featherstorm, but the identity of his father was always a mystery. His Clanmates taunted him with rumors that his father had been a kittypet, and he grew all the more determined to prove his courage and skill in battle. It was no surprise that Cedarstar chose him to be deputy when he was still a young warrior, after his daring plan to trap rats at the Carrionplace.

As a warrior, Raggedpelt was respected by his Clanmates, but not particularly well liked because of his sharp-tongued, defensive nature. Only Yellowpaw, who would one day be Yellowfang, saw through to the vulnerability that made him lash out. She insisted they try to find Raggedpelt’s father in Twolegplace, but when they went in search of him they met with nothing but hostility and denial. Raggedpelt’s father was a kittypet named Hal who had no interest in claiming his Clanborn son. Moons later, an attack by Twolegplace rogues brought Raggedpelt face-to-face with Hal once more—and this time Raggedpelt killed him.

Yellowfang's decision to become a medicine cat made Raggedpelt furious. He couldn't comprehend why she would give up the future she had with him to follow such an isolated path. But it was too late to untangle their paths; Yellowfang soon revealed that she was expecting his kits. Raggedpelt was overjoyed at the prospect of becoming a father, then outraged when Yellowfang said their kits could never know who their real mother was. Only one kit survived, an angry tom with a crooked tail who grew up to become Brokenstar.

Raggedstar raised his son to be fierce enough to fight back against the teasing that came from having no mother. He was desperately proud of Brokentail and made him deputy as soon as he could, after Cloudpelt was killed in a skirmish with WindClan. But even Raggedstar's ambition paled beside Brokentail's desire for power. Too late, Raggedstar realized that his son was training cats to fight to kill. He confessed to Yellowfang that he had made a terrible mistake in appointing Brokentail to be deputy so soon and tried to tell Brokentail to train less fiercely. Days later, Brokentail ambushed and killed his father in a remote part of the territory, blaming WindClan trespassers for his death.



• SAGEWHISKER •

Sagewhisker



• CLAN •



• POSITION •

Medicine cat

• TRAITS •

Perceptive
Gifted
Understanding
Skilled

• MENTORS •

Redthistle

• APPRENTICES •

Yellowfang

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“No warrior wants to die. Especially in a battle that should not have happened.”

–SAGEWHISKER, *NIGHT WHISPERS*

SAGEWHISKER WAS THE medicine cat before Yellowfang. She served Cedarstar, dying before she had to witness Raggedstar’s mistakes or the cruelty of Brokenstar’s leadership. Sagewhisker had a prodigious memory for herbs and a gift for listening to StarClan, but her greatest strength lay in observing the cats around her. She was the first to realize that the young she-cat Yellowpaw, who would one day be Yellowfang, had a unique sensitivity to other cats’ ailments and felt their pain in sympathy. Sagewhisker encouraged Yellowpaw’s curiosity about berries and herbs, secretly hoping that Yellowpaw would ask to be apprenticed as a medicine cat.

But Yellowpaw seemed intent on following the path of a warrior despite her talents and earned the warrior name Yellowfang. Close questioning after a clash with the Twolegplace cats confirmed Sagewhisker’s suspicions that, even though Yellowfang had escaped with hardly a scratch, she knew exactly where her Clanmates had been hurt. Yellowfang still had her heart

set on serving her Clan as a warrior, not a medicine cat, but Sagewhisker was insistent that she knew the young she-cat's true destiny.

Eventually Yellowfang could no longer bear to fight alongside her Clanmates when she could feel every blow that was struck, and she asked Sagewhisker if she could train as a medicine cat. Sagewhisker quickly agreed and helped Yellowfang find a way to block out the pain of other cats. Soon after Yellowfang became a full medicine cat, Sagewhisker realized the young she-cat was expecting Raggedstar's kits, and she wondered if she had made a terrible mistake. But Sagewhisker believed that being a medicine cat was more important than anything else, and she persuaded Yellowfang to tell Raggedstar so that their kits would have at least one parent in the Clan. Yellowfang took her mentor's advice, and gave Brokenkit up to Lizardstripe as soon as he was born. Sagewhisker kept Yellowfang out of the nursery so she was not distracted by the sight of her son and gave her herbs to dry up her milk.

Sagewhisker died in her den, midway through sorting herbs. She had fulfilled her duty to her very last breath and trusted Yellowfang to do the same.

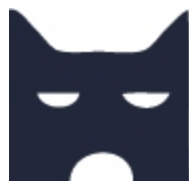


• RUNNINGNOSE AND LITTLECLOUD •

Runningnose and Littlecloud



• CLAN •



RUNNINGNOSE

• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Sickly
Cheery

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



LITTLECLOUD



• POSITION •
Medicine cat



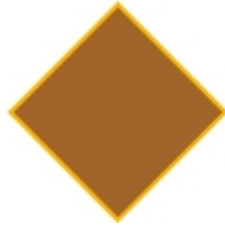
• TRAITS •
Resilient
Generous



• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I made a vow to serve ShadowClan and that will outlast any leader.”

– RUNNINGNOSE, *YELLOWFANG’S SECRET*

RUNNINGNOSE WAS CHOSEN by Yellowfang to train as a ShadowClan medicine cat. Weaker than his littermates due to his tendency to catch every passing sickness, he was nonetheless cheerful and keen to learn. Yellowfang never did teach him to cure his own sniffles, but he became a skilled and well-respected medicine cat, loyal to his Clan above all else, and patient with the most querulous elder or fractious kit.

His life became much harder once Yellowfang was forced out of ShadowClan, leaving Runningnose in the grip of Brokenstar’s bloodthirsty rule. As younger and younger kits were trained to fight, Runningnose had to patch up the tiniest bodies when they returned injured and scared out of their fur. His heart broke for every scrap of life that was lost in Brokenstar’s obsessive quest to conquer his rivals.

Even when Brokenstar was captured by ThunderClan, and ShadowClan was free to choose a new leader, Runningnose shouldered the heavy burden of knowing that Nightstar had not been granted his nine lives. Brokenstar still had his final life, despite no longer leading Shadow Clan, and StarClan would not appoint a new leader until that life had been spent. Both Nightstar and his medicine cat were left to lie to the rest of the Clan about the ceremony. Runningnose could only wonder how his path had led him to this, hiding a terrible secret from his precious Clanmates while he struggled to keep Nightstar strong enough to lead them.

Littlecloud was Runningnose’s apprentice. Born during Brokenstar’s rule, he was forced into warrior training when he was just three moons old. After already being a warrior, he was inspired to become a medicine cat after being rescued by Cinderpelt of ThunderClan during ShadowClan’s

Great Sickness. Disease from the rats at Carrionplace brought a different kind of death to ShadowClan, and Littlecloud escaped with Whitethroat into ThunderClan territory. Cinderpelt took pity on them and kept them hidden from passing patrols while she treated their sickness. They eventually went back to ShadowClan, where Littlecloud turned away from his warrior status to become a medicine cat.



Cinderpelt's kind deed was rewarded by a fair and peaceful medicine cat in ShadowClan for many, many moons. Littlecloud was always willing to share herbs and experience with ThunderClan and watched out for blind Jayfeather on his first independent journeys to the Moonpool. He was devastated when his apprentice, Flametail, drowned after falling through ice on the lake, but unlike his Clanmates, he didn't blame Jayfeather for failing to save him. For Littlecloud, everything was a test of his faith in StarClan, and that never faltered throughout his long life.



• BROKENSTAR •

Brokenstar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Ambitious
Persuasive
Cunning
Brutal

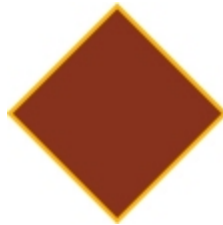
• MENTORS •
Nightstar

• APPRENTICES •
Stumpytail
Moss paw
Volewhisper

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I’ve shared dreams with StarClan. You will have to kill me nine times over before I join them. Do you really think you’re strong enough to do that?”

– BROKENSTAR TO FIREPAW, *INTO THE WILD*

BORN IN SECRET to the ShadowClan medicine cat Yellowfang and raised by Lizardstripe, a queen who had no wish to nurse an extra mouth at her belly, Brokenstar walked a twisted path from the start. From the moment he opened his eyes, he was determined to prove to his Clanmates that he was stronger, braver, and more ferocious than they could ever be. Unflinchingly loyal to his Clan and the warrior code, he quickly became deputy to the leader, his father, Raggedstar—and then killed Raggedstar in order to become leader himself, despite knowing that he was sending his own father to StarClan.

When he stood at the head of ShadowClan, Brokenstar oversaw a reign of terror, unleashing attacks on WindClan and training the smallest kits to fight in the thick of battle. When Yellowfang could no longer bear to treat the wounds on cats who should still have been in the nursery, she spoke out

against this practice and was exiled from the Clan. Brokenstar continued his bloodthirsty leadership, driving out WindClan and setting his sights on taking over ThunderClan territory too. But he overextended himself—and underestimated his neighbors—and ended up blind and captive in the ThunderClan camp. Yellowfang grudgingly cared for him, still without telling him the truth about his birth.

When Brokenstar plotted with Tigerstar to launch an attack on ThunderClan from within, Yellowfang took it upon herself to end her son's bloodstained life. Feeding him deathberries, she told him exactly who had kitted him, and how he had brought his destruction upon himself.

Brokenstar continued to rage against the Clans from the Dark Forest, joining with Tigerstar to recruit discontented cats in their dreams. In the final, desperate battle, Yellowfang came from StarClan to obliterate her only son, breaking his neck and sending him out of the Clans forever.



• NIGHTSTAR •

Nightstar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Loyal
Guarded
Secretive
Hopeful

• MENTORS •
Foxheart

• APPRENTICES •
Brokenstar

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“It doesn’t matter that StarClan didn’t give me nine lives. Even if I’m not the true leader, I will hold ShadowClan together.”

– NIGHTSTAR, *EXILE FROM SHADOWCLAN*

AS A WARRIOR, Nightstar, then known as Nightpelt, was dedicated, thoughtful, and well respected. Cedarstar appointed him as mentor to Brokenpaw, hoping that Nightpelt’s gentle approach would soften some of the angry young cat’s impulses. Brokenpaw had no patience with a warrior that he saw as weak and cowardly, and sought training from Raggedpelt instead. Nightpelt’s poor health led to his early retirement to the elders’ den soon after Brokentail became a warrior. He prepared to live out his days there peacefully. But Brokenstar exiled Nightpelt and the elders, telling them the best way for them to support their Clan was to take responsibility for their own survival instead of relying on younger Clanmates as elders had always done. Nightpelt found a new purpose in caring for his elderly denmates until Brokenstar’s bloodthirsty rule, and the death of kits too young to be forced into battle, stirred him to action. He and the elders and other exiles of ShadowClan believed Brokenstar was destroying ShadowClan, and they joined ThunderClan in fighting against him.

After Brokenstar was exiled, Nightpelt put himself forward as ShadowClan's new leader. He went to the Moonstone with the medicine cat, Runningnose, where both cats were dismayed to learn that StarClan regarded Brokenstar as the ShadowClan leader still, and thus would not give Nightstar nine lives. It was perhaps Nightstar's greatest moment of courage that he was prepared to lie to his Clanmates and tell them that StarClan approved of his leadership, in order to save them from any further influence from that dark-hearted cat.

Nightstar tried to steer his Clan into a time of peace and recovery, but age and ill health caught up with him and he died after just a few seasons. A bout of greencough stole his single life, leaving ShadowClan lost and leaderless, and ready for Tigerstar.



• TIGERSTAR (TIGERCLAW) •

Tigerstar (Tigerclaw)

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Underhanded
Influential
Mighty
Manipulative

• MENTORS •
Thistleclaw

• APPRENTICES •
Darkstripe
Ravenpaw

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I’m going to kill you, and kill you again. As many times as it takes for you to join StarClan forever. It’s time for me to lead this Clan!”

– TIGERCLAW TO BLUESTAR, *FOREST OF SECRETS*

THE FIRST SHADOWCLAN leader to bear the name Tigerstar was born in ThunderClan, son of Pinestar and Leopardfoot. Soon after Tigerkit was born, his father left the Clan to take refuge in the life of a kittypet. The shame of this stayed with Tigerstar for all his life and beyond, and his pelt burned with the need to prove his own loyalty, with the warrior code running through his veins. Mentored by the cruel and ambitious Thistleclaw, young Tigerpaw, whose warrior name would be Tigerclaw, wanted to be the greatest warrior his Clan had seen. A skirmish with a young stray kittypet—which Tigerpaw won easily—fueled his hunger for victory. In a clash over Sunningrocks with RiverClan, Tigerclaw saw his chance to kill the ThunderClan deputy, Redtail, and blame it on their rivals. Bluestar eventually made Tigerclaw deputy as he had hoped, but by then her attention had turned to the new arrival in the Clan, a former kittypet named Firepaw, who seemed to be taking the place in Bluestar’s confidence that Tigerclaw sought for himself.

As Bluestar declined into old age, Tigerclaw decided he had to hasten his promotion to leader. He tried to lure Bluestar to the Thunderpath but a young apprentice named Cinderpaw came in her place and was badly injured by a passing monster. Increasingly desperate, Tigerclaw plotted with rogues that had once belonged to ShadowClan, and with Brokenstar, the former leader of ShadowClan now held captive by Bluestar, to launch a direct attack on the ThunderClan camp. The attackers were defeated and Tigerclaw was banished from the territory forever. He left swearing vengeance, and found it by joining up with rogues and then charming his way into ShadowClan, which was floundering under Nightstar's leadership. Desperate for a strong cat to reassert their position among the other Clans, ShadowClan welcomed Tigerclaw, and when Nightstar died with no deputy to replace him, Tigerclaw was the natural successor.

Tigerstar began plotting against his former Clan at once, first laying a trail of dead rabbits to lure a pack of wild dogs into the heart of the camp, and then forming an ill-advised alliance with Scourge and his violent cats from Twolegplace, BloodClan. Little did Tigerstar realize that Scourge was the young kittypet whom he'd fought all those moons before. At the moment when ShadowClan, RiverClan, and BloodClan were poised to leap into battle against their neighbors, Scourge turned on Tigerstar and ripped all nine lives from him with one terrible blow.

But for Tigerstar, death was no obstacle to his pursuit of revenge on Firestar and all of ThunderClan. He walked in the dreams of his sons, Hawkfrost and Brambleclaw, training them among the shadows of the Dark Forest and urging them to kill Firestar. Hawkfrost, a RiverClan warrior, was willing to do whatever it took to please Tigerstar, but at the last moment Brambleclaw realized his loyalties lay with his Clan leader, not his long-dead father, and he killed Hawkfrost instead.



Undaunted, Tigerstar walked in the dreams of more and more cats from the Clans, raising an army of warriors who were discontented, restless, or simply keen to learn more fighting skills. Finally he led an onslaught of warriors, dead and alive, out of the Dark Forest and into the living world of the Clans. Face-to-face with his enemy Firestar, Tigerstar struck the fatal blow that took the ThunderClan leader's ninth life. But Firestar matched it with a strike that ended Tigerstar's existence in the Dark Forest, and put him beyond revenge, beyond influence, and beyond a warrior's darkest dreams once and for all.



Blackstar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Proud
Guarded
Commanding
Weak-willed

• APPRENTICES •
Dawncloud

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Hope is easy, but it catches no prey.”

– BLACKSTAR, *MIDNIGHT*

BLACKSTAR HAD THE unenviable task of taking over the leadership from Tigerstar. ShadowClan was in ruins, awash with the blood of its own warriors and stained by the memory of inviting BloodClan into the forest. Blackstar took a dogged, loyal, and almost unnoticeable path to restoring the strength of his Clan. He had faith in the virtues at the heart of ShadowClan, the loyalty and courage that ran through the veins of every cat. Although he had played a role in ShadowClan bringing death to the forest, he refused to apologize for cats who no longer walked among his Clanmates. Instead, he looked to the future, but could be argumentative and struggled to grapple with new ideas. When Tawnypelt returned from her quest to find the mysterious Midnight, it took some time for him to agree to join the Great Journey.

Settled in their new territory beside the lake, beneath pine trees that reminded the ShadowClan cats of their former home, Blackstar became disillusioned with a life that seemed as difficult as ever for his warriors. Scarce prey, troublesome kittypets, even Twolegs that invaded the clearing at the edge of their territory, were all things he hoped to have left behind. When his medicine cat, Littlecloud, didn't seem to be getting reassurance from StarClan, Blackstar began to question why their ancestors had brought them to this place.



Then a charismatic rogue named Sol moved to ShadowClan after a battle involving all four Clans. Sol offered a different way of living to Blackstar, one in which cats took care of their own needs, hunted for themselves, and lived free from the burden of the warrior code. He told Blackstar that each cat was more powerful than StarClan because they could control their own destinies. The fact that Sol had predicted a recent eclipse of the sun convinced Blackstar that he should listen to this stranger. ShadowClan stopped attending Gatherings, and Blackstar forbade Littlecloud from visiting the Moonpool. He returned to using the name Blackfoot and ordered all apprentice training to cease.

In despair at the disintegration of ShadowClan, Lionblaze, Hollyleaf, and Jaypaw schemed with Tigerpaw and Dawnpaw to create a false message from StarClan. Lying in wait for Blackfoot in a marshy part of the territory, they dug up saplings to fall onto the former leader and trap him while Jaypaw pretended to be a StarClan cat with a dire warning to start believing in the warrior ancestors once more. At the last moment, Jaypaw

was joined by two real StarClan cats, Raggedstar and Runningnose, who told Blackfoot that Sol represented darkness and the imminent loss of the warrior code. Stunned back into faith, Blackstar reclaimed his leader name and exiled Sol.

He led his ShadowClan warriors against the Dark Forest in the Great Battle, and survived. The oldest Clan leader by many moons, still proud of his warriors' fighting skills and fearsome reputation, Blackstar eventually died by drowning during the Great Storm.



Tawnypelt

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Deputy

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Proud
Loyal
Fierce

• MENTORS •
Brackenfur
Oakfur

• APPRENTICES •
Starlingwing
Grassheart
Needletail
Snaketooth
Conefoot

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I want to be the best warrior I can be. And I can’t be that in
ThunderClan.”

– TAWNYPAW, *THE DARKEST HOUR*

BORN IN THUNDERCLAN, Brambleclaw’s littermate and the daughter of Tigerstar and Goldenflower, Tawnypaw was a bright and confident apprentice, with a quickness of temper that sometimes led her into clashes with her Clanmates, especially when her loyalty was questioned. She was horrified to learn the truth behind her father’s exile, which had happened when she was still a kit, and insisted that her loyalty was to ThunderClan only, refusing her father’s continued requests to join him in ShadowClan once he became their leader.

When Tigerstar allied his Clan with RiverClan and orchestrated a deadly attack on ThunderClan, Tawnypaw found herself judged more and more harshly by her Clanmates for the crimes of her father. Pushed to the breaking point by Smallear’s comparison of her with Tigerstar because she

seemed to share her father's reluctance for clearing out the elders' den, Tawnypaw left her home and went to find acceptance in ShadowClan. Even after Tigerstar's death in the battle with BloodClan, Tawnypaw stayed with her adopted Clan, gaining her warrior name—Tawnypelt—and earning Blackstar's trust.

Tawnypelt went on the quest to the sun-drown-place as the representative of ShadowClan, where her courage and willingness to look beyond Clan boundaries made the unlikely group of cats bond much more quickly. She was less hasty to dismiss Crowfeather because of his sullenness and quick temper, and encouraged Feathertail—who would later die saving him from the mountain lion Sharptooth—to see past his shy exterior to the qualities beneath.

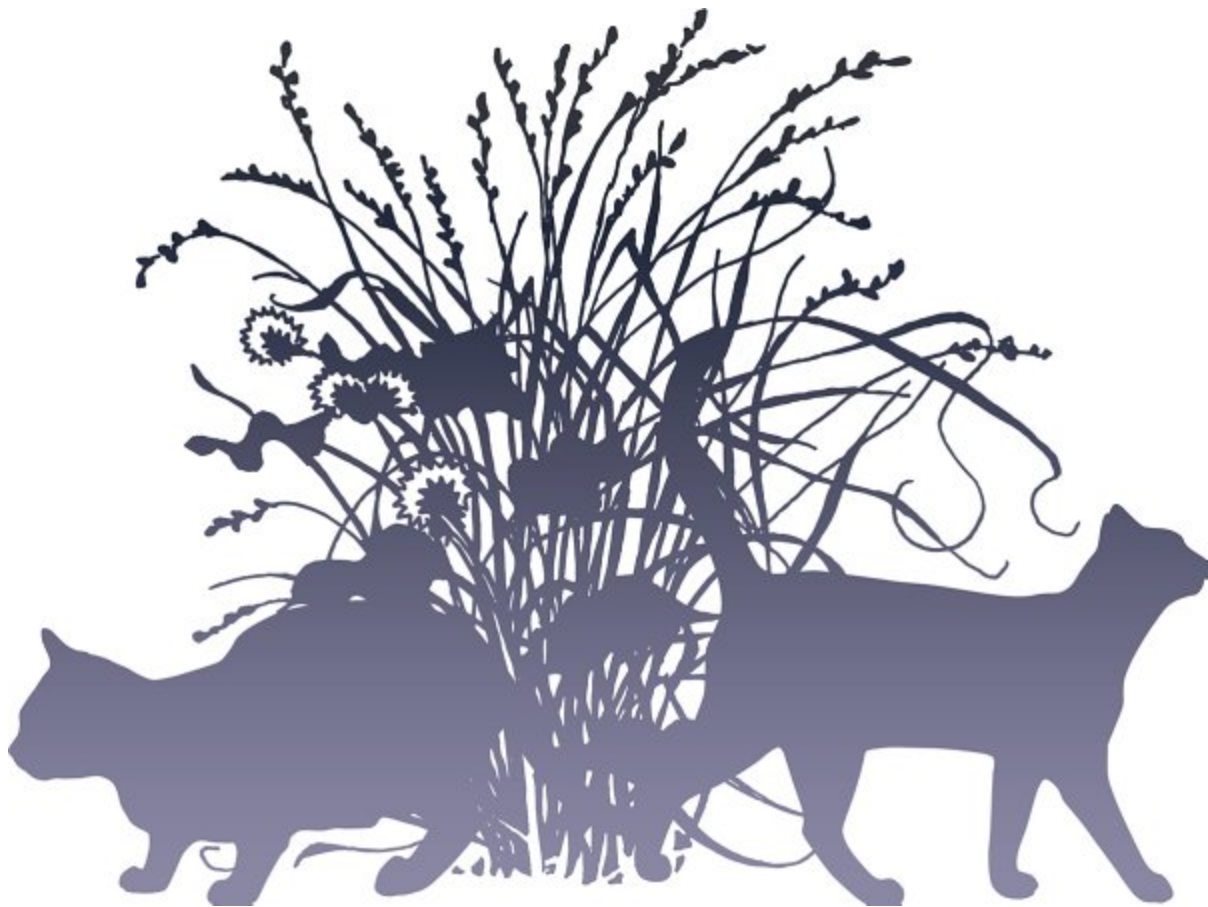
Tawnypelt was visited by Tigerstar in her dreams, just like Brambleclaw, but she refused to accept his offer of secret training because she knew her father would never help her achieve what she wanted most: security, peace, and loyalty to one Clan above all. Instead, she found this in Rowanclaw, who fathered her three kits: Flametail, Dawnpelt, and Tigerheart.



Tawnypelt proved that being loyal didn't mean treating all other cats as enemies. She stayed friendly with Brambleclaw and other ThunderClan cats and raised her kits to have the same sense of fairness. When Rowanstar became ShadowClan's leader, Tawnypelt stood by him, even as most of ShadowClan joined Darktail's Kin. Once Darktail was defeated, Tawnypelt served as Rowanstar's deputy after the departure of their son—the former

deputy Tigerheart—and tried to help rebuild ShadowClan. When Rowanstar dissolved the Clan, Tawnypelt joined SkyClan along with the remnants of their Clan, but found it difficult to act as a SkyClan cat. Some suggested Tawnypelt should lead a new ShadowClan, but she doubted if that was StarClan's plan. Rowanclaw was killed and Tawnypelt lost all interest in becoming leader herself: ShadowClan, she said, was dead.

When Tigerheart came back, he was dead, too, a body dragged to the Moonpool. Tawnypelt mourned, and, when StarClan resurrected her son as ShadowClan's new leader, rejoiced. ShadowClan formed again, with Tawnypelt as deputy. But soon she chose to give up the position of deputy and become a warrior once more, believing that ShadowClan should look toward the future, not the past.





• FLAMETAILED •

Flametail



• CLAN •

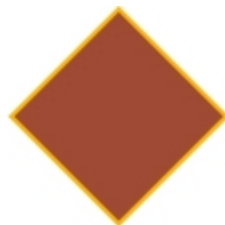


• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Caring
Careful
Protective
Dedicated

• MENTORS •
Littlecloud

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“This time we cannot risk relying on anyone but ourselves.”

– FLAMETAILED, *NIGHT WHISPERS*

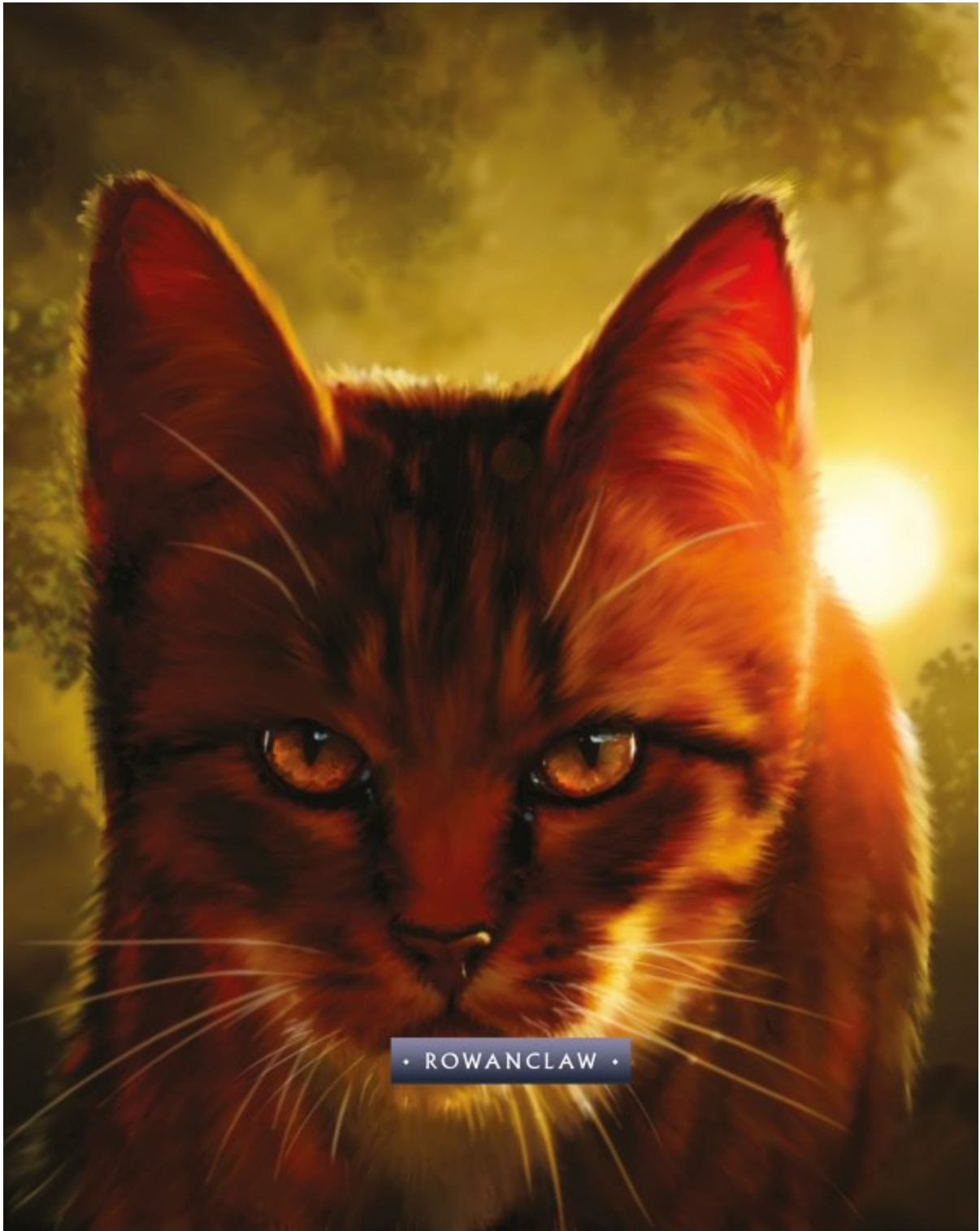
FLAMETAILED WAS THE son of Tawnypelt and Rowanclaw, and littermate to Dawnpelt and Tigerheart. When he was an apprentice, but had not yet been given a mentor, Blackstar lost faith in StarClan. Tawnypelt had no wish for her kits to grow up in a Clan that no longer listened to its warrior ancestors, so she took them to ThunderClan and asked for shelter. Flamepaw was particularly angry about Blackstar's change of heart because he was on the verge of being apprenticed to Littlecloud the medicine cat, but all the same, he and his littermates were intrigued to meet their ThunderClan kin: Lionblaze, Jaypaw, and Hollyleaf.

When Jaypaw came up with the idea to fake a sign from StarClan, Flamepaw and his littermates were keen to help. StarClan made their false sign a reality, sealing his belief in StarClan and making him even more determined to become a medicine cat. After returning to ShadowClan, he was apprenticed to Littlecloud.

He was faced with a lot of responsibility early on when Littlecloud became ill, but Flametail was confident in his skills and treated his Clanmates. On a visit to the Moonpool, Flametail was warned that a time of war was coming, and that the Clans would have to stand alone in order to survive. Littlecloud refused to believe that medicine cat allegiances across Clan borders could ever be threatened. But with Littlecloud confined to the elders' den, Flametail convinced Blackstar to heed their ancestors' warning and cut themselves off from the other Clans.

Flametail started to experience dreadful visions of drowning. He interpreted them as a warning that a terrible time of darkness was coming and worked harder to prepare for the battle that seemed inevitable.

Seeing that the young medicine cat was exhausted, Flametail's sister persuaded him to play a game on the frozen lake. The ice broke beneath Flametail's paws, sending him down to a cold, watery death. He was aware of Jayfeather diving down to help him, and another, unfamiliar cat nudging Jayfeather back to the surface. Flametail was left to drown and was forced to watch his Clanmates battle the Dark Forest from his place in StarClan.



• ROWANCLAW •

Rowanclaw

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Haughty
Loyal
Indecisive
Regretful

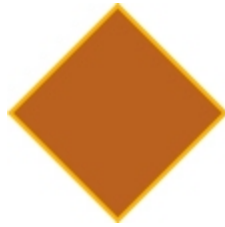
• MENTORS •
Jaggedtooth

• APPRENTICES •
Talonpaw
Ivytail

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Don’t look to me for leadership! I failed my Clan. I failed my kin. I’m not worthy of being their leader.”

– ROWANSTAR, *DARKEST NIGHT*

ROWANSTAR WAS A loyal warrior, a reliable deputy, a loving mate and father, and a weak leader. As Blackstar’s deputy, he was an intelligent strategist in battle, but as leader he was unable to control his Clanmates.

Unsure what to do with the many young cats in his Clan, Rowanstar assigned apprentices to brand-new warriors. Without experienced guidance, the young cats grew rebellious. As Darktail and his rogues moved onto ShadowClan territory, many cats preferred their less disciplined life to the rules of the Clans. Finally, Darktail took over ShadowClan entirely. Rowanstar, his mate, Tawnypelt, and their son Tigerheart took refuge in ThunderClan, while the rest of the Clan chose to follow Darktail.

After the Clans drove out Darktail and his Kin, ShadowClan promised loyalty to Rowanstar. But they quickly began to turn against him once more, bitter that so many of their Clanmates had died or fled Darktail’s rule. When Tigerheart disappeared, along with his ThunderClan love, Dovewing, Rowanstar dissolved ShadowClan, giving its territory to SkyClan. Now

there were only four Clans beside the lake, although StarClan had made it clear that there must be five Clans for the warrior cats to survive.

Tree helped Rowanstar to see the ShadowClan dead who had died at Darktail's paws, who told Rowanstar that, for ShadowClan to be reborn, he needed to find the missing cats who had fled Darktail's rule. Instead, Rowanstar, feeling hopeless, surrendered the additional lives StarClan had given him and became Rowanclaw again.

Many cats were enraged by Rowanclaw's decision. Sleekwhisker, who had once joined Darktail's Kin, kidnapped Tawnypelt and a pair of ShadowClan kits. Furious over Rowanclaw's weak leadership, she threatened to kill Tawnypelt and the kits unless he gave himself up. Rowanclaw agreed to exchange his life for his mate's, but when Sleekwhisker refused to release the kits, led an attack on her. Rowanclaw's patrol won the battle, but Rowanclaw was killed. With his last breath, he assured Tawnypelt that Tigerheart would return—and encouraged him from StarClan as his son did indeed come back to reunite ShadowClan at last.



Needletail



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Sacrificing
Regretful
Rebellious
Lonely

• MENTORS •
Tawnypelt

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Just because I don’t always follow stupid rules doesn’t mean I don’t know they exist.”

– NEEDLEPAW, *THE APPRENTICE’S QUEST*

SHARP-WITTED AND SHARP-TONGUED, Needletail rarely respected authority. As an apprentice, Needleclaw invited herself on the ThunderClan patrol traveling to SkyClan’s gorge, where she quickly became close to Rain, one of the supposed SkyClan cats. When the Clan cats discovered the truth—that Darktail and his followers were rogues who had driven out the real SkyClan—they escaped. On the way back to the Clans, Needleclaw and Alderpaw found two abandoned kits. Needleclaw named one Violetkit, for her sweet-smelling fur, and when Violetkit was brought to ShadowClan, Needleclaw treated her like a younger sister.

When Needleclaw discovered that Darktail’s rogues had followed them from the gorge, she renewed her flirtatious friendship with Rain. Eventually, Needleclaw and several other apprentices left ShadowClan to live with the rogues, and Violetkit went with them. Among the rogues, Needleclaw decided that she was ready to become a warrior, named herself Needletail, and took Violetkit as her apprentice. Needletail was saddened when Violetclaw returned to ShadowClan without her. Later, when Darktail’s rogues and their new ShadowClan followers, now calling themselves the Kin, took over ShadowClan, Needletail convinced Violetclaw to stay.

But Needletail was no better at following Darktail’s orders than she had been at listening to Rowanstar, and among the Kin, the consequences of

disobedience could be fatal. After the Kin took over RiverClan's camp, Needletail allowed Mothwing and Alderheart to collect herbs from the medicine den. As punishment, Darktail imprisoned her. Violetpaw, now a spy for the Clans, tried to help the prisoners escape, but was caught. Darktail gave Needletail the chance to regain his favor by killing Violetpaw, but instead Needletail sacrificed herself, giving her beloved friend a chance to flee.

Needletail did not calmly pass into StarClan. As a ghost, she led Violetshine, now a warrior, to find Tree, the loner who prophecy claimed would help the Clans. When she moved on to StarClan, Needletail was the first to make her way into the Dark Forest to help fight the impostor trying to destroy the Clans. Together, she and Violetshine battled Darktail again, and Needletail had the pleasure of avenging herself on the cat who had murdered her.



• PUDDLESHINE •

Puddleshine

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Compassionate
Fretful
Skilled
Dedicated

• MENTORS •
Leafpool

• APPRENTICES •
Shadowsight

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I can’t leave. I have sworn to protect my Clanmates.”

– PUDDLESHINE, *THUNDER AND SHADOW*

PUDDLEKIT DIDN'T EXPECT to become a medicine cat apprentice. When ShadowClan's medicine cat Littlecloud died, there was no medicine cat or apprentice in ShadowClan. ThunderClan sent Leafpool to the other Clan temporarily, and Rowanstar chose Puddlekit to learn from her. Despite this haphazard appointment, Puddlepaw worked hard and learned quickly, and after only two moons of training, he was given his medicine cat name, Puddleshine, and Leafpool returned to ThunderClan. Despite his inexperience, the young cat was now responsible for the care of his Clan. His first true challenge was an outbreak of illness in ShadowClan's camp. As Puddleshine struggled to cure it, he was finally contacted by StarClan. In a dream, former medicine cat Runningnose told him the disease was yellowcough and how to cure it. This contact with StarClan gave Puddleshine the confidence to believe that he was a true medicine cat. Yellowfang, the former ShadowClan and ThunderClan medicine cat, continued to teach him healing in his dreams.

When Darktail and his rogues took over ShadowClan, Puddleshine knew his Clanmates would need his skills, former ShadowClan and rogue cats alike. He quickly became frustrated, as Darktail would not allow him to treat prisoners and tried to limit his healing to only the Kin. After the Kin were driven out of ShadowClan, Puddleshine and the other Clan medicine cats received a vision, telling them that the Clans must “remember their names” to defeat Darktail for good. This message, meaning the Clans should use their individual strengths, enabled them to win the battle.

When Rowanstar merged the Clan with SkyClan, Puddleshine became a SkyClan medicine cat but clashed with the Clan’s two existing medicine cats over their different methods of treating illnesses. Receiving a vision that shadows were approaching and “must not be dispelled,” Puddleshine hoped it meant that the ShadowClan cats who had fled Darktail’s reign would return. Perhaps ShadowClan was not finished after all. When Tigerheart returned, Puddleshine witnessed his revival and receipt of nine lives from StarClan. The prophecy was fulfilled, ShadowClan reformed, and Puddleshine gratefully returned to his role as ShadowClan’s medicine cat.



Tigerstar (Tigerheart)

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Stubborn
Headstrong
Distrusting
Resolute

• MENTORS •
Oakfur

• APPRENTICES •
Sleekwhisker

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I am leader of ShadowClan. I say what happens there.”

– TIGERSTAR, *THE SILENT THAW*

THE SECOND TIGERSTAR to lead ShadowClan was loyal and brave, a very different cat from his brutal grandfather.

Soon after Tigerpaw and his littermates were apprenticed, Blackstar lost faith in StarClan and dissolved ShadowClan. Tigerpaw's mother, Tawnypelt, took her kits to ThunderClan, where they continued their apprenticeships. Tigerpaw, his littermates, and young ThunderClan cats conspired to create a sign, hoping to convince Blackstar to believe in StarClan, but actual StarClan cats appeared, turning their pretense into reality. Blackstar reformed ShadowClan, and Tigerpaw and his littermates returned home.

Tigerpaw became a warrior named Tigerheart, and his life changed forever when he and ThunderClan apprentice Dovepaw fell in love. They began to meet secretly, but Tigerheart had another secret: he was training with the evil spirit cats of the Dark Forest in hopes of learning more about their plans. When the battle came, Tigerheart chose his home, fighting on the side of the Clans. After the battle, Dovepaw, now Dovewing, broke off

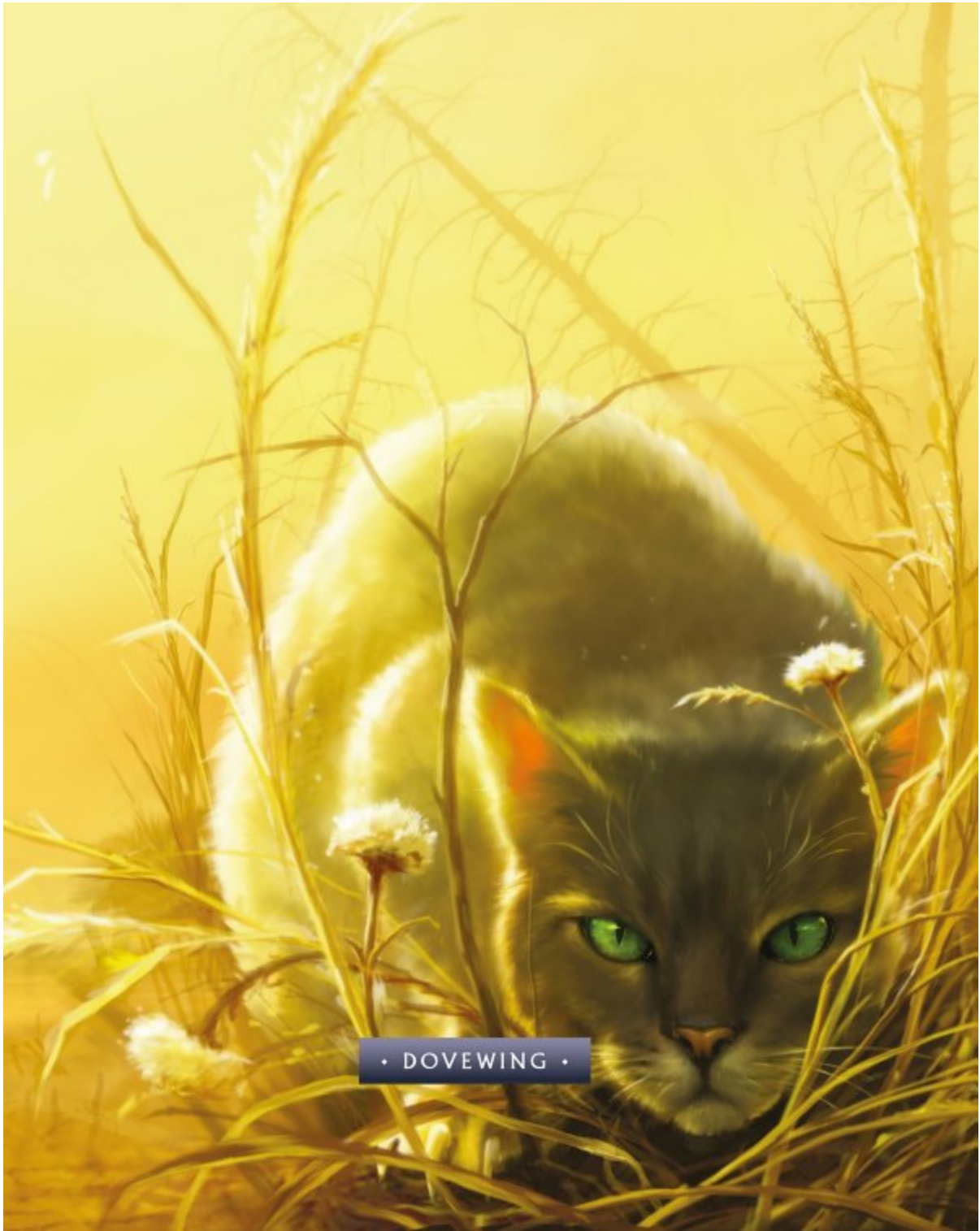
their relationship. Tigerheart accepted this at first, but as time passed, he and Dovewing continued to pine for each other. When Darktail and his Kin took over ShadowClan, Tigerheart took refuge with ThunderClan, and their romance bloomed again. Darktail was defeated and ShadowClan reformed, but Tigerheart and Dovewing continued to meet in secret, and soon Dovewing was expecting Tigerheart's kits.

Dovewing dreamed that she must leave the Clans to protect their kits, and asked Tigerheart to come with her. As ShadowClan's deputy, he believed his duty was to stay. Yet as ShadowClan tore itself apart, Puddleshine dreamed that Tigerheart's shadow was darkening the camp, and Tigerheart left to follow Dovewing. They settled in a Twolegplace far from the Clans, with a group of guardian cats, and began to raise their kits: Lightkit, Shadowkit, and Pouncekit. Dovewing and Tigerheart weren't sure if they wanted to return to the Clans, but their decision became urgent when a guardian cat gave Tigerheart a message from the stars: "The shadows are fading. He can't keep them together." Tigerheart knew it meant that ShadowClan was dissolving, and he and Dovewing decided to return to the lake. Near the end of their journey, Tigerheart was killed by an owl and all seemed lost. But Dovewing carried his body to the Moonpool and, after a leadership ceremony in StarClan, he was revived.



As leader, the new Tigerstar rebuilt ShadowClan and led it well. But when Shadowpaw told him of messages, supposedly from StarClan, naming “codebreakers”—including Dovewing—Tigerstar told him to tell no cat. Protecting Dovewing was more important to him than following StarClan’s wishes. Shadowsight, now a full medicine cat, eventually realized his message was not from StarClan. Tigerstar, who had distrusted the false Bramblestar from the beginning, gave shelter to the rebels and exiles from the other Clans. The impostor was exposed, and Tigerstar led the Clans against him, then waited anxiously as Shadowsight traveled into the Dark Forest to fight the escaped impostor and free StarClan.

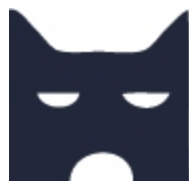
StarClan had chosen Tigerstar to revive ShadowClan, and he was a strong leader, but his biggest concern would always be for his mate and kits.



Dovewing



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Caring
Loyal
Devoted
Brash

• MENTORS •
Lionblaze

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Maybe it won’t be so bad, having these powers, if I can use them to help my Clan.”

– DOVEPAW, *THE FOURTH APPRENTICE*

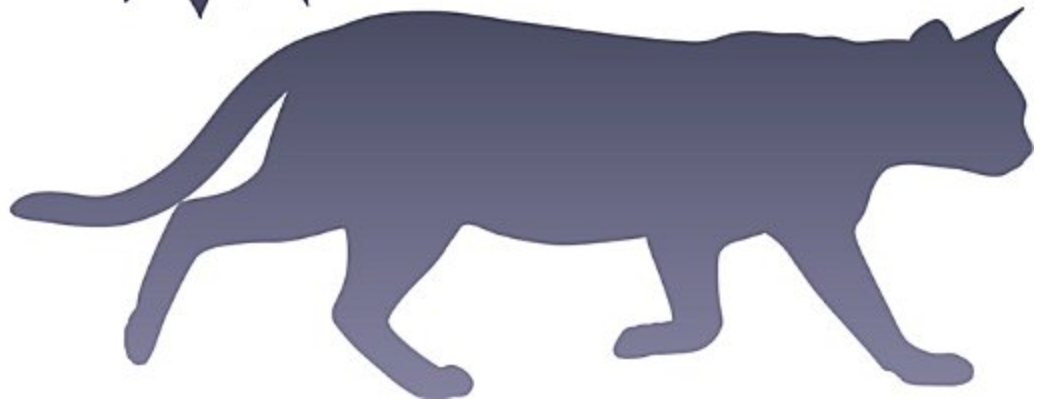
KIN TO FIRESTAR through her mother’s father, Cloudtail, Dovewing was the true third cat of Skywatcher’s prophecy, in place of Hollyleaf. From the time she was a tiny kit, she could hear sounds from far, far away, even beyond the lake, and could picture what was happening in other territories. Dovepaw assumed that every cat was the same, so it was a shock when she first learned she was the only one after she helped her Clan by realizing that the shortage of water in the lake was caused by big, brown animals—beavers—building a dam of wood to block a stream much farther up. Jayfeather instantly recognized the potential of Dovewing’s gift, but he told her to pretend she had dreamed what was happening, which was something Firestar would understand.

Although she was still only an apprentice, Dovepaw traveled with cats from the other Clans to find the beavers and destroy the dam, releasing the water back into the lake. She forged a powerful friendship with the ShadowClan cat Tigerheart on the journey, a friendship that persisted and deepened when they returned to their own Clans. Even after she had learned about the prophecy and the role she would have to play in the clash between the cats of the Clans and the Dark Forest, Dovepaw couldn’t resist visiting Tigerheart at night, using her powers of hearing to keep them safe from detection.

But the looming crisis forced Dovewing to reconsider her loyalties. She found a good friend, somewhat unexpectedly, in Bumblestripe and began to see a future with a cat of her own Clan, rather than the secret love she'd had for Tigerheart. As the echoes of the final battle died away, with the scratches from Dark Forest cats still stinging on her pelt, Dovewing thought she had made her choice. But the loss of her powers made Dovewing question what her purpose was, now that it was no longer to save the Clans, and she soon realized she and Bumblestripe were better as friends. After the Kin took over ShadowClan and Tigerheart sought shelter with ThunderClan, their love was reborn, deeper and stronger.

Dovewing was still torn between her Clan and her secret mate, until she became pregnant and was haunted by dreams of her kits dying in ThunderClan's camp. She fled the lake and Tigerheart followed. They built a new life among other cats in a Twoleg city, but destiny compelled them and their three kits to return to ShadowClan. During their journey, Tigerheart was killed by an owl, but Dovewing insisted on bringing his body to the Moonpool—StarClan had fated him to lead ShadowClan, and she was sure they would not let him die. And she was proved right, when ShadowClan awarded him his nine lives and allowed him to live to restore ShadowClan.

ThunderClan would have welcomed Dovewing back, along with her kits, but she chose to keep her family together and become a ShadowClan cat. She never took this decision lightly, and when accused of being a "codebreaker," she chose to exile herself for a time as an atonement. When the impostor Bramblestar was exposed in ThunderClan, she joined the fight against him, but she was quick to defend and plan the escape of her son, Shadowsight, when he was accused of working with the impostor. Dovewing was a loyal warrior who would fight for the Clans, but, once she chose her mate, her first priority remained always with her family.





Shadowsight



• CLAN •



• POSITION •

Medicine cat

• TRAITS •

Determined

Loyal

Honest

Quiet

• MENTORS •

Puddleshine

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You’ve seen into the shadows, just as you were meant to. But that part of your life is over now. You can begin anew.”

– LEAFPOOL TO SHADOWSIGHT, *A LIGHT IN THE MIST*

SHADOWSIGHT WAS QUITE small when his parents, Tigerheart and Dovewing, began to suspect he was special. When the family left the Twoleg city where Shadowkit and his littermates had been born, it was Shadowkit who dreamed of the way back to the Clans. As a kit, he suffered violent seizures accompanied by visions, which Stoneteller of the Tribe of Rushing Water taught him to control when he journeyed to the Tribe to help save their home.

Shadowpaw’s history of visions, coupled with his gentle nature and interest in healing, naturally led to his being apprenticed as a medicine cat. When StarClan suddenly ceased contact with the Clans, Shadowpaw was the only medicine cat who seemed able to reach them, seeing visions and hearing a voice that warned of “codebreakers” and told him how to cure ThunderClan leader Bramblestar’s illness. The “cure” killed Bramblestar, and when he did not quickly begin a new life, Shadowpaw blamed himself. But at his own vigil, Bramblestar revived, and Shadowpaw was given his medicine cat name, Shadowsight.

Shadowsight continued to trust the voice, repeating its accusations that some cats were “codebreakers,” even though one of the accused was his own mother. Conflict broke out between the Clans about whether to punish the “codebreakers,” and how. And to Shadowsight’s horror, he realized that the voice guiding him was not StarClan but an impostor who had used the

young medicine cat to possess Bramblestar's body. Shadowsight tried to expose the plot, but the impostor attacked him and left him for dead. While he hovered between life and death, Shadowsight's spirit traveled to confront the impostor. Realizing Bramblestar's spirit was trapped in the Dark Forest, Shadowsight brought himself close to death so that he could briefly travel there and free Bramblestar from his prison.



The impostor, exposed as Ashfur, was held prisoner. Shadowsight, afraid that the leaders would kill Bramblestar's body, helped Ashfur to escape—which allowed him to kidnap Squirrelflight and take her into the Dark Forest. Many Clan cats now saw Shadowsight as a traitor, but he was determined to do what was right. Shadowsight returned to the Dark Forest to help Bramblestar and Squirrelflight escape and later with Bristlefrost to help save Rootspring and free the trapped spirits Ashfur had enslaved.

After Ashfur's defeat, Shadowsight lost his connection to StarClan, but kept his compassion, integrity, and knowledge and continued to care for his Clan as a medicine cat.

Tigerstar's Nine Lives: StarClan Makes Its Choice



RUNNINGNOSE REACHED THE dark, yawning hole below the jagged peaks and stepped aside. “After you, Tigerclaw,” he murmured.

Tigerclaw walked past the gray-muzzled medicine cat and stood at the mouth of the tunnel. Dank shadows that tasted of stone lapped at his paws. Above their heads, a sharp wind hurled itself against Highrocks, flattening the grass on the hillside and threatening to dash the few crows that challenged it back down to the ground. But Mothermouth was silent, waiting for cats to enter and have their lives changed beyond all measure.

Tigerclaw had been here before, as a warrior in ThunderClan. But this time was different. Now he came to claim his nine lives as the new leader of ShadowClan. He had arrived in the Clan after the death of their previous leader, Nightstar, who had left his cats confused, frightened, and still traumatized by Brokenstar’s bloody rule. If ever a Clan needed a strong leader, this was it. Tigerclaw bided his time, proved his value as a warrior and hunter, showed his adopted Clanmates that Bluestar had made him deputy of ThunderClan because she saw in him the skills of a future leader. The support of Blackfoot and Jaggedtooth had been essential when it came to putting himself forward as Nightstar’s successor. After some tense discussion and a faked sign from StarClan, the other cats were persuaded. And now, here Tigerclaw stood, on the brink of everything he had ever wished for. Leadership of a Clan. Authority over all his Clanmates. The power to wage war on his enemies.

Sleep with one eye open, Fireheart. I am coming for you.

Behind him, Runningnose stirred. “Tigerclaw, the moon is rising,” he meowed.

Tigerclaw looked back at him, feeling his claws scrape against the stone. “StarClan will wait for me,” he growled. While Runningnose had initially seemed relieved to have a new leader for his Clan, now that the

time had come to present Tigerclaw to his ancestors, he suddenly seemed hesitant. It was as though some dark thought that Tigerclaw couldn't guess at dragged at his paws.

"StarClan might, but dawn will not," Runningnose muttered.

Tigerclaw let his front claws extend until they caught the moonlight. Runningnose blinked his rheumy eyes but stayed where he was. Tigerclaw snorted and turned back to the tunnel. He took a deep breath and walked into the shadows, letting the darkness wash over him like water until he was swallowed entirely. Now he was walking blind, using his whiskers to find the walls, setting each paw carefully on the cold, wet stone as the tunnel began to slope steeply down. He could hear Runningnose padding behind him, the medicine cat's rasping breath echoing around the tiny space. Tigerclaw felt a flare of irritation. Who would trust a medicine cat who couldn't cure his own sickness, anyway?

Suddenly the sound of his paw steps changed, the walls fell away from his whiskers on either side, and Tigerclaw knew he had reached the cave where the Moonstone stood. He walked forward more slowly until he felt his muzzle brush against the icy crystal. Runningnose moved closer, until Tigerclaw could feel his hot breath on his flanks.

"Lie down and touch the stone with your nose," the medicine cat instructed.

I know what to do, mouse-brain! Tigerclaw gritted his teeth and sank to his belly, wincing at the feel of the hard, cold floor. He rested his muzzle against the Moonstone and, in the same instant, a shaft of moonlight sliced through the gap in the roof, turning the crystal to dazzling white light. Tigerclaw's heart leaped. *StarClan is here!*



Runningnose settled himself beside Tigerclaw. The warrior tried not to recoil from the stench of old herbs on the medicine cat's ungroomed pelt. "Don't be alarmed," Runningnose began, "if our ancestors do not come to you."

Are you blind? The Moonstone is alight with them!

"When I brought Nightpelt here," Runningnose went on, "things were . . . not as we expected. StarClan did not approve of him as our leader because Brokenstar was still alive. It was a very difficult moment."

Tigerclaw resisted the urge to claw the ears of the foolish old cat. *Everything* was different this time. "But we know that Brokenstar is no longer alive," he meowed. "And ShadowClan themselves have asked me to lead them. Will their ancestors deny the wish of their living Clanmates?"

Runningnose whispered something that might have been a prayer, then mewed out loud, "StarClan knows our destiny better than any of us."

And that destiny is my leadership! Tigerclaw was in no mood to continue debating with the fretful medicine cat. He closed his eyes and felt

himself being tugged gently into sleep. Almost at once a cool breeze stirred his fur, scented with pine needles and a mustier tang of marsh water. Tigerclaw blinked and looked around. He was standing at the edge of a forest thick with pines, lapped by a broad expanse of tussocky grass. "I'm . . . I'm in ShadowClan!" he gasped.

A cat stepped out of the trees. "Not exactly," it purred. "This is our version of ShadowClan."

Tigerclaw looked closer at the newcomer. He was a dark gray tom with a white belly and eyes the color of amber. His fur was shot through with starlight, and Tigerclaw could see the outline of tree trunks behind his misted flanks.

"I am Cedarstar," meowed the StarClan cat. "Welcome."

Tigerclaw let out a long breath, suddenly aware of the tension that had made his fur lift along his spine. *StarClan welcomes me!* "Are there others?" he asked. *I need nine lives, not one!*

Cedarstar gestured with his tail to the edge of the woodland. The shadows sparkled with light as, one by one, a long line of cats stepped forward and nodded to Tigerclaw. The warrior stood and stared. *They have come!*

A small, ginger she-cat padded forward until she was barely a mouse-length from Tigerclaw's muzzle. He flinched when he realized he couldn't feel her breath on his nose, then reminded himself that these cats no longer lived the way he did.

"We have waited a long time for you," meowed the she-cat. "My name is Littlebird, and I died without being able to save my Clan from Brokenstar. Now my Clan can be strong again."

Tigerclaw bowed his head. "If you will help me, then I will lead your Clan to greater victories than it has ever known before."

"Victory isn't everything," Littlebird mewed lightly. "Sometimes peace brings greater rewards."

Believe that if you wish. Once I am leader, I will use your former Clan to seek revenge on every cat who has ever wronged me.

Littlebird leaned forward and pressed her muzzle against Tigerstar's head. She had to stretch on tiptoe to reach. "I give you a life for compassion," she murmured. "Try to understand what is important to other cats, not just yourself, and let that guide your paws."

In an instant, Tigerclaw's mind whirled with countless images of cats in pain, joy-filled cats, cats wailing in terror or hissing with fury. He staggered, overwhelmed by the emotions that poured into him from all sides, and deafened by the noise inside his world.

"Be strong, Tigerclaw," Littlebird whispered. "It takes more courage than you know to feel what other cats do."

Tigerclaw straightened up. *If I am the leader of my Clan, and my word is law, why should I concern myself with what my Clanmates think? My duty is to lead them; theirs is to follow.* "Thank you, Littlebird," he meowed out loud.

The ferns behind Littlebird stirred and a tiny shape slipped out. Not much bigger than a newborn kit, with a black-and-white pelt that glowed in the half-light, the cat trotted up to Tigerclaw and craned its neck to look up at him. "I am Badgerfang!" he squeaked.

Tigerclaw snorted. "Are you sure? You're the smallest warrior I've ever seen!"

There was a flash of anger in the little cat's eyes that belied his fragile size. "I died as Badgerpaw when I was three moons old. Brokenstar forced me and my denmates to fight in battles before we should even have become apprentices. But I fought bravely and gave my life to save my Clan. Because of that, my mentor, Flintfang, said I could choose my warrior name."

Tigerclaw nodded. "Fine. So what life can you give me?"

Badgerfang blinked. "Be patient," he warned. "Your lives will come as we wish to give them, not as you wish to receive them." He took a step closer and stretched up until his muzzle brushed Tigerclaw's chin. "I give you a life for training your young cats wisely. Train them when they are strong enough to survive their first battle, and encourage them to listen to many cats, including the elders, to learn the most from their Clanmates' histories."

Tigerclaw felt a rush of warmth flood through him, filled with the chattering voices of tiny kits. He recognized his own eagerness to leave the nursery and start training, and he curled his lip with amusement. *Oh, I will train my young Clanmates,* he vowed. *They will soon know they belong to the most powerful Clan in the forest and deserve nothing but victory in every battle!*

Badgerfang trotted away, casting a shadow no bigger than Tigerclaw's front paw, and another cat stood before him. Tigerclaw stared in disbelief at the tall, red-brown cat who fathered him. "Pinestar!" he breathed.



The red-furred tom nodded. "Yes, although that is not the name I had when I died."

Tigerclaw felt his claws unsheathe and sink into the soft earth. "Because you were a *kittypet*," he snarled.

"That was my choice for my final life," Pinestar agreed. "But I walk with our ancestors for tonight to give you a life for being aware of what goes on beyond Clan borders. There are good cats everywhere, Tigerclaw. Do not forget that." He leaned forward and brushed Tigerclaw's nose with his own.

A flurry of images flashed into Tigerclaw's mind, of green fields, lazy swollen rivers, Twolegplaces made of hard red stone, crisscrossed with Thunderpaths and humming with the sound of monsters. He shook his head to clear it. "I will be loyal to my Clanmates above all others," he growled.

Pinestar inclined his head. "The warrior code demands nothing less. But do not assume that every other cat is an enemy or unable to help you in some way." He turned to leave, then looked back wistfully. "When I left the forest, I thought I would never see you again. But here you are, leader of ShadowClan. Perhaps not the choice I would have made," he added wryly, "but you have traveled a hard path to get here."

And I did it all without you, Tigerclaw hissed inside his mind. His pelt prickled at the thought that his father—the treacherous warrior-turned-kittypet—dared give him—loyal to the last, nothing but warrior blood running in his veins—one of his lives. *I won't mind losing that one in battle,* he thought.

The next cat to face him was a small, pale gray she-cat that Tigerclaw didn't recognize. As if reading his thoughts, she meowed, "You won't know me, Tigerclaw. My name is Whitetail. I walked in these woods long ago, before you were even dreamed of. But if we had met before, would you have noticed me, I wonder?"

Surprised, Tigerclaw looked more closely at the she-cat. Her head only just reached his chest, and her pelt hung loosely on her bony frame. If he had encountered her in the midst of a battle, he would have flung her aside with a flick of his paw as if she was nothing more than a moth in his way.

Whitetail didn't give him a chance to answer. "I give you a life for understanding that size isn't everything. Strength does not always mean power, and you should respect your enemies, whatever they look like." She touched her muzzle to his chest, and Tigerclaw felt a strange calm spread through him, cold and heavy like water on his fur. To his dismay, he started to shiver—not just from cold but from fear as well. What was he frightened of? He sank his claws deeper into the ground to hold himself still.

Whitetail looked up at him. "Beware the small cats," she whispered, then turned and walked back into the shadows.

A long-legged, light brown tabby came next, introducing himself as Sedgestar, leader of ShadowClan when there were still five Clans in the forest. He was so old, Tigerclaw could clearly see the trees behind him through his misty outline. But his voice was strong and steady as he rested his muzzle on Tigerclaw's head.

"I give you a life for pride in ShadowClan, knowing they can stand alone through any challenge. ShadowClan needs no allegiances, no help from other Clans when times are hard. Your cats will always find a way to survive if you give them a chance, Tigerclaw."

This life made Tigerclaw feel as if he was growing from the inside, taller than a fox, broader than a badger, filled with the certainty that ShadowClan was the strongest of all. Whatever happened in the forest, ShadowClan would emerge victorious!

A ginger-and-white she-cat with gentle eyes took Sedgestar's place. "I am Flowerstar," she meowed. "Like you, I was not the deputy to the previous leader of ShadowClan. That leader, Brightwhisker, died on her first night of leadership, before she had a chance to receive her nine lives and before she could appoint a new deputy. Our medicine cat, Redscar, found a sign from StarClan—the stalk of an early-blooming snowdrop—that showed our ancestors wished for me to become the next leader." She leaned closer and pressed her sweet-scented nose to Tigerclaw's cheek.

"I give you a life for placing all your faith in StarClan," she murmured. "Trust your warrior ancestors, let them guide you when all seems dark, and honor them with your loyalty for all your lives."

Tigerclaw's pelt lit up with starlight, and he tingled all the way to the tip of his tail. There was fierceness in this life, but also the warmth of a mother's belly fur, all shot through with sparkling light.

Flowerstar stood for a few moments more with her face against Tigerclaw's, until a soft cough from behind made her step aside. A reddish-brown tabby pushed his way forward, and Tigerclaw winced when he saw the jagged scar that stretched from the tabby's ear down the line of his jaw.

"My name is Redscar," mewed the tabby. He looked over his shoulder to check that Flowerstar had disappeared back into the trees. "I am the medicine cat who told Flowerstar that StarClan had chosen her as our leader. But you need to know something: I faked that sign. I picked the snowdrop, severed the blossom, placed the stalk where I could find it in the middle of the camp and announced to everyone that our ancestors had spoken. We needed a leader, and I found them one." His pale eyes looked hot and feverish as he shuffled forward to wedge his muzzle against Tigerclaw's chin. "Listen to StarClan, but do not let that deafen you to your own senses. I give you a life for trusting your own instincts as well. StarClan will guide you, but only you, as leader, can steer the paws of your Clanmates."

Tigerclaw nodded. *At last, a life that makes sense!* He felt a surge of confidence inside his chest, burning like fire and roaring like the wind. Only he knew what was truly right for ShadowClan! They were his cats now!

A dark tortoiseshell she-cat stepped up. Her eyes shone like yellow moons against the shadows behind. "I am Mossheart," she announced. "I was a medicine cat long ago, at a time when cats died every day in needless

battles against the other Clans. The forest ran with blood, and my herb stores went unused as cats died before I could do anything to help them. I joined together with the other medicine cats to create a new code, in which warriors do not have to kill their opponents to secure victory. What would become of the Clans if we let all our blood spill into the earth?" She touched Tigerclaw's nose with his. "I give you a life for mercy, for knowing that victory can leave both cats standing. Your opponent may have been the lesser cat in this battle, but he deserves to live and have a chance to try again."

What kind of victory is that, knowing you have spared your enemy for another attack? Tigerclaw braced himself against the tide of heat that swept into him, hating the softness that lapped at his fur, closing his mind to the images of bleeding, maimed warriors that flooded behind his eyes. *If they lose, they deserve to die!*

He opened his eyes and saw Mossheart looking at him. "Mercy brings strength, remember that," she murmured. Tigerclaw felt a stab of alarm. Did the old cat know that this was a life Tigerclaw didn't want?

Mossheart padded away and the cat that had been standing beside Tigerclaw all this time stepped forward. "You have only one more life to receive," meowed Cedarstar. "Are you ready?"

Tigerclaw nodded. *One more, and I will be the true leader of ShadowClan!*

Cedarstar let out a sigh. "I should never have appointed Raggedstar as my deputy," he mewed. "All this trouble goes back to that moment. If only I had known what lay ahead . . ." He lifted his head and placed his muzzle against Tigerclaw's. "I give you a life for farsightedness, for understanding what the results of your actions might be, however distant in the future. It will be the hardest and most lonely part of your duty as leader, Tigerclaw, but essential to keep your Clan safe. Do not rush into anything. Look forward, and choose the path that leads to where you would want your Clanmates to be."

The life was clear and sparkling like the light from the Moonstone. It danced through Tigerclaw's fur, sharpening all his senses until he felt as if he could see right to the edges of StarClan. Something stirred at the back of Tigerclaw's mind.

"But Cedarstar, where are my lives for courage? For strength in battle and revenge on my enemies?" He heard his voice go shrill with doubt, and

wincing.



Cedarstar looked calmly at him. “You bring enough courage, strength, and vengeance in yourself. It is the duty of StarClan to give you lives for what you might lack, to make your leadership fair for all the cats in your care.”

Tigerclaw twitched his ears. *If StarClan trusts me to win battles without their help, who am I to argue?* “Thank you, Cedarstar,” he mewed.

“Welcome, Tigerstar!” Cedarstar declared, stepping back and raising his voice. “Lead ShadowClan well with all of your lives!”

“Welcome, Tigerstar!”

“Tigerstar!”

“Tigerstar!”

Tigerstar bathed in the cheers of the StarClan cats. *At last! This is what I have waited for my whole life.* He looked around and saw a group of cats standing close together, watching with anxious, hopeful eyes. He recognized the former ShadowClan elders: Poolcloud, Archeye, Hollyflower, Crowtail, Featherstorm, and Brightflower. And beside them, Nightstar—or perhaps Nightpelt, here, because he had never been given

nine lives? *I will lead your Clan back to the glory it had before*, Tigerstar promised them silently. *Trust me.*

The starlit cats began to fade in front of him. Runningnose appeared, making Tigerstar jump. “I have been here all along,” Runningnose meowed. “It is time to leave now.”

Tigerstar nodded. “I have a Clan to lead,” he declared.

Runningnose paused and looked at him. “With StarClan’s blessing,” he mewed. “Tigerstar, you must listen to what our ancestors have said to you tonight. If you do not respect what each life stands for, StarClan cannot help you.”

Tigerstar tensed. Was his medicine cat *threatening* him? “I heard nothing tonight that challenges what I want to do with my Clan,” he growled. “You are my medicine cat, Runningnose. You serve me before your Clanmates, before StarClan.”

Runningnose’s eyes darkened for a moment, then he dipped his head. “Of course, Tigerstar,” he murmured.

Tigerstar lifted his head and stared at the star-washed landscape. “ShadowClan is mine,” he whispered. “And I have nine lifetimes to make them remember me forever!”

WindClan



Introduction to WindClan: Tallstar Speaks

THE OTHER CLANS have always been quick to dismiss WindClan as puny and skittish, easy to defeat in battle and the least skilled at hunting under trees. But we are the most closely descended from the mountain cats, the first settlers in the forest who came in search of a kinder home than that harsh, rocky place behind the waterfall. Like my Clanmates now, they needed broad, open sky above their heads and the breeze in their fur to feel truly free. Why should we want to smother ourselves with tree branches, or soak our pelts in the cold river, every time we need to hunt? We may be small and lithe, but we can run faster than any other Clan, and we alone have the skills to catch rabbits on the open moor.

Don't confuse a keen sense of danger with lack of courage. We can see our enemies coming from far away, and if that makes us more watchful, quicker to alarm than the other Clans, then it only helps to keep us safe. We have no wish to invade other Clans' territories because our hunting skills are best suited to our own territory—but don't assume that we won't fight as fiercely as our neighbors if we are attacked. I would rather make an alliance with another Clan to fend off trouble on an endangered border than risk my Clanmates' survival for the sake of stubborn pride.

I had to watch my Clan suffer more than any other when the Twolegs started to destroy our territory in order to expand the Thunderpath. Their yellow monsters turned our home to rabbitless mud, then made our Clan into prey by trying to poison us. But I would not leave the forest without the other Clans. WindClan is one of many and always will be. Those mountain cats did not leave the waterfall in vain; we will preserve their legacy forever with our speed and determination to survive.



• TALLSTAR •

Tallstar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Wise
Brave
Peaceful
Noble

• MENTORS •
Dawnstripe

• APPRENTICES •
Deadfoot
Morningflower

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Every cat I have loved has taught me the meaning of friendship and the unbending power of the warrior code.”

– TALLSTAR, *TALLSTAR'S REVENGE*

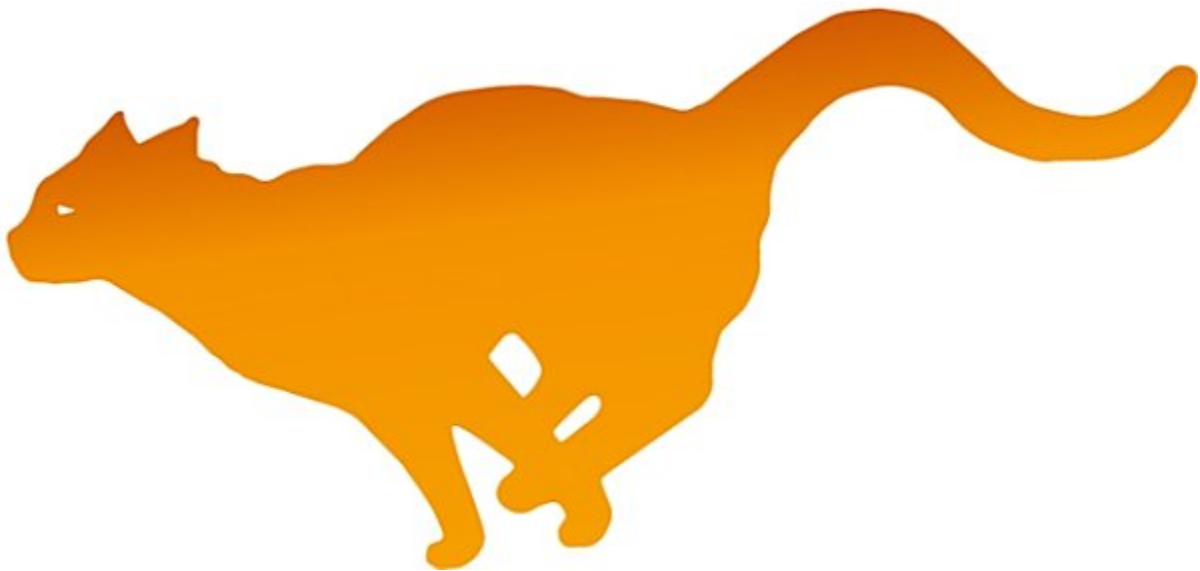
THE CAT WHO would grow to become Tallstar was born to a pair of tunneling cats, Sandgorse and Palebird, who expected their son to follow the tradition, unique to WindClan, of cats skilled in digging and hunting belowground. But Tallkit preferred running over the open moor with the wind in his fur and hated the thought of being trapped in the dark. Heatherstar realized this and apprenticed him to a moor runner, much to the disappointment of Sandgorse and Palebird. But when Sandgorse was killed in an underground collapse while showing a visiting rogue named Sparrow one of the tunnels, Tallpaw decided to train as a tunneler like his father. However, Heatherstar forbade her cats to go belowground again, and though Tallpaw earned his warrior name, Talltail, he was restless and angry with grief.

Swearing vengeance on Sparrow, Talltail left WindClan and set out to find him. He encountered a kittypet named Jake and struck up an unlikely alliance, which deepened into true friendship when they traveled beyond Twolegplace to the rogues' new home. Jake told Talltail that he could be a

better cat by not taking Sparrow's life in revenge; at the very last moment, with Sparrow poised on top of a cliff above a Thunderpath, Talltail recalled his friend's words and decided to spare Sparrow. But the tom slipped over the edge anyway, forcing Talltail to risk his life to save him.

Sparrow told Talltail that Sandgorse died saving his life from the collapsing tunnel. Humbled by his father's final brave act, Talltail left the rogues, intending to carry on traveling with Jake. But Jake wanted to go home, back to his housefolk, and Talltail knew deep down that he was still a Clan warrior who belonged on the moor. When he returned to WindClan, he fought hard to win back the respect and trust of his Clanmates and was rewarded when Heatherstar made him deputy.

As Clan leader, Tallstar remembered his experiences beyond the moor and was always willing to make allegiances across his borders to protect his Clan. When a young flame-colored cat joined ThunderClan, Tallstar realized he was the son of his old friend Jake. He never let on to Firestar that he had known his father so well, but Tallstar always favored the ThunderClan cat, sometimes to the dismay of his own Clanmates.



Tallstar lived just long enough to make the Great Journey to the lake and died on the shore before the Clans had separated into their new territories. With his dying breath, Tallstar dismissed his deputy, Mudclaw, fearing he would lead WindClan too quickly into battle with the other Clans, and appointed Onewhisker to succeed him instead. Tallstar meant well, but he left Mudclaw to fester and rise up in rebellion against the new

leader, while Onestar tried perhaps a little too hard to prove that WindClan no longer needed the friendship of the other Clans to survive.



• ONESTAR •

Onestar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •

Leader

• TRAITS •

Proud
Haughty
Weak-willed
Selfish

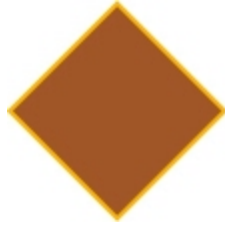
• MENTORS •

Deadfoot

• APPRENTICES •

Whitetail
Gorsepaw

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“WindClan is as strong as any other Clan and we shall prove it. We do not need help from any cat.”

– ONESTAR, *TWILIGHT*

AS A WARRIOR, Onestar was loyal and courageous, and as leader, he tried to guide and protect WindClan. But his paw steps were haunted by a mistake that would endanger not only Onestar, but all the Clans.

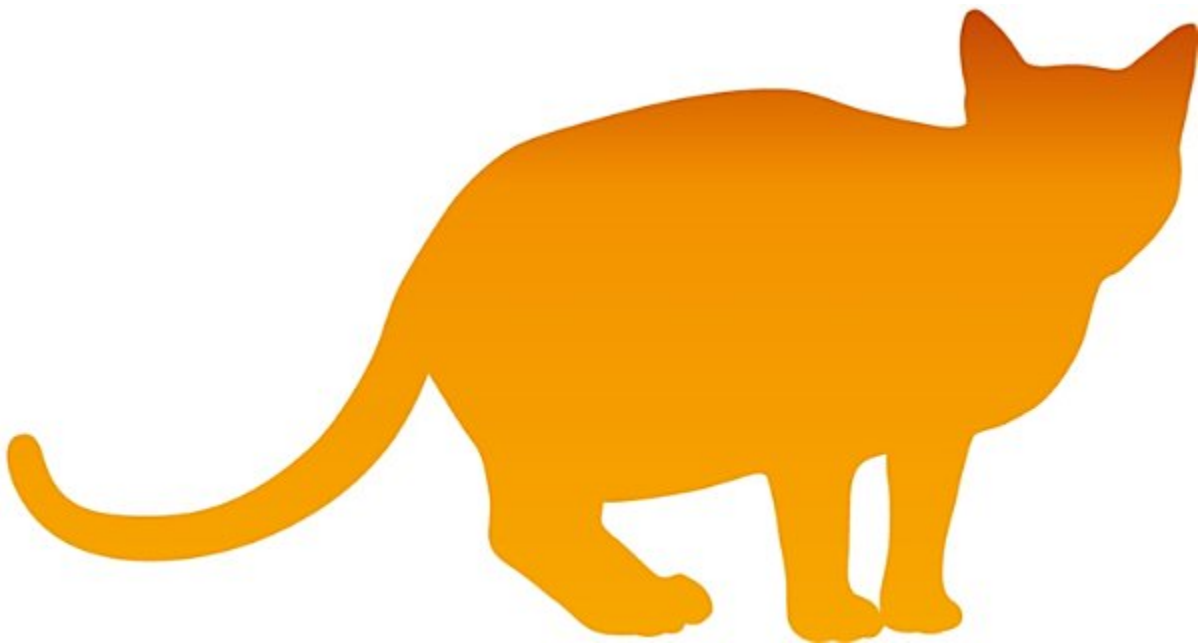
In his youth, Onepaw became infatuated with a kittypet, Smoke. But he never showed her the truth of a warrior’s life, preferring to tell tales of adventure while she admired his heroism. Eventually, he realized they had no future: he could not be a true warrior with one paw out of the Clans. He broke things off with Smoke and fell in love with Whitetail, a fellow WindClan warrior.

When the Twoleg monsters destroyed the forest, Onewhisker prepared to journey with the Clans to find their new home. On the eve of departure, Smoke brought him the son he had fathered: Darkkit. Enchanted by his tales of Clan life, she wanted their son to become a warrior. Onewhisker was horrified. The Clans were about to embark on a journey to an unknown future. How could he take in a kit? And how would he explain this kit to

WindClan, or to Whitetail? He turned her away, and Smoke never forgave him.

On the Great Journey to the lake, Onewhisker looked after WindClan's frail leader, Tallstar, who died soon after their arrival, naming Onewhisker his successor rather than WindClan's deputy Mudclaw. Tallstar believed Mudclaw was too warlike to lead WindClan, as they would have to cooperate with the other Clans to survive.

Onewhisker was shaken to find himself leader of WindClan, but Mudclaw was outraged. Onewhisker's friend Firestar, the ThunderClan leader, guided him as he found his paws in his new role. But Mudclaw came to believe that ThunderClan was controlling Onewhisker and led a rebellion. Onewhisker defeated the former deputy and received nine lives from StarClan, the first leader to do so at the Moonpool. To prove WindClan could survive without ThunderClan's help, Onestar distanced himself from Firestar. The old friends were reunited when the Dark Forest invaded the lake territories and the four Clans fought to defend themselves against the evil spirits of the dead.



Onestar forgave the WindClan cats who had trained in the Dark Forest and made one, Harespring, his new deputy. He felt that his role as leader was secure. But the past came to haunt him when his son, now Darktail, took over ShadowClan.

Onestar joined the other Clans in fighting the invaders, but, after losing a life, he called on WindClan to retreat and closed his borders, abandoning the other Clans. He feared StarClan would condemn any cat who killed his own son. Realizing at last that only he could keep Darktail from destroying the Clans, he met his son in battle, where they died together and Onestar, despite his fears, ascended to StarClan.



Mudclaw



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Deputy

• TRAITS •
Haughty
Ambitious
Resentful
Dedicated

• APPRENTICES •
Brushpaw
Webfoot
Crowfeather

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Firestar, Onewhisker, listen. Mudclaw is a brave warrior, but he is not the right cat to lead WindClan.”

– TALLSTAR, *STARLIGHT*

MUDCLAW WAS CHOSEN to be deputy because Tallstar recognized the need for a warrior who was not afraid to show his claws to balance out his own gentler, peace-loving leadership. Mudclaw was fearless, fiercely loyal to his Clan, and determined to be a strong leader without having the bloodthirsty ambition that had polluted the paths of leaders in other Clans. When Tallstar dismissed him and appointed Onewhisker in his place, Mudclaw felt utterly betrayed. He saw no reason behind Tallstar’s decision, except that the old cat had lost his mind just before losing his ninth life. A challenge to Onestar’s leadership seemed entirely logical, and Mudclaw was encouraged by a significant number of cats who shared his disbelief—not just from his own Clan, but ShadowClan and RiverClan too. His most determined supporter was Hawkfrost of RiverClan; ever keen to stir up trouble, Hawkfrost preyed on Mudclaw’s fear that Firestar was trying to control WindClan through Onestar and implied that their Clan would suffer for it.

Mudclaw met his allies from the other Clans secretly on the island in the lake and one cold night, led them in a brave—perhaps even foolhardy—attack on WindClan’s new leader. They were defeated when Firestar brought ThunderClan warriors to fight on Onestar’s side. Mudclaw fled back to the island, where he was killed by a tree that had been felled by a bolt of lightning. The other cats took this as a sign from StarClan that Onestar’s leadership had their approval, and Mudclaw had been wrong to launch his challenge. The fallen tree provided a bridge, giving easy access to the island, so future Gatherings could be seen as Mudclaw’s dying gift to all the Clans. But he gave another gift after his death: he was one of the StarClan cats who granted Onestar a life at the Moonstone, remorseful for his misguided anger during his life.





• CROWFEATHER •

Crowfeather



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Deputy

• TRAITS •
Bitter
Cold
Sharp
Indecisive

• MENTORS •
Mudclaw

• APPRENTICES •
Heathertail
Featherpelt
Fernstripe

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I would like to choose my own warrior name. If it is all right, I wish to be known as Crowfeather.”

– CROWPAW, *DAWN*

SHY, DEFENSIVE CROWPAW was only an apprentice when he set out on the quest to find Midnight and learn how the Clans could be saved, but he fought as bravely as his companions against hostile kittypets and hungry foxes. RiverClan warrior Feathertail saw past his shyness and sharp tongue to the loyal warrior beneath, and the two fell in love.

On their return from finding Midnight, the badger who told them where to find a new home for the Clans, the cats stopped in the mountains with the Tribe of Rushing Water, which was plagued by a mountain lion named Sharptooth. The Clan cats laid a trail to catch Sharptooth and poison him, but the mountain lion arrived too soon, trapping Crowpaw in a corner of the cave. Feathertail leaped up to a talon of stone that hung from the roof and wrenched it free to plunge into Sharptooth's back, killing him instantly. The fall killed Feathertail too, and Crowpaw was left with the horrifying knowledge that the cat he loved had given her own life to save his.

He chose his warrior name, Crowfeather, in her memory. Leafpool, the ThunderClan medicine cat, tried to reassure him that Feathertail was still with them, watching over him from the stars. Crowfeather refused to be comforted. But during Mudclaw's attack on Onewhisker and his supporters, when ThunderClan and WindClan warriors fought side by side, Crowfeather found Leafpool clinging to the top of a cliff. His mind whirled back to the moment Feathertail had lost her life—but this time he could save Leafpool. In that moment, he realized he loved Leafpool just as he had loved Feathertail, however guilt-stricken that made him feel.

The two cats tried to deny their feelings until Crowfeather persuaded Leafpool that they would be happier together, even if that meant leaving their Clans. They had been gone for less than a day when they learned of a badger attack against ThunderClan and returned in time to see Cinderpelt killed, just as Sorreltail's kits came into the world. Crowfeather's heart broke again, knowing that Leafpool would now stay with her Clan.

He went back to WindClan and took Nightcloud as his mate. Nightcloud gave birth to Breezepelt, but unbeknownst to Crowfeather, Leafpool was expecting his kits too. Lionblaze, Hollyleaf, and Jayfeather were raised by Squirrelflight and Brambleclaw. When the truth emerged about their parentage, Crowfeather refused to acknowledge them. However much his heart ached for Leafpool, he could not betray his Clan again. Unable to connect with his difficult WindClan son, Breezepelt, he resented Nightcloud because she was not the she-cat he truly loved.

In the Great Battle with the Dark Forest, Crowfeather realized the legacy he had created when he found Breezepelt attacking Lionblaze. He pulled his WindClan son away from the ThunderClan warrior, vowing that he would never let another cat harm a hair on Lionblaze's pelt. Left alone with Leafpool, Crowfeather admitted he regretted nothing—the closest he would ever come to accepting her kits as his own.

After the battle, Crowfeather struggled with Breezepelt's betrayal. But when Nightcloud disappeared and was believed dead, father and son worked together to find her, and the three were at last able to resolve their differences.

When Harestar became leader of WindClan, he made Crowfeather his deputy, but exiled him when he was named a "codebreaker." Crowfeather took shelter among the other exiles, but was welcomed back as deputy after Ashfur was exposed as an impostor.

Much as he had journeyed with cats of other Clans to find a new home, Crowfeather volunteered to travel into the Dark Forest to fight Ashfur and his minions and restore the Clans' connection with StarClan. On that journey, he was briefly reunited with both of his lost loves, Feathertail and Leafpool, and on his return argued for changes to the warrior code that would allow cats of different Clans to find love without censure.





• BREEZEPILT •

Breezepelt



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Ornery
Vindictive
Bitter
Brutal

• MENTORS •
Whitetail

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“When was the last time the Clans agreed on anything without fighting about it first?”

– BREEZEPELT, *THE SILENT THAW*

AS PRICKLY AND irritable as his father, Breezepelt was raised by parents who disliked each other. Nightcloud loved their son, Breezepelt, with a ferocity that came from anger, because she believed Crowfeather did not love him—just as he did not love her. She coddled Breezepelt, encouraging him to believe he was better than the other warriors, while he hungered for acknowledgment from his undemonstrative father. He had heard the whispers about Crowfeather’s past and was determined to prove that he would never be so disloyal.

Breezepelt could have been a brave, fierce, and loyal WindClan warrior, but he had a dangerous arrogance that was mixed with fury against his father. On a journey to the mountains with ThunderClan cats as an apprentice, Breezepaw watched how Jaypaw and Lionpaw were treated with warmth and easy affection by Brambleclaw, and his fury burned brighter. He became even angrier when he learned that Jayfeather, Lionblaze, and Hollyleaf were actually his half-siblings, evidence of Crowfeather’s betrayal of WindClan.

When cats from the Dark Forest offered him a chance to become a better warrior than his Clanmates, Breezepelt accepted. He was one of the few cats who understood the true nature of the Dark Forest’s attack on the Clans—and he relished the thought of punishing those cats who had made his life so difficult. In the depths of the battle, he launched himself at

Lionblaze. But Crowfeather chased him off, blaming Breezepelt for leading himself down the darkest of paths.

In the moons that followed, Breezepelt faced hostility in WindClan for having fought on the side of the Dark Forest. But when Nightcloud disappeared—and was believed to have been killed—during a stoat attack in the tunnels, Crowfeather and Breezepelt worked together to find her and began to reconcile. They found Nightcloud imprisoned by Twolegs and brought her home. At last Nightcloud and Crowfeather were able to admit that they did not want to be mates but could be friends and share their love for their son. Breezepelt let go of some of his rage and himself found love with Heathertail and raised kits of his own, determined to not let resentment damage their future as it had his past.



• HEATHERTAIL •

Heathertail



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Proud
Compassionate
Dedicated
Honorable

• MENTORS •
Crowfeather

• APPRENTICES •
Furzepelt

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Oh, Lionpaw, what have we done?”

– HEATHERPAW, *DARK RIVER*

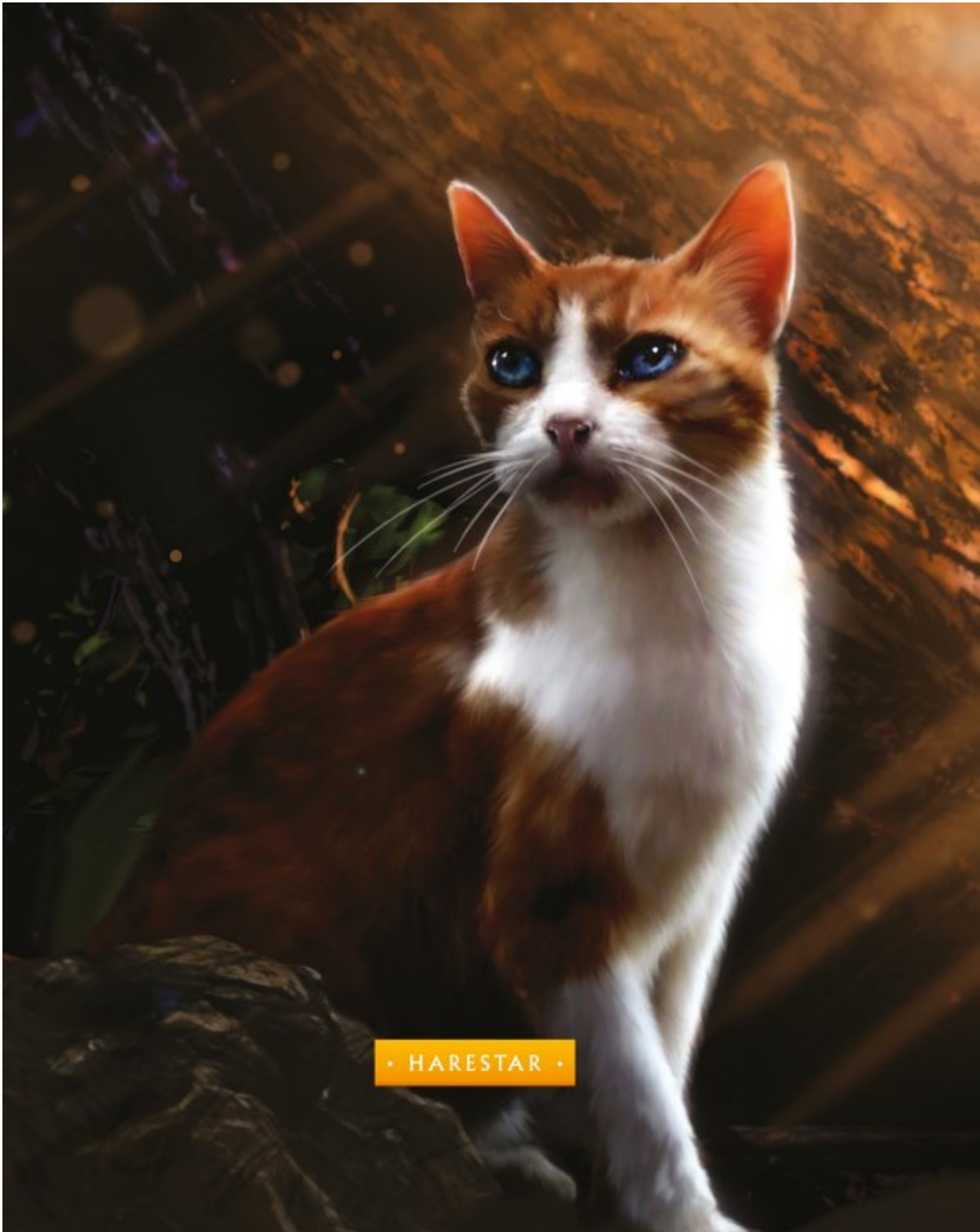
HEATHERPAW WAS A lively, curious, impulsive WindClan apprentice who first encountered Lionpaw at the young tom's first Gathering. She met Lionpaw again when his patrol came to the aid of WindClan after a dog strayed too close to the camp on the hill. The young cats fought side by side, and the invisible, Clan-bound border between them began to fade.

Frustrated by the difficulty of speaking to Lionpaw at Gatherings, Heatherpaw suggested they meet at night on the boundary between their Clans. She saw no challenge to her loyalty by fostering this friendship, no reason it would make her any less of a warrior. When she discovered an entrance to the tunnels that burrowed beneath the woods and the hillside, she realized she had found the perfect hiding place for their blossoming relationship. Together, she and Lionpaw explored the underground world, playing games of DarkClan in the largest cave, neither of them aware of the ancient eyes that watched them from the shadows.

Meanwhile, relations between their Clans deteriorated, with Heatherpaw's father, Onestar, determined to prove he could be strong

without Firestar's help. Border clashes made Lionpaw reluctantly decide he could no longer meet Heatherpaw in secret. When three WindClan kits went missing, Onestar assumed that ThunderClan had stolen them. Heatherpaw and Lionpaw guessed that the kits had found their way into the tunnels, and went looking for them with Jaypaw, Breezepaw, and Hollypaw. Torrential rain flooded the underground river, washing the cats out into the lake, and they narrowly escaped with their lives.

Heatherpaw knew her relationship with Lionpaw could never be rekindled. Their Clans were at war, and she had learned that her loyalty had limits, in spite of what her heart felt. The time came, moons later, when she had to face Lionblaze in battle, and her memories of what they had once shared were pushed aside by his determination to blame her for what had gone wrong. After that, Heathertail's feelings cooled considerably, and she hardened enough against him to look at him only as an enemy warrior. Her feelings for Lionblaze were left behind forever when she found a deeper, truer love with his half-brother Breezepelt.



• HARESTAR •

Harestar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Pragmatic
Dedicated
Rash
Secretive

• MENTORS •
Tornear

• APPRENTICES •
Slightfoot

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I could not let a Clan die.”

– HARESPRING, *THUNDER AND SHADOW*

HARESPRING WAS A brave young warrior, eager to defend WindClan’s borders from other Clans and always willing to fight. Fooled by the promise of Tigerstar, Hawkfrost, and the other Dark Forest cats that they would make him stronger and more skilled, he trained in the Place of No Stars, but did not attack the living Clans in their battle, fighting alongside his Clanmates instead.

WindClan’s leader Onestar forgave his Clanmates who had apprenticed to Dark Forest warriors. He chose Harespring as his new deputy as a symbol of reconciliation, replacing longtime deputy Ashfoot, who had been killed in the battle. As WindClan’s deputy, Harespring served his Clan loyally, but sometimes used his own judgment instead of following Onestar’s direction. When ShadowClan desperately needed an herb to fight a disease plaguing their camp and Onestar refused to give it to them, Harespring and Kestrelflight, the WindClan medicine cat, let them gather it on WindClan’s territory, relying on their own sense of compassion and justice rather than their leader’s decision.

After Onestar's death, Harestar became the leader of WindClan, and tried to be compassionate and level-headed. When the angry Clans argued over Rowanstar and Onestar's responsibility for Darktail and the pain he caused, Harestar stood up for them, saying that Darktail alone had caused the Clans' suffering.

Harestar's tendency to follow his own judgment made him unwilling to listen when Squirrelflight and Kestrelflight tried to tell him that the impostor pressuring him to exile "codebreakers" was not really Bramblestar; instead he reluctantly exiled his own deputy, Crowfeather. When he lost his first life in battle, his mind was changed by what he saw before his second life began: a faint vision of his ancestors in StarClan, clearly in distress. Based on this experience, he denounced the impostor and led WindClan against him.

Harestar has always relied on his own judgment while also respecting StarClan. As a leader, he believes he can see things more clearly than any other cat of the Clans.

RiverClan

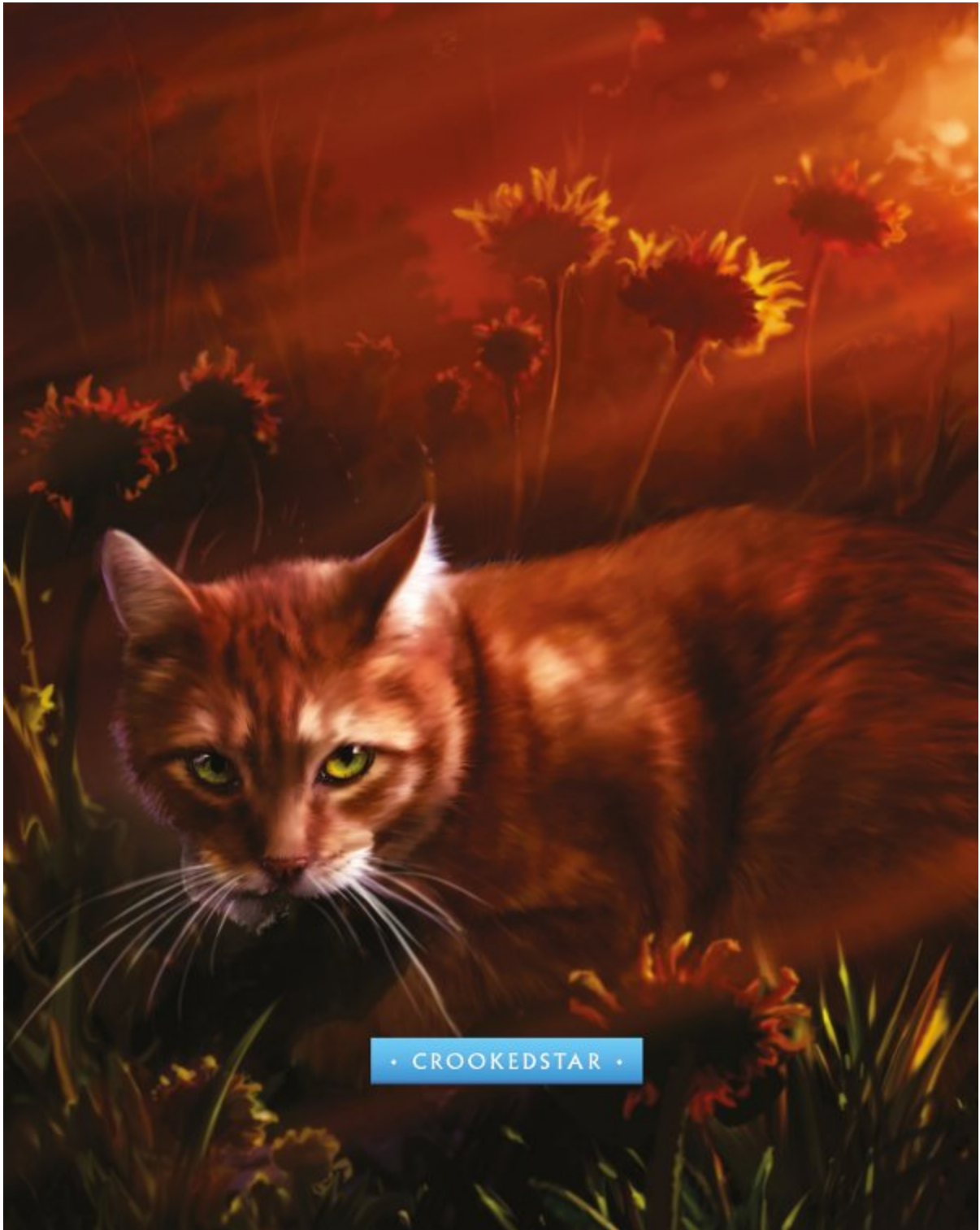


Introduction to RiverClan: Crookedstar Speaks

RIVERCLAN CATS HAVE always been viewed with suspicion by the other Clans because of our skill at swimming, and our fondness for getting our paws wet. We descend mostly from cats who did not come from the mountains to settle in the forest; those wind-tossed, open-air-loving cats had no wish to live among the close, whispering reeds, or dive underwater to catch fresh-kill. Instead, our first ancestors were those who saw the potential of the river for providing food in every season—food that would be safe from the other Clans because of its watery shelter. Our diet of fish made our pelts grow glossy and thick, better suited to keeping out the chill of the waves, and while other Clans scorned our plain, reed-rattled dens, we made them charming with feathers and moss and other trinkets we could collect along the shore.

Our warriors can fight as bravely as any, but we are called lazy and cowardly by the other Clans because we rarely venture into battle. We have no need: If no cats are willing to soak their paws crossing the river to attack us, why should we pick battles with them? The exception was Sunningrocks. Those rocks were ours! When cats first settled in the forest, the river flowed on both sides, cutting them off from ThunderClan and leaving them a short swim from our camp. The river changed direction, giving ThunderClan dry-paw access to the rocks, and those greedy cats instantly claimed them as their own. More blood was shed trying to take them back than I care to remember. Sunningrocks was won and lost, won and lost, every season until we finally left the forest.

Now every Clan lives beside water, although we are still the only cats that swim for our prey. We have made our territory around a stream that flows into the lake. We have been threatened by curious Twoleg kits and a poisonous pool, but RiverClan endures, taking pride in our independence and our strong-swimming cats.



• CROOKEDSTAR •

Crookedstar



• CLAN •



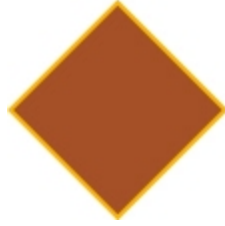
• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Loving
Loyal
Ambitious

• MENTORS •
Cedarpelt

• APPRENTICES •
Sedgecreek

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“My Clan means more to me than anything in the world.”

– CROOKEDJAW, *CROOKEDSTAR’S PROMISE*

WHEN CROOKEDSTAR WAS born, he was called Stormkit, but a fall as a kit broke his jaw and his mother, Rainflower, renamed him. It was obvious to Crookedkit that his mother was disappointed to have a son she considered less than perfect. She showered attention on his brother, Oakkit, instead, leaving Crookedkit restless and discontent. He left the Clan when he was still a kit and lived with farm cats instead, learning to hunt through fields of wheat, free from the warrior code. But deep down, he was still a Clan cat, and he returned home, was given the apprentice name Crookedpaw, and eventually earned the warrior name Crookedjaw.

In his dreams, he walked with Mapleshade, a cat with revenge in her heart, who let him assume she was from StarClan although she was confined to the Dark Forest. She agreed to make him the most powerful RiverClan warrior of all, if he vowed that nothing would ever be more important to him than his Clan. Crookedpaw could see no trickery in this and made the promise. Mapleshade trained him hard, honed his skills, but

also expected Crookedpaw to stand by and watch as, one by one, the cats he loved most were taken away from him.

Crookedjaw proved his worth many times over with his skill at hunting on land and in the river. He never seemed to be able to do enough to please his mother, but he soon won the affection of his denmate Willowbreeze. Mapleshade tested him by luring a Twoleg kit to Willowbreeze, allowing her to be captured and held hostage by Twolegs. Crookedjaw rescued her with the help of her sister, Graypool—and he knew exactly what Mapleshade had done. He was beginning to realize that he had made a terrible promise that would leave him isolated in the midst of the Clan, but Mapleshade would not release him.

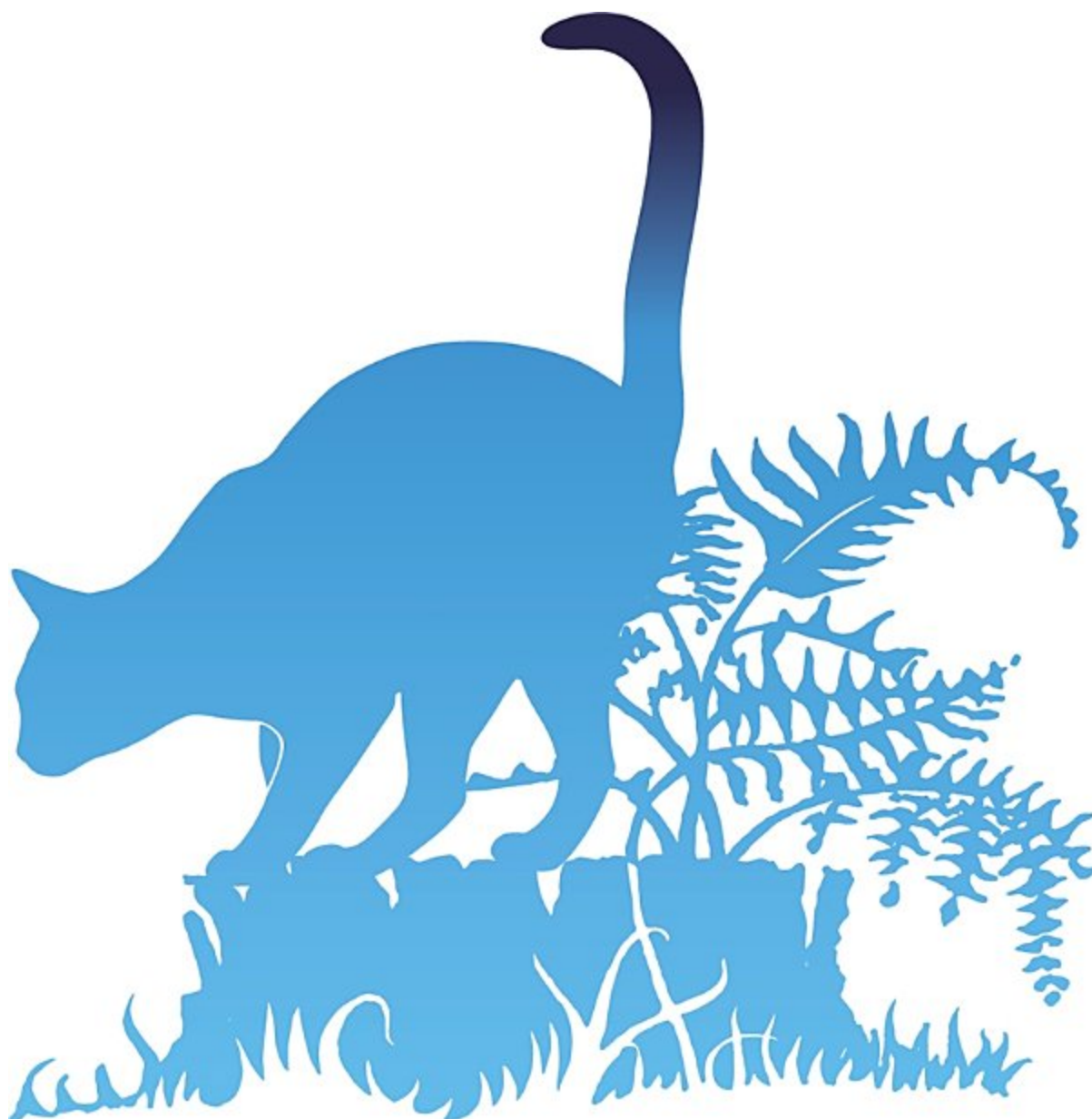
A stray dog in the RiverClan camp sent Crookedjaw racing to help, but he was faced with the dreadful choice of saving his Clanmates or rescuing his mother, who had been knocked into the river. Urged on by Mapleshade, Crookedjaw went to help the other warriors, and Rainflower died. Crookedjaw never forgot the moment when he lost his mother, and with her, the chance of ever winning her love.

When Shellheart retired from Clan deputy, the broken jaws of a squirrel on the fresh-kill pile predicted that Crookedjaw should take his place, despite being so young. Mapleshade took the credit for damaging the prey, and that night Crookedjaw finally realized that he was being trained among Dark Forest warriors. Horrified that he was being asked to kill to secure victory—against the warrior code—Crookedjaw vowed never to return.

But Mapleshade reminded him of the promise he had made, and slowly Crookedjaw's world fell apart. His brother, Oakheart, fell in love with Bluefur, a ThunderClan warrior, and compromised his loyalty to RiverClan. An expedition to find fresh bedding in a nearby barn, suggested by Crookedjaw, led to the death of Hailstar, plunging Crookedstar too soon into leadership. And then greencough took Willowbreeze and two of their new-kitted daughters, leaving just one, Silverkit, for Crookedstar to raise alone. And then Oakheart died in another conflict over territory.

For a while Crookedstar thought Mapleshade's curse had lifted, but his daughter Silverstream fell in love with Graystripe, a ThunderClan warrior, and died giving birth to his kits on the other side of the river, in the shadow of Sunningrocks. Thanks to Mapleshade, Crookedstar had achieved everything he had ever wanted—and lost everything that mattered. It is to

his credit that he hid so much of his private torment and was regarded as a strong, fair-minded leader throughout the forest.





• SILVERSTREAM •

Silverstream



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Proud
Resolute
Loving
Stubborn

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“If you could see beyond your nose, you’d realize . . . there’s a lot more to life than what we’ve got in one little Clan.”

—SILVERSTREAM, *CROOKEDSTAR’S PROMISE*

AS CROOKEDSTAR’S ONLY surviving daughter, and with her mother Willowbreeze lost soon after giving birth, Silverstream was a feisty, headstrong young cat who could bend her father to her will with little effort. But her impulsive nature was tempered by gentleness inherited from her mother, and she was loved by all her Clanmates. Silverstream was a RiverClan warrior through and through, with freshwater running in her veins, and she never intended to fall in love with a ThunderClan warrior. She saved Graystripe from drowning not with any romantic notions, but because RiverClan cats were not in the habit of letting dead cats pollute their source of prey.

When Graystripe begged to see her again, Silverstream agreed out of curiosity. Her fondness for the ThunderClan warrior grew in spite of all her instincts to stay loyal to her Clan. When they met in secret, it felt as if she were walking on thorns, and fish stuck in her throat when she returned to her Clanmates at the fresh-kill pile. But she could not deny the pull of her heart, and when she discovered she was expecting Graystripe’s kits, her fears were balanced by joy that she would raise a new generation with him.

Tragically she bled to death giving birth at the foot of Sunningrocks, desperately trying to reach her mate. It is hard to know if Silverstream would have been happy to live in ThunderClan, closed in beneath trees and out of sight and sound of her beloved river. But if love could give her the courage to break the warrior code, it might have given her a chance of happiness with Graystripe.



Leopardstar



• CLAN •



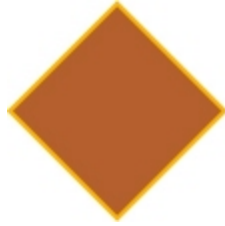
• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Proud
Haughty
Ambitious
Regretful

• MENTORS •
Whitefang

• APPRENTICES •
Whiteclaw
Hawkfrost

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“The other Clans’ troubles are not ours to worry about.”

— LEOPARDSTAR, *DAWN*

LEOPARDFUR, WHO WOULD one day become Leopardstar, was a young, keen, ambitious cat who was appointed deputy by Crookedstar because he saw in her a straightforward, loyal cat with none of the shadows that haunted his dreams. But Leopardfur’s black-and-white approach to the warrior code meant that she viewed her leader’s more tolerant attitude as a detriment to her Clan. When Tigerstar took over ShadowClan, Leopardstar formed an alliance that nearly led to the destruction of every cat. Perhaps she also hoped that Tigerstar would invite her to be his mate and share the rule of the forest. The charismatic leader convinced her that tolerating half-Clan cats was a grave weakness and spoke of making the forest one supreme Clan, with no petty fighting over boundaries or loyalties blurred through breeding between different Clans.

She realized her mistake when Tigerstar combined their Clans into TigerClan and made himself leader, then made half-Clan cats fight to the death. Whatever Leopardstar had hoped for, this was not it. But she was trapped by her pride and couldn’t speak out against Tigerstar—not because

she was scared for her own safety, but because she couldn't face losing the respect of her Clanmates by admitting she was wrong.

Leopardstar saved her Clanmates by agreeing to join LionClan on the eve of the battle with BloodClan; thanks to Firestar's courage, she ended up on the winning side. But she never forgot how close she came to destroying her Clan. She led her cats on the Great Journey to the lake and supported them through the difficult days of shaping their new home. Her experience with Tigerstar had left her brittle and defensive when dealing with other Clans, but her loyalty to her own Clanmates could not be questioned. She died of sickness in her old age, knowing that RiverClan was safe and well settled beside the lake. It was a peaceful end to a life that had been more turbulent and sad than any other cat truly appreciated.



• OAKHEART •

Oakheart



• CLAN •



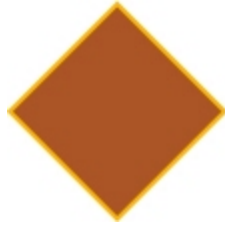
• POSITION •
Deputy

• TRAITS •
Brave
Loving
Loyal
Protective

• MENTORS •
Shellheart

• APPRENTICES •
Loudbelly

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“This isn’t about the code. This is about us.”

—OAKHEART TO BLUEFUR, *BLUESTAR’S PROPHECY*

CROOKEDSTAR’S BROTHER, OAKKIT, who would one day be Oakheart, was painfully aware that their mother, Rainflower, favored him over his littermate. Rainflower seemed unable to cope with the fact that one of her kits was disfigured from an accident, but it made no difference to Oakkit. He was fiercely loyal and protective toward his brother, but when Oakpaw was made an apprentice before his still-healing brother, Crookedkit left the Clan out of the loneliness due to being the only kit in the nursery. Oakheart trained hard, proved his skills in fighting and fishing, and there were soon murmurs of leadership qualities. Crookedkit returned shortly before Oakpaw became a warrior, and it seemed that everything was as it should be.

But then Oakheart met a feisty, troubled ThunderClan warrior named Bluefur. Her sharp tongue and cool wit fascinated him, and he began to seek her out at Gatherings. Crookedjaw warned him not to get too close to a cat from a rival Clan, but Oakheart saw no harm in what he was doing. He was still as loyal to RiverClan as a warrior could be. After an encounter beside

the river, Oakheart suggested to Bluefur that they meet in secret that night at Fourtrees. There in the moonlight she taught him to climb one of the four Great Oaks, all the way to the very top. Beneath the starry sky, Oakheart knew he had fallen in love forever.

They both understood that they could not be together, that one night was all they would have. They parted heartbroken but resolute. Not long after, Crookedstar became leader and asked Oakheart to be his deputy, but Oakheart refused. He was still torn between loyalty to his Clanmates and his love for Bluefur. To his delight, Bluefur came to him and revealed that she was expecting his kits. Oakheart began planning a future in which she would come to RiverClan or he would join ThunderClan. However, Bluefur said she was going to raise these kits alone, telling them nothing about their father except that he was a ThunderClan warrior. Oakheart knew he would never be able to change her mind, but he vowed always to be the kits' father if they needed him.



That time came soon after the three kits were born. Bluefur brought them to the river in deep snow, insisting that she had to give them up to save her Clan from Thistleclaw becoming deputy. One of the kits, Mosskit, died from the cold, but Mistykit and Stonekit survived. Oakheart gave them to Graypool to care for, and watched over them as they grew to be strong, proud RiverClan warriors, knowing nothing of their true mother.

Perhaps mercifully, Oakheart died before he saw Tigerstar's dreadful persecution of half-Clan cats. Oakheart himself was killed by a rock slide during yet another clash over Sunningrocks, a true warrior's end for a cat with more courage and dignity than his Clanmates ever realized.



Mistystar



• CLAN •



• POSITION •

Leader

• TRAITS •

Thoughtful
Enduring
Honest
Loyal

• MENTORS •

Echomist

• APPRENTICES •

Feathertail
Mothwing
Dapplenose

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I love my Clan, in spite of it all. I’ll help you rebuild RiverClan.”

– MISTYFOOT TO LEOPARDSTAR, *LEOPARDSTAR’S HONOR*

MISTYKIT WAS BORN in ThunderClan to the warrior Bluefur, after her illicit relationship with the RiverClan cat Oakheart. Faced with the agonizing knowledge that Thistleclaw was about to become deputy and destroy ThunderClan with his bloodthirsty ambition, Bluefur took her three kits through the snow to the edge of the river and gave them to Oakheart, leaving her free to be chosen as deputy instead. One of the kits, Mosskit, died in the cold, but the other two survived and were raised by Graypool after the death of her own litter. Of course, Graypool guessed exactly where the kits had come from, as did Crookedstar, but they kept Oakheart’s secret and raised the cats to be loyal, brave, respected RiverClan warriors.

Mistyfoot and her brother, Stonefur, were stunned when Bluestar revealed to them the truth about their birth, and they were exposed as half-Clan cats. They were briefly reunited with their mother when she fell into the gorge, saving her Clanmates from a pack of wild dogs. Bluestar died with her kits at her side, happy to have acknowledged them at last.

When Tigerstar took control of RiverClan, Stonefur was killed by Darkstripe and Blackfoot—both of whom had left their Clans to join TigerClan—on Tigerstar’s command. Mistyfoot escaped with the help of ThunderClan, but returned to her Clan after the battle with BloodClan and was made deputy by a shocked and chastened Leopardstar. Mistyfoot helped her Clanmates on the Great Journey and stayed loyal to her father’s Clan as they settled into their new home.



When Leopardstar died, Mistystar became the leader of RiverClan. Having suffered the cost of conflict between the Clans, she valued peace

and would often put herself between other leaders to calm volatile arguments. When Darktail and his Kin drove RiverClan out of their territory, she fought beside the other Clans to drive the rogues away, then closed RiverClan's borders, giving her Clan time to recover without the stress of inter-Clan conflict.

After they rejoined the other Clans, their peace was shattered once more as the impostor took over ThunderClan. Mistystar, believing he was the real Bramblestar, sided with him against the "codebreakers" and rebels. When she learned the truth, she once again chose to fight for the good of RiverClan, volunteering to travel into the Dark Forest and battle to save StarClan. Mistystar finally lost her last life and drifted off to StarClan, secure in the knowledge that she was leaving her Clan in good paws—unaware that her son and deputy, Reedwhisker, had already fallen at the paws of one of his Clanmates and that her Clan was about to be thrown into the greatest turmoil it had ever known. . . .



Feathertail



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Compassionate
Distrustful
Gentle

• MENTORS •
Mistystar

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I’ll do anything to ensure RiverClan’s survival. And if I have to face this unknown danger . . . I’ll face it loyal to my Clan.”

—FEATHERTAIL, *A SHADOW IN RIVERCLAN*

FEATHERTAIL NEVER KNEW her mother, Silverstream, who died giving birth to her at the foot of Sunningrocks. She and her brother, Stormfur, were first raised in ThunderClan by their father, Graystripe, but when they were treated less than kindly by their adopted Clanmates, Graystripe took them back across the river to be raised in their mother’s Clan. Graystripe soon returned to ThunderClan, but Featherkit and Stormkit stayed loyal to RiverClan. When Tigerstar rose to power and inflicted his obsession with pure Clan blood on the whole forest, Featherpaw and Stormpaw, now apprentices, were obvious targets. Leopardstar was persuaded to keep them prisoner in an old fox den, together with their mentors, Stonefur and Mistyfoot, and from that dank hole, Featherpaw and her brother watched Stonefur die in a savagely unfair fight with Darkstripe and Blackfoot.

Firestar, Graystripe, and Ravenpaw rescued them and took them to ThunderClan, but like Mistyfoot they chose to go back to RiverClan when the battle with BloodClan was over. Feathertail struggled at first to forgive the Clan that had nearly watched her die, but after Leopardstar risked her life to save Feathertail and Stormfur from a fox, she not only forgave her leader but also found joy in the life of a RiverClan warrior again. In the following greenleaf, StarClan visited Feathertail, now a warrior, in a dream, urging her to listen to Midnight. Four cats, one from each Clan, received the same message, and joined together to travel to the sun-drown-place and find

a way to save their Clanmates from the destruction of the forest. Stormfur went with Feathertail, too loyal to his littermate to let her travel so far alone. But Feathertail was not alone; she fell in love with another cat who had been visited by StarClan, Crowpaw of WindClan. To other cats, he was prickly and reserved, but Feathertail saw through that to the loyal warrior beneath and, free from the borders that divided their forest home, they had no need to hide their affection.



On the return journey from the sun-drown-place, they stayed in the mountains with the Tribe of Rushing Water, and here Feathertail learned that she was part of another prophecy altogether, not from StarClan but from the Tribe of Endless Hunting. They foresaw that a silver cat would be the one to save the Tribe from the mountain lion named Sharptooth that preyed on them. The prophecy cost Feathertail her life, plunging from the

roof of the cave with the shard of stone that killed Sharptooth. She was buried above the waterfall, and she walks in the stars with the Tribe of Endless Hunting, watching over her adopted home. But she has never forgotten the Clans and often visits them in their dreams as part of StarClan, guiding their paw steps with the same gentleness and foresight that she showed in her short, courageous life.



Hawkfrost



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Proud
Calculating
Ambitious
Persuasive

• MENTORS •
Leopardstar

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Did you really think you’d live after betraying me?”

–HAWKFROST TO IVYPOOL, *THE LAST HOPE*

HAWKFROST WAS TIGERSTAR’S other son, half brother to Brambleclaw and Tawnypelt. He and his sister, Mothwing, as well as their brother, Tadpole, were born to a loner named Sasha who strayed into ShadowClan shortly after Tigerstar became leader. Sasha gave birth to her kits alone in the forest and tried to raise them on her own. After nearly losing her litter in a flood that claimed the life of Tadpole, Sasha brought her kits to RiverClan. Although she worried joining the Clans would draw attention to her kits’ parentage, she hoped it would give her kits a better chance of survival than if they were left in the wild. She came back for them when she learned that the Clans were being forced out of the forest by Twolegs, but by then Hawkfrost and his sister, Mothwing, were grown up and loyal to the code they shared with their Clanmates.

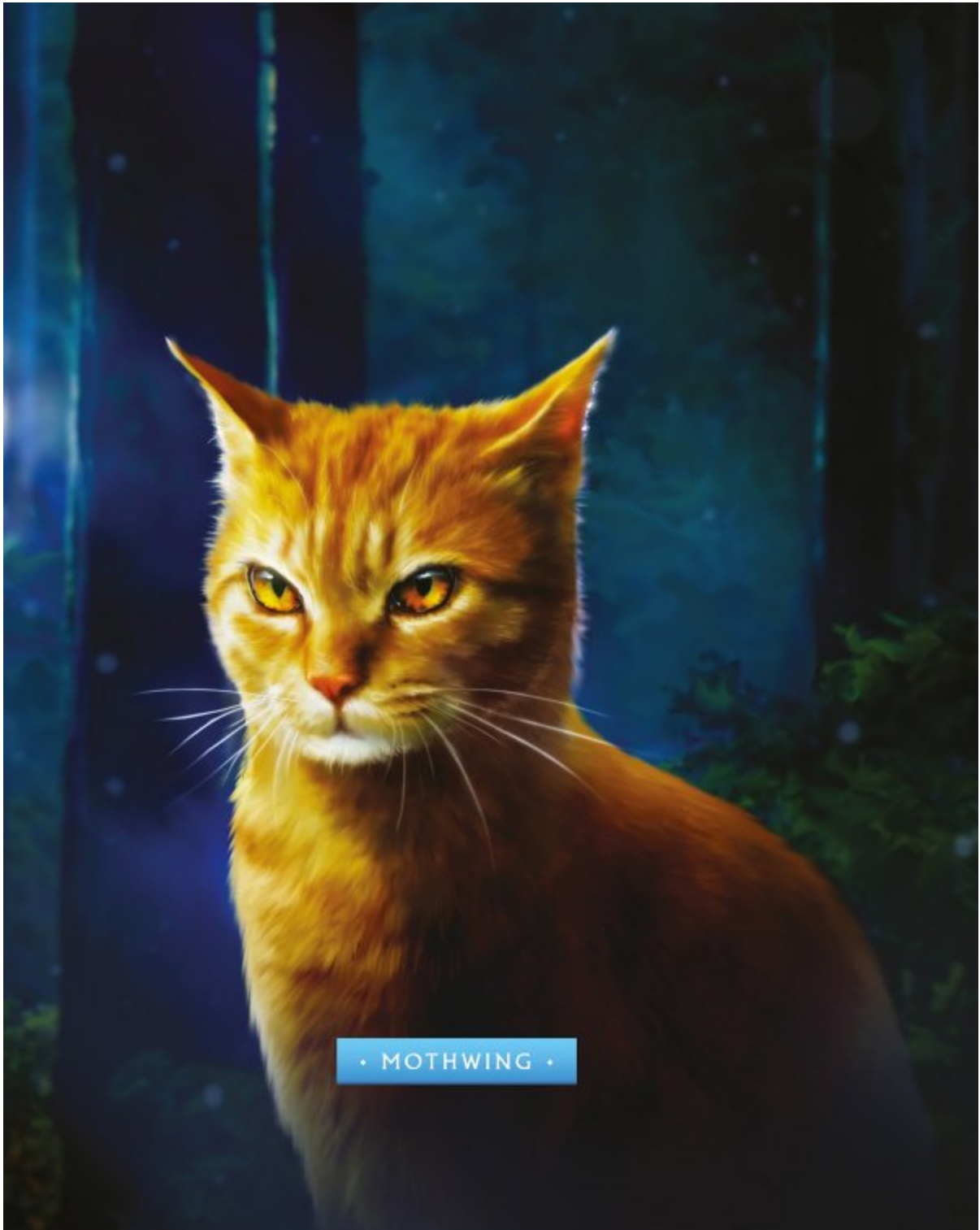
From a young age, Hawkfrost wanted to take Leopardstar’s place. He trained harder than any other apprentice, practiced catching fish over and over even though the skill didn’t run in his blood as it did in his Clanmates’, and was rewarded by being made temporary deputy when Mistyfoot was captured by Twolegs. He was clever enough to know that being Leopardstar’s favorite did not mean he was respected by his Clanmates. For that he needed something more . . . such as a sister who was the Clan’s medicine cat. So he tore the wing off a moth and faked a sign from StarClan to convince Mudfur that Mothwing was the right choice for his apprentice.

Tigerstar saw the potential in his ambitious, coldhearted son, and when the cats made the long journey to the lake, Tigerstar began visiting Hawkfrost in his dreams, encouraging him to support Mudclaw in the rebellion against Onestar. When Mudclaw was defeated, Hawkfrost defended his actions and argued that StarClan's sign had changed his mind.

And it was Tigerstar's idea that Hawkfrost plot with a ThunderClan cat who was willing to put aside his allegiance to lure Firestar into a trap. That cat was Ashfur. But Tigerstar underestimated Brambleclaw's loyalty to his Clan leader; instead of killing Firestar as Hawkfrost and Firestar expected, he freed the ThunderClan leader from the trap. Then Brambleclaw turned on his half brother, and StarClan's terrible prophecy was fulfilled: "Before all is peaceful, blood will spill blood and the lake will run red."



Hawkfrost joined his father in the Dark Forest and preyed on discontented cats in the living Clans, urging them to train in their dreams and rise up against the weaknesses of the warrior code. Hawkfrost personally sought out Ivypaw, Dovepaw's troubled sister, and watched with pride as she became one of the Dark Forest's most skilled warriors. Even when his companions doubted her loyalty, Hawkfrost insisted she could be trusted. When he realized that she had duped him all along and had been a ThunderClan spy in their midst, he turned on her. Before he could strike the fatal blow, Hollyleaf leaped to intercept it. Hawkfrost killed her instead and was ultimately killed in both body and spirit by Brambleclaw.



• MOTHWING •

Mothwing



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Caring
Determined
Secretive
Devoted

• MENTORS •
Mistystar
Mudfur

• APPRENTICES •
Willowshine

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I am skilled at healing and caring for my Clanmates, and that has been enough to serve my Clan.”

–MOTHWING, *MISTYSTAR'S OMEN*

MOTHWING WAS EAGER to become a medicine cat, but dismayed to learn that her brother, Hawkfrost, had faked the sign that convinced Mudfur to train her as his apprentice and lived in fear that his deception would be discovered. Mothwing was a quick learner, sensitive to cats in pain or injured, and trusted by her Clanmates. But she suffered from one flaw: Mothwing had no belief in or connection with StarClan.

Hawkfrost threatened to reveal her secret, forcing her to make false prophecies, such as the tale that led to Stormfur and Brook being driven out of the Clan. Because Mothwing was unable to receive warnings from StarClan, she didn't know about the Twoleg poison on RiverClan territory, and her warrior ancestors couldn't tell her where to find catmint when greencough struck. Terrified that her lie might be destroying her Clan, Mothwing confided in Leafpool, who began speaking to Mudfur in dreams on her behalf.

Mistystar's nine lives ceremony posed a greater challenge, because Mothwing was forced to confess to her closest friend that she did not believe in StarClan. At first Mistystar felt the essence of her leadership was threatened by such a lack of faith, but a vision of a perfect moth emerging triumphant and glorious from a dry brown pod convinced her that she should trust Mothwing to fulfill her duties as she had done for seasons before.

StarClan found a solution in Willowshine, Mothwing's apprentice. Leafpool walked with Willowshine in her dreams, teaching her about StarClan and how to read omens and watch for signs. Willowshine didn't need to ask why she was being helped by cats from other Clans; she had already guessed that her mentor didn't share her connection to StarClan. But in the same moment, she knew that it didn't matter. Mothwing was a wise, experienced, and skilled medicine cat. Willowshine vowed to keep Mothwing's secret until her very last breath.

After cats of StarClan fought with the living Clans against cats of the Dark Forest, Mothwing had to believe her own eyes: StarClan did exist. But what use were they? she wondered. She chose to continue to rely on her own skills and knowledge, and let Willowshine handle StarClan.

The two shared RiverClan's medicine cat duties for many moons, until Mothwing was declared a "codebreaker" because her parents had not been RiverClan cats. Under pressure from the cat inhabiting Bramblestar's body, Mistystar reluctantly exiled her, and Mothwing took refuge among the other exiles and rebels in ShadowClan territory.

When the impostor abducted Squirrelflight into the Dark Forest, Mothwing volunteered to try to dream her way into the forest after them, but Willowshine successfully argued that, because of her connection to StarClan, she should be the one to try. Ashfur, however, managed to kill her and pull her spirit into the Dark Forest. As a spirit, Willowshine was under Ashfur's control, but she escaped and joined the fight against Ashfur before making her way into StarClan.

Mothwing mourned her friend. With Willowshine's death, RiverClan had no medicine cat, and Mothwing's heart had always belonged to her Clan. She honored Willowshine and their love for RiverClan, and returned.



SkyClan

Introduction to SkyClan: Cloudstar Speaks

SKYCLAN HAS THE distinction of being the very first Clan in the forest. Our founder, Clear Sky, came from the mountains and chose not to stay with the others on the moor, clinging to an environment that reminded them of home; instead, he saw the potential in the prey-rich woodland, in the dense undergrowth that could offer shelter and secrecy. He took with him the cats that were most skilled at leaping into the air to bring down eagles. This talent was easily turned to climbing trees in pursuit of squirrels and smaller, easier-won birds. The moorland cats found our ways aggressive and territorial, but Clear Sky knew he was sowing the seeds of a group that would grow strong and proud, and last forever.

And perhaps it would have. But Clear Sky could not have foreseen what the Twolegs would do to his precious territory. By the time I became leader, many, many seasons after Clear Sky had gone to walk among the stars, our beloved trees were being torn down to make way for new Twoleg dens. For the first time, SkyClan was the most vulnerable of all the Clans. We appealed to the others for help, for enough of their territory to survive the bitter cold of leaf-bare, but it seemed our history, our place in establishing the very grounds of the warrior code, meant nothing. Cast out, I led my Clanmates on a long and dreadful journey until I found a gorge carved out of sandy rock that offered shelter and prey and a chance to rest.

SkyClan thrived in its new home, nurturing the flickering flame of the warrior code, until rats came and stole our prey and killed our kits and terrorized us until there was no cat left. SkyClan could not suffer two defeats. The cats scattered and the gorge lay empty until I charged Firestar from my place in StarClan to restore what had once been a noble and important Clan. Firestar and Sandstorm rebuilt our Clan, tracking down our

descendants who still showed an echo of our tree-hunting skills, and inviting other cats to join and uphold the warrior code. There were still rats to defeat and the challenge of teaching so many cats at once to live according to the ways of our ancestors, but the heart of SkyClan had never truly died. Maybe they had lived apart from the other Clans, maybe some of our cats had not completely cast off their kittypet connections, but SkyClan thrived once more.



The Clan spent seasons more in the gorge where I and my Clanmates had found shelter, before being driven out by Darktail and his rogues. SkyClan had a long, perilous journey, but StarClan led us to join the other Clans by the lake, returning to our place among the Clans at last.



• CLOUDSTAR AND SKYWATCHER •

Cloudstar and Skywatcher

• CLAN •



CLOUDSTAR

• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Independent
Protective

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



SKYWATCHER

• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
**Misunderstood
Spiritual**

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“SkyClan will never end! We have suffered great losses before, only to rise and thrive again.”

– CLOUDSTAR, *HAWKWING'S JOURNEY*

CLOUDSTAR WAS WELL aware of the significance of his Clan's place in the history of the forest, and he took as much pride as his Clanmates in SkyClan's strength and reputation. When Twolegs started to destroy the territory to build new dens, Cloudstar trusted his rival Clans to help him survive. Instead, each leader protested that sharing their territory would be impossible, that SkyClan would not be able to catch different prey, that if there were only four Great Oaks in the hollow, perhaps StarClan only ever intended for there to be four Clans.

To his horror, Cloudstar realized that his Clanmates' only chance of survival lay in finding a new home. His mate, Birdflight, stayed behind in ThunderClan with their newborn kits. Numb with grief, Cloudstar found somewhere to rest in a sandy gorge, far upriver from the forest. His faith in StarClan had been shaken so deeply that he gave little heed to the warrior code. Food and shelter, that was all his Clanmates needed. Other leaders came after him, but a savage horde of rats drove out the remaining cats, and from his place in the stars, Cloudstar watched his beloved Clan dwindle to dust.

Skywatcher was the last descendant of SkyClan living in the gorge when Firestar and Sandstorm arrived. His mother had told him tales of their ancestors who watched the full moon from the rock jutting out over the gorge and lived in different sandy dens according to their role in the Clans. Skywatcher lived alone, his thoughts muddled with age and loneliness, spending most of his nights on a rock that jutted from the top of the gorge, staring up at the stars. For this reason, the cats who knew him called him Moony and jeered him for his peculiar, absent ways.

But Firestar recognized the truth in his ramblings of long-ago cats, and when the new SkyClan rose from the dust, Skywatcher was welcomed as an honored elder. He lived just long enough to see his mother's distant memories reignite the gorge, and then died, taking his place among his ancestors. But Skywatcher never forgot the debt he owed to Firestar, and it

was he who was chosen to deliver the greatest prophecy of all to the ThunderClan leader: “There will be three, kin of your kin, who hold the power of the stars in their paws.”



Leafstar

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Welcoming
Adaptable
Open-minded
Honorable

• APPRENTICES •
Sparrowpelt
Sol

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“No matter what, there is one thing SkyClan will always do. We will protect one another.”

– LEAFSTAR, *VEIL OF SHADOWS*

LEAF WAS A loner in the woods near the sandy gorge when Firestar first approached her and told her about the cats who lived there long ago. Leaf was happy as she was, hunting for herself, occasionally sharing tongues with her friend Scratch. But she was curious enough about what Firestar said to come to a meeting of cats in the gorge. His tales of StarClan, and of cats that helped each other survive the harshest leaf-bares, drew Leaf in, and along with several others—loners and kittypets alike—she agreed to join the new Clan.

With the warrior name Leafdapple, she learned fast from her ThunderClan mentors. She was given an apprentice of her own, Sparrowpaw, and she helped her Clanmates set border markers around the gorge, protecting the territory that now belonged to them. She fought as fiercely as a lion to defeat the rats that had begun to torment them, just as the old SkyClan had been tormented so many moons ago.

A vision of leaf-shadowed sunlight in the midst of leaf-bare prompted the new medicine cat, Echosong, to speak with Firestar, who realized that this must be a sign for him to choose a leader. At first, Leafdapple resisted taking on so much responsibility when there was still much to learn, but faith in her newly discovered ancestors gave her courage, and she became Leafstar.

With the support of her mate, Billystorm, and her deputy, Sharpclaw, she led SkyClan through its turbulent early seasons, fending off attacks from foxes and hostile cats, as well as negotiating a new kind of Clanmate, a daylight warrior, part-kittypet and part-Clan cat. Leafstar knew this would not be accepted in other Clans, but she was wise enough to recognize that things were very different for SkyClan. They had to exist alone, and they needed to swell their numbers by any means in order to stay strong and well-fed. Some questioned the loyalty of the daylight-warriors, and some daylight-warriors proved inadequate, but Leafstar's decision was the right one, and SkyClan flourished.



Leafstar had her own litter, Firekit, Stormkit, and Harrykit, and the four of them were briefly captured when a well-meaning elderly Twoleg took them to her den. Her mate, Billystorm, realized how much his family meant to him after this and decided to stay in the gorge forever. Perhaps the only fatal mistake Leafstar made was sending away the would-be warrior Sol; fatal not for her Clan, but for the Clans far away that she had never met.

Leafstar planned to lead SkyClan in the gorge for all her nine lives, but when Darktail and his rogues attacked, SkyClan was driven away from their home. Following Echosong's prophecies, Leafstar took SkyClan on a long and difficult journey to the lake territories, seeking the other Clans. When they finally arrived, to their dismay Darktail had preceded them. This time, though, they were able to work together with the other Clans, and Leafstar had the satisfaction of seeing Darktail killed and his rogues driven away.

As SkyClan settled at the lake, tension arose over how room would be made for them; no Clan wanted to give up territory. Unwilling to stay where her Clan was unwelcome, Leafstar decided to lead SkyClan back to the gorge. But believing that StarClan wanted the five Clans united, each of the other Clans gave up part of their territory. This, too, proved unsuccessful, as conflict over the borders continued and at last, Leafstar moved her Clan once more, establishing a new camp further from the lake but closer to the Moonpool, and the five Clans could finally live in harmony.

When the cat pretending to be Bramblestar first demanded that each Clan expel its "codebreakers," Leafstar took no position on the matter: there were no codebreakers in SkyClan. Even as Rootspring, a cat of her own Clan, claimed that ThunderClan's leader was not who he pretended to be, Leafstar remained dubious. But when the impostor demanded that SkyClan expel two of its warriors, Leafstar had had enough: she would fight for the right to lead her Clan as she thought best.



Echosong and Frecklewish

• CLAN •



ECHOSONG

• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Compassionate
Loyal

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



FRECKLEWISH

• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Talented
Passionate

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Our faith is being tested, but we must believe StarClan wouldn’t lead us astray.”

–ECHOSONG, *HAWKWING’S JOURNEY*

ECHOSONG WAS PURE kittypet, with no hint of SkyClan in her long, fluffy coat and delicate paws. But she dreamed of cats with the light of stars in their fur, and when Firestar and Sandstorm came looking for new warriors in Twolegplace, Echosong was expecting them. Already made restless by her strange dreams, Echosong was willing to leave her housefolk and go live in the gorge. Her sensitivity to the stars and her quick knowledge of herbs, thanks to Sandstorm’s patient teaching, made her an obvious choice for SkyClan’s new medicine cat.

The loners in the Clan, including Sharpclaw, were suspicious of the soft-furred kittypet, but Echosong was patient and loyal and proved her worth. She saved lives after the battle with the rats and shared her Clanmates’ grief when it was too late to help the brave warrior Rainfur. It was Echosong who received the sign of dappled leaves to indicate StarClan’s choice for the leader of SkyClan, and she traveled with Leafstar to watch her receive her nine lives from their ancestors. Firestar knew that with these two cats, he was leaving the young Clan in the safest paws.

Frecklepaw joined SkyClan as a “daylight warrior,” returning to her kittypet life at night. She began as a warrior apprentice but, fascinated by healing, became Echosong’s apprentice and decided to train as a medicine cat. When the Clan was driven out of their gorge by Darktail, Frecklewish was captured by Twolegs. The Twolegs were kind enough, but Frecklewish longed for her Clan and when, after many moons, a SkyClan patrol returned in search of her and other lost Clanmates, she made a daring escape and joined her Clan once more. Echosong, sadly, had died during SkyClan’s travels, and Frecklewish settled down as her Clan’s senior medicine cat, providing wise counsel to Leafstar and training her own apprentice, Fidgetpaw, as Echosong had once trained her.



Sharpclaw

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Deputy

• TRAITS •
Daring
Dutiful
Caring
Wary

• APPRENTICES •
Cherrytail
Egg

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“But our warrior code is clear: victory does not require death.”

– SHARPCLAW, *SKYCLAN AND THE STRANGER*

WHEN FIRESTAR AND Sandstorm first came to the gorge, Sharpclaw was a loner known as Scratch. Firestar only needed a chance meeting to realize that this cat had the SkyClan ability to jump, and the courage of a fully trained Clan warrior. Sharpclaw was more than willing to join the new Clan and learn how to defend its borders and stock the fresh-kill pile with enough prey to fill every mouth. But his zeal spilled over into arrogance, and he was dismissive of the former kittypets, claiming they could never learn to survive in the wild.

His impulsive need to protect his Clan caused trouble when he leaped too quickly into skirmishes with passing cats, but his bravery and strength played the greatest role in helping his Clanmates to victory against the horde of rats. Leafstar didn't hesitate to ask him to be her deputy; in his heart, Sharpclaw thought he deserved to be leader just as much, but his loyalty to the newly formed SkyClan made him equally committed to this supporting role.

His impatience with kittypets spilled over when the daylight warriors seemed too slow to keep up with Clan duties and too quick to return to their housefolk's cozy dens at night. But Leafstar made him give these cats a chance to prove their worth while his growing closeness to the young warrior Cherrytail gave him a contentment and sense of purpose he had not known before.

He and Cherrytail became mates and raised four kits together: Hawkwing, Cloudmist, Blossomheart, and Duskpaw, and he grew into a deputy whom the whole Clan admired.

Sadly, he would never be leader. In the battle with Darktail and the rogues that drove SkyClan from their home in the gorge, he died at the claws of Darktail. He would be remembered as a cat who served SkyClan well, and at last gave his life in his Clan's defense.



• HAWKWING •

Hawkwing

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Deputy

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Loyal
Headstrong
Dedicated

• MENTORS •
Ebonyclaw

• APPRENTICES •
Curlypaw

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You can’t live for the past and hide from the future.”

– HAWKWING, *DARKEST NIGHT*

THE SKYCLAN DEPUTY’S life has been marked by loss. As an apprentice, he failed to save his brother, Duskpaw, from a fire and blamed himself for Duskpaw’s death, as Hawkpaw had pulled their fellow apprentice Pebblepaw from the fire before Duskpaw. As a young warrior, now called Hawkwing, he befriended the loner Darktail, who claimed to know where to find the other Clans but proved to be lying. Worse, Darktail led a group of rogues to attack SkyClan. Darktail killed Hawkwing’s father, the Clan deputy Sharpclaw, in front of him. Saying that Hawkwing was unlike the rest of his Clan, Darktail offered him a place by his side, but Hawkwing vehemently refused and fought bravely beside Pebblepaw to defend the nursery. When Leafstar called for SkyClan to flee, Hawkwing and Pebblepaw helped the kits to cross the river but one, Snipkit, was swept away.

Knowing the gorge was lost, Leafstar decided to lead SkyClan to join the other Clans, which Echosong had seen in a vision. Hawkwing was assigned his first apprentice, Curlypaw, to mentor on their journey. Despite

his sorrow, Hawkwing was full of hope as he learned that Pebbleshine was expecting his kits. But mere days later, tragedy struck when Pebbleshine was abducted by a Twoleg monster while hunting for food.

Over the next moon, Hawkwing grieved, but took comfort in mentoring Curlypaw and in helping Plumwillow care for her newborn kits, whose father had disappeared as they fled the gorge. But Hawkwing lost this makeshift family when Curlypaw decided to become a kittypet and Plumwillow's mate found his way back to SkyClan. Shortly afterward, Hawkwing became SkyClan's deputy when Waspwhisker was captured by Twolegs.

After moons of travel, SkyClan, led by prophecy, finally found their way to the lake where Hawkwing discovered to his joy that his daughters, Violetkit and Twigkit, had survived and were living among the Clans. SkyClan's old enemy Darktail had made his way there as well, and Hawkwing and his Clanmates fought bravely beside the other Clans and defeated him. Despite the sorrows of his earlier life, Hawkwing found peace by the lake, loving his daughters and helping to lead his Clan as Leafstar's trusted deputy.



Pebblesshine

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Dedicated
Loving
Strong-willed
Independent

• MENTORS •
Billystorm
Sandynose

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“She was the kindest, sweetest cat I’ve ever known, and I miss her every day.”

– HAWKWING, *DARKEST NIGHT*

CLEVER AND COURAGEOUS Pebbleshine died young but nevertheless continued to protect her kits.

Raised in the gorge, she and Hawkpaw were rival apprentices, but after Hawkpaw saved her from a fire, she began to admire him. Unfortunately, Hawkpaw—soon Hawkwing—resented Pebblepaw because of his brother’s death in that fire. Later, Pebblepaw saved Hawkwing from a badger but blamed herself for not also saving her mentor. United in their grief and guilt, Pebblepaw and Hawkwing grew close.

When Darktail and his rogues drove SkyClan from the gorge, Pebblepaw and Hawkwing fought off rogues attacking the nursery. Pebblepaw earned her warrior name, Pebbleshine, and as SkyClan began its journey, Pebbleshine and Hawkwing’s friendship blossomed into love.

Prey was scarce during SkyClan’s journey in search of the other Clans. Pebbleshine, expecting kits, needed food more than ever. When she discovered a Twoleg monster full of caged birds, she led a raid to catch

them and was abducted by the monster. By the time she managed to escape, she was stranded far away from Hawkwing and the rest of SkyClan.

Her dreams told her to follow the light of the setting sun, and she had nearly reached the lake when she gave birth to her kits with the guidance of the StarClan cat Micah, the first medicine cat of SkyClan. Pebbleshine, overwhelmed with love for her two she-kits, had little time with them. While protecting them by leading a badger away from her nest, she was killed by a Twoleg monster on the Thunderpath.



Despite her death, Pebbleshine would not leave her tiny kits behind. When she awoke in StarClan, she asked to be allowed to return to the living world to watch over them for as long as they needed her. She saw two apprentices find her kits and take them to safety among the Clans. When Twigkit almost drowned, Pebbleshine was beside her, whispering to her to swim, to not give up. She spoke to Tree, a loner who could talk to ghosts, and through him, tried to persuade SkyClan to remain by the lake rather than return to the gorge. With Tree's help, she was also able to meet her kits

and her mate face-to-face one last time, and to inform Violetshine that she, too, would become a mother. Even as she took her place in StarClan, confident that Violetshine and Twigbranch could now look after themselves, Pebbleshine continued to watch over them, just from a greater distance.



• VIOLETSHINE •

Violetshine



• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

• TRAITS •
Careful
Quiet
Aloof
Strong-willed

• MENTORS •
Dawnpelt
Rabbitleap

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“What about me? Why am I never allowed to be happy?”

– VIOLETSKINE, *DARKEST NIGHT*

AFTER VIOLETKIT AND her sister, Twigkit—believed to be the subject of a prophecy—were discovered beneath a Thunderpath, Violetkit was taken to ShadowClan. While no ShadowClan cat was cruel to Violetkit, only Needleclaw took an interest in her, and Violetkit looked up to her almost as an older sister.

Rebellious Needletail left ShadowClan and joined Darktail and his group of rogues, taking Violetkit with her, and Violetkit became an apprentice with the Kin. After Darktail took over ShadowClan, Violetclaw worked against the Kin from within, helping elders, queens, and kits to escape and feeding starving prisoners—until Darktail learned of her betrayal and ordered Needletail to kill her. Instead, Needletail sacrificed herself and Violetclaw escaped.

Meanwhile, ThunderClan's medicine cat Alderheart dreamed of SkyClan. But ThunderClan, busy battling Darktail, was unwilling to give up warriors to search for the lost Clan. Twigclaw set off on her own, and after a

long and perilous journey, she led SkyClan to the lake. After the Kin's defeat, Twigpaw and Violetpaw joined their father, Hawkwing, in SkyClan.

Soon after Violetpaw joined the search for SkyClan cats who had been lost on their journey. The ghost of Needletail led her to a loner, Tree, who she brought back to SkyClan, believing the six-toed cat might fulfill the prophecy "To fend off the storm, you will need an extra claw."

On her return to SkyClan, Violetpaw became a warrior and was given the name Violetshine. Romance blossomed between Violetshine and Tree. They had two kits: Needlekit, named after Violetshine's first friend, and Rootkit. Violetshine never forgot life under the tyrant Darktail and, when the impostor pretending to be Bramblestar began to punish "codebreakers," she and Tree considered leaving the Clans. She was reluctant, though, to leave her father and sister behind.

After the impostor escaped to the Dark Forest, Violetshine became one of the "lights in the mist" who would free StarClan and help reestablish its connection to the living Clans. In the Dark Forest, she was reunited with her beloved friend Needletail, now a StarClan cat, and they fought side by side once more.



Tree

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Mediator

• TRAITS •
Independent
Loving
Protective
Perceptive

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“There’s more to life than fighting and showing yourself off as a strong cat. It’s not always about who is the biggest and bravest.”

–TREE TO ROOTPAW, *LOST STARS*

MOST CATS CONSIDER Tree the oddest cat in SkyClan. Born to the Sisters, a group of female cats who spoke to the spirits of their dead, he was originally named Earth. As a kit, he was unable to see the dead. Then, at six moons old, he had to go out into the world on his own, as was the Sisters’ tradition for male cats. Angry at being forced out, he found his father, Root, and renamed himself Tree. Father and son traveled together until Root was killed by a fox and Tree at last saw his first spirit: his father.

Tree continued his travels, but longed for kin of his own, while distrusting organized groups of cats because of his resentment toward the Sisters. He had friendly encounters, including with Pebbleshine of SkyClan and Needleclaw of ShadowClan, but always moved on. This changed when the ghost of Needletail led Violetclaw to him. He liked Violetclaw immediately and came with her to SkyClan despite his doubts. There, Leafstar allowed him to stay because he had six toes on one of his hind paws and might be the subject of the prophecy: “To fend off a storm, you will need an extra claw.” Tree helped the grieving Clan cats to see Darktail’s victims, letting the living cats find closure and the dead move on to StarClan.

Tree agreed to remain in SkyClan—largely because of Violetclaw, now Violetshine—but doubted he’d fit into Clan life. He thought being a warrior apprentice would be boring but didn’t feel the call to train as a medicine cat. Eventually, Leafstar created a new role for him: mediator, helping to settle disputes between Clans. She hoped his good humor and outsider’s eye would help other cats come to fair decisions.

Tree and Violetshine's friendship became love, and eventually they had two kits, Rootspring and Needleclaw. Rootspring inherited the ability to see ghosts, and Tree helped his son to tell the other cats about Bramblestar's ghost and his warnings about the impostor inhabiting his body. When the false Bramblestar began persecuting "codebreakers," Tree wanted to take his family and leave the Clans but was convinced to stay and fight.

While he treasures his kin, the big-hearted SkyClan mediator doesn't fully consider himself a Clan cat. Instead, he is a cat who is loyal to the Clans because of the cats he loves.



Rootspring

• CLAN •



• POSITION •
Warrior

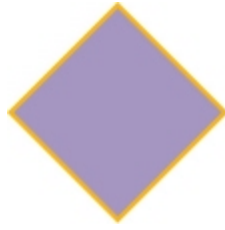
• TRAITS •
Loving
Devoted
Thoughtful
Perceptive

• MENTORS •
Dewspring

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“No warrior, no matter how brave and loyal they are, is strong enough to fight love.”

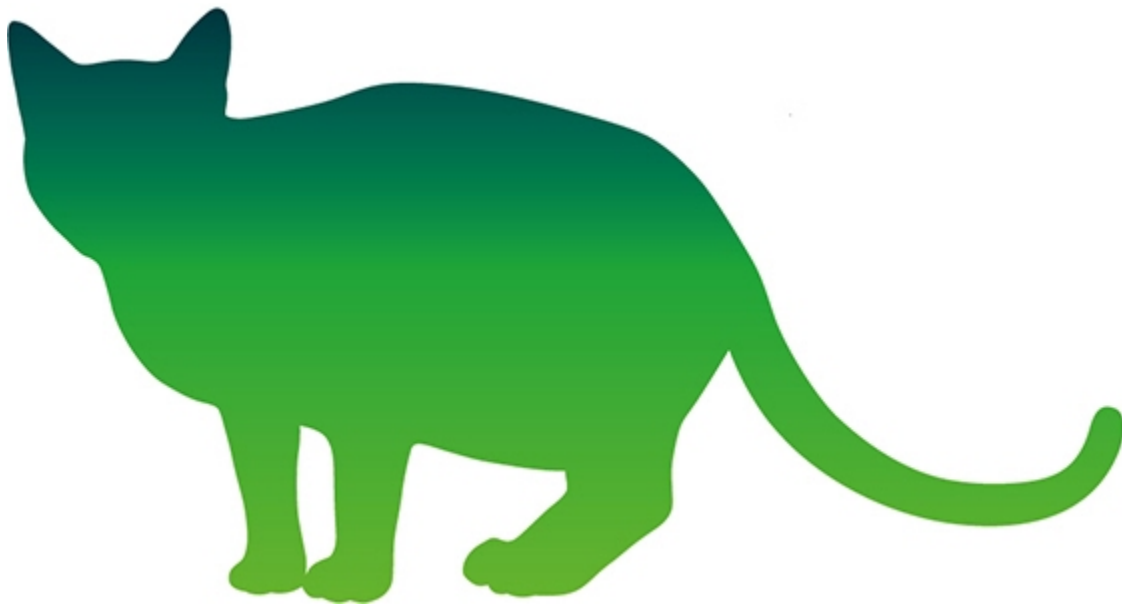
– ROOTSPRING, *A LIGHT IN THE MIST*

AS AN APPRENTICE, Rootpaw was self-conscious, afraid the rest of SkyClan would judge him because of Tree, his free-spirited, ghost-seeing father. This self-consciousness was compounded after he almost drowned in the lake and developed an intense crush on Bristlepaw, the ThunderClan apprentice who saved him.

After Bramblestar, newly resurrected, began to accuse cats of being “codebreakers,” Tree suggested to his family that they leave the Clans, but Rootpaw argued to stay: SkyClan was his home. When Rootpaw saw the ghost of the real Bramblestar, he realized that the Bramblestar leading ThunderClan was an impostor. He managed to convince Squirrelflight, Bramblestar’s mate and deputy of ThunderClan, of this and helped to spark a rebellion in ThunderClan.

Leafstar, learning that Rootpaw could see ghosts, made him a medicine cat apprentice, but he had no affinity for healing and soon returned to warrior apprentice duties. Led by another ghost, he saved the gravely injured Shadowsight and was given his warrior name, Rootspring. His unique abilities led Rootspring to discover both that Bramblestar’s spirit was weakening and that newly killed warriors were not moving on to StarClan. Rootspring and Bristlefrost were reunited on a patrol to seek out the Sisters, a group of female cats who were Tree’s kin and shared his and Rootspring’s powers. While on this quest, the attraction between the two young warriors deepened, but both felt that their loyalty to their separate Clans mattered more than whatever might be between them.

The Sisters taught Rootspring to summon ghosts more easily, and Rootspring, to his horror, saw that the forest was full of suffering spirits. When Ashfur escaped, Rootspring witnessed his abduction of Squirrelflight through the Moonpool. Rootspring was drawn into the Dark Forest, where he fought Ashfur and the spirits under his control, enabling Bramblestar and Squirrelflight to escape, but was himself captured. Bristlefrost and Shadowsight came to his rescue and the three fought the cats of the Dark Forest together with their allies. Rootspring even allowed Firestar's spirit to take control of his body to win in battle.



As they faced danger side by side, Rootspring and Bristlefrost realized that they belonged together and, briefly, Rootspring imagined a future with the cat he'd loved for so long. But Bristlefrost was killed in the ensuing battle, and Rootspring was left knowing that he'd helped to save the Clans and free StarClan but lost the chance to ever be with his beloved.

Tribe of Rushing Water

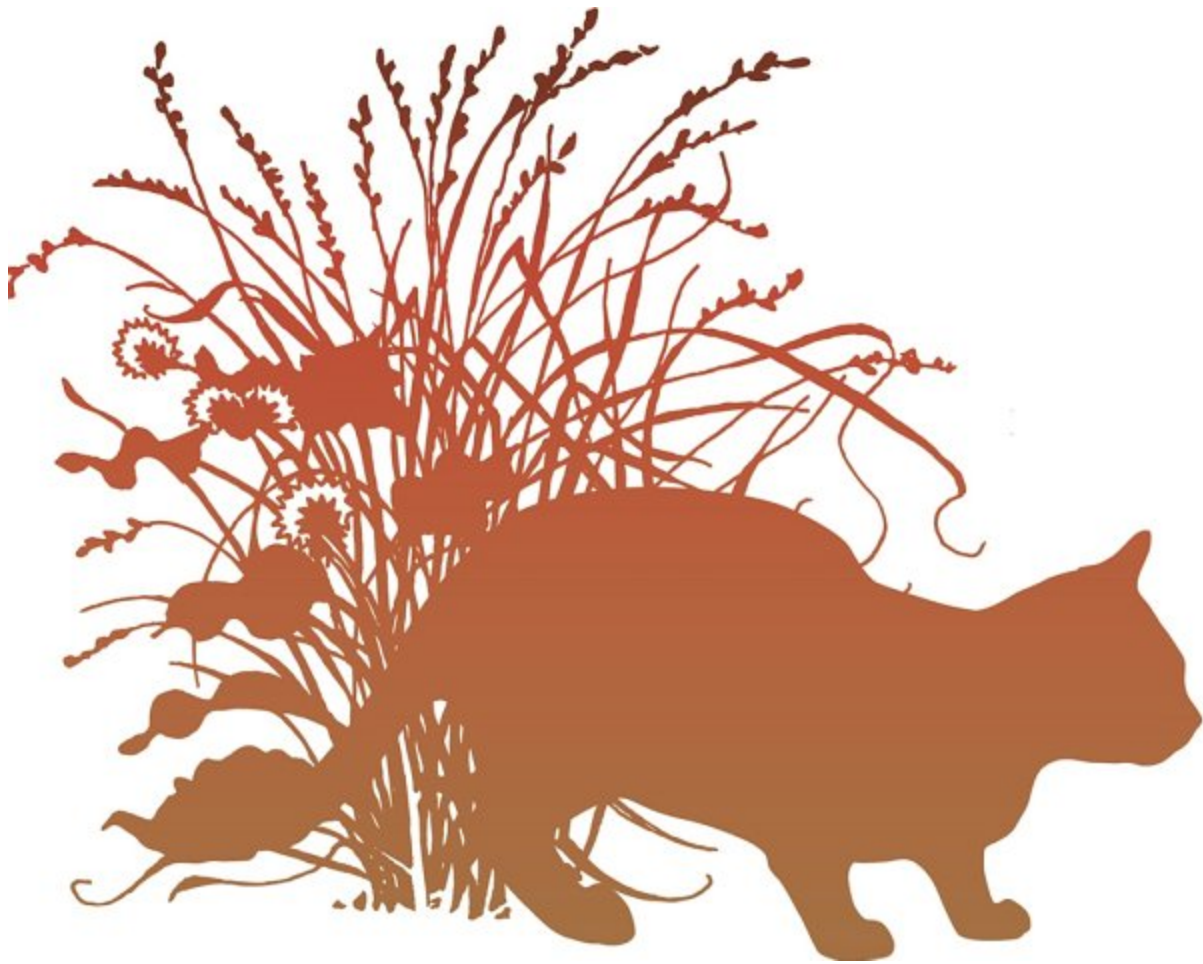


Introduction to the Tribe of Rushing Water: Stoneteller Speaks

THE TRIBE OF Rushing Water has been shaped by the mountains that are our home. We are lithe, quick, and the color of stone, our pelts blending into the rocks. Even our names echo the stark beauty around us: the sharp peaks outlined against the sky, the dazzle of the waterfall, the clouds that drift high above us or lie heavy on the summits.

As the Teller of the Pointed Stones, leader and healer of the cats behind the waterfall, it is my duty to share tongues with my ancestors and to read the signs of moonlight on the surface of the pools. Clan cats look up to the stars for their omens; we look down into water, sheltered in our cave.

The first cats to settle in the mountains came here from the lake. I wonder if the Clan cats know they have come full circle, for it was mountain cats who went to find a new home in the forest, where the Clans lived for so many seasons. At first, we struggled to survive in the harsh and lonely mountains. The cats began to divide according to their talents, the brave and quick fighters taking on the role of protecting those who were skilled at tracking what little prey there was. We named these cats “prey-hunters,” and the sturdy cats who protected them “cave-guards.” Our young we called “to-bes,” because they were to be cave-guards or prey-hunters one day themselves.



We carved out a life for ourselves and found a way to survive everything the mountains could hurl at us—until Sharptooth came, and we found ourselves helpless as prey, waiting for a silver cat to save us.





• TELLER OF THE POINTED STONES •

Teller of the Pointed Stones



• ALLEGIANCE •
Tribe of Rushing Water

• POSITION •
Stoneteller

• TRAITS •
Brave
Pessimistic
Spiritual
Observant

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Why could we not survive alone? Why did you bring us here if we were doomed to fail?”

– TELLER OF THE POINTED STONES, *SIGN OF THE MOON*

THE STONETELLER THE four Clans met on the journey to the lake was an old, old cat who had led his Tribe through many harsh seasons only to face the cruelest enemy of all: a mountain lion named Sharptooth who treated every cat as prey. Stoneteller clung to the hope that his prey-hunters and cave-guards would protect them, but when a party sent out to kill Sharptooth failed to return, he began to despair. If every part of the mountains was set against them—from the snow and cold to the creatures that shared their home—then the Tribe of Rushing Water seemed doomed to extinction.

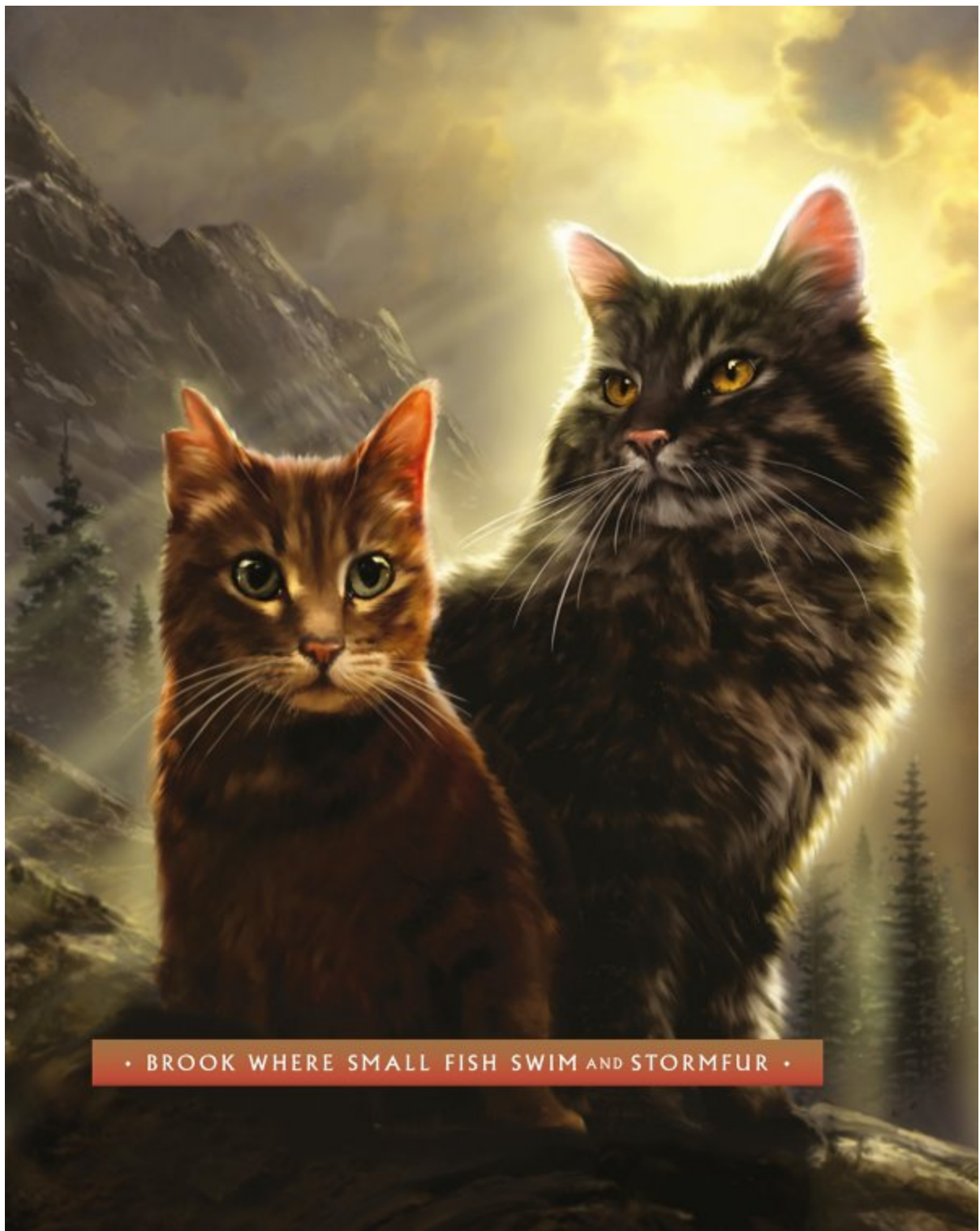
Then the Tribe of Endless Hunting sent him a prophecy that a silver cat would save them from Sharptooth. When the six Clan cats first arrived on their way to the sun-drown-place, it seemed the prophecy had been fulfilled. The gray tom Stormfur was surely the promised cat! But the five other cats helped Stormfur escape the cave, and they were left alone again. Resigned to watching his Tribe perish in Sharptooth’s jaws, Stoneteller wondered why their ancestors had given up on them.

But Brook and the Clan cats returned, bringing with them the exiled Tribe cave-guards, and another silver-furred cat, Feathertail, killed Sharptooth. Stoneteller’s Tribe had been saved, and proud as he was, he acknowledged the debt he would always owe the cats of the Clans.

When they visited again after their brief rest in the cave during the Great Journey, having found a new home by a distant lake, Stoneteller had grown weary with age, and the leadership of the Tribe, with no medicine cat or deputy at his side, had become too much for him. With the arrival of another group of cats in the mountains who stole the Tribe’s prey and

fought them over every paw step of territory, Stoneteller had yet again lost his faith in the Tribe of Endless Hunting. Because of this, he refused to name his successor, wanting his cats to find a different way to survive.

In the last moments of his life, he saw his ancestors standing around him, waiting to welcome him to the Tribe of Endless Hunting, and knew that he had been wrong. He watched, grateful, from his place in the stars as the ThunderClan medicine cat Jayfeather chose Crag Where Eagles Nest to be the next Teller of the Pointed Stones. Their debt to these strange Clan cats, it seemed, was not yet repaid.



Brook Where Small Fish Swim and Stormfur



• ALLEGIANCE •
Tribe of Rushing Water

BROOK

• POSITION •
Prey hunter

• TRAITS •
Calm
Reasonable

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



STORMFUR

• POSITION •
Cave-guard

• TRAITS •
Protective
Devoted

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Where you go, so do I. That’s what you said when Stoneteller banished me. Do you think I would do any less for you?”

–STORMFUR TO BROOK, *OUTCAST*

BORN IN THE cave behind the waterfall in the mountains, Brook Where Small Fish Swim knew early on that she wanted to be a prey-hunter for her Tribe. Brook was fiercely loyal to her Tribe, and when the journeying Clan cats arrived on their return from their meeting with Midnight, she was the first to spot Stormfur and ask whether he could be the cat that had been prophesied to save them from Sharptooth. She taught the forest cats the Tribe’s hunting techniques. She became Stormfur’s mate when he decided to stay with the Tribe, and later gave birth to their kits, Lark That Sings At Dawn, Pine That Clings To Rock, Feather of Flying Hawk, and Breeze That Rustles the Leaves.

Stormfur was the son of ThunderClan warrior Graystripe and RiverClan warrior Silverstream, and grew up in RiverClan. When his sister, Feathertail, was chosen by StarClan to make the journey to the sun-drown-place, Stormfur insisted on going with her—never imagining that this journey would lead to an eventual separation from the Clan life he had always known.

Stormfur returned to his Clan in the wake of Feathertail’s death, but felt isolated. He finally admitted to himself that he wanted to spend his life with Brook, and when the Clans reached the mountains on the Great Journey, he stayed with the Tribe because he cared for Brook so much that he couldn’t bear to leave her.

But Brook and Stormfur’s life together wasn’t easy. When a group of strange cats moved into the mountains, Stormfur persuaded the Tribe to fight against them, and in spite of their courage and the fighting skills he taught them, they lost the battle. Stormfur was blamed for the death of many Tribe cats, and exiled from the mountains. He and Brook returned to RiverClan, but Hawkfrost, afraid that Stormfur would be chosen as deputy instead of him, cast doubt upon his loyalty and had him driven out. Firestar then invited Stormfur and Brook to join ThunderClan, but when the Tribe cats came to the lake to ask for help, Stormfur returned to the mountains and supported the Clan cats in persuading Stoneteller to use Clan methods

to deal with the intruders. He was a strong and loyal cat who had finally found a place for himself.



• CRAG WHERE EAGLES NEST •

Crag Where Eagles Nest



• ALLEGIANCE •
Tribe of Rushing Water

• POSITION •
Stoneteller

• TRAITS •
Honorable
Brave
Curious
Thoughtful

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I am honored to have been chosen. I will serve my Tribe until the end of my days.”

—CRAG WHERE EAGLES NEST, *SIGN OF THE MOON*

CRAG WAS THE leader of the Tribe cave-guards and was particularly skilled at protecting the prey-hunters from eagles that would attack them on the mountainside. He was one of the first cats to meet Stormfur and the rest of the journeying cats when they first arrived in the mountains, and when Stormfur was made a prisoner, Crag escorted the other cats out of the Tribe’s territory and seemed to regret that there could not be friendship between them.

Crag fought bravely against the strange cats who invaded the Tribe’s territory, but when the Clan cats returned to the mountains to offer help, he was reluctant to accept. He was afraid that the Tribe would lose everything that was important to them if they gave up their traditions to follow the ways of the Clans. But he helped to establish the new territory and took part in patrols.

When Stoneteller died and Jayfeather had to choose his successor, he knew that he needed to find an experienced cat, one who had great courage and faith in his Tribe and was selfless enough to put them first and work with all his strength to secure their future. Crag was the cat he chose.

Crag was astonished that he should be the cat to take on leadership of his Tribe. But he felt honored to be chosen and promised to serve his Tribemates for the rest of his days.



The Early Settlers



Introduction to the Early Settlers: Half Moon Speaks

THERE WERE ALWAYS wild cats living in the territories between Highstones and the Twolegplace, in the woods, moorland, and riverside willow trees that later became the homes of ThunderClan, ShadowClan, SkyClan, WindClan, and RiverClan. But these cats were rogues and loners, living separately and independently, with occasional clashes over a particularly tasty piece of prey. They had favorite places to sun themselves or sleep, but there were no borders between hunting grounds, no sense that one area was more “home” to one cat than another.

Until the cats from the mountains arrived, that is. These cats had left the rugged shelter of a cave beneath a waterfall in search of somewhere richer in prey and warmer to live. Scant generations before, their ancestors had abandoned their home beside a lake, finding refuge in snow-capped mountains where food had to be dragged from the sky on eagles’ wings.

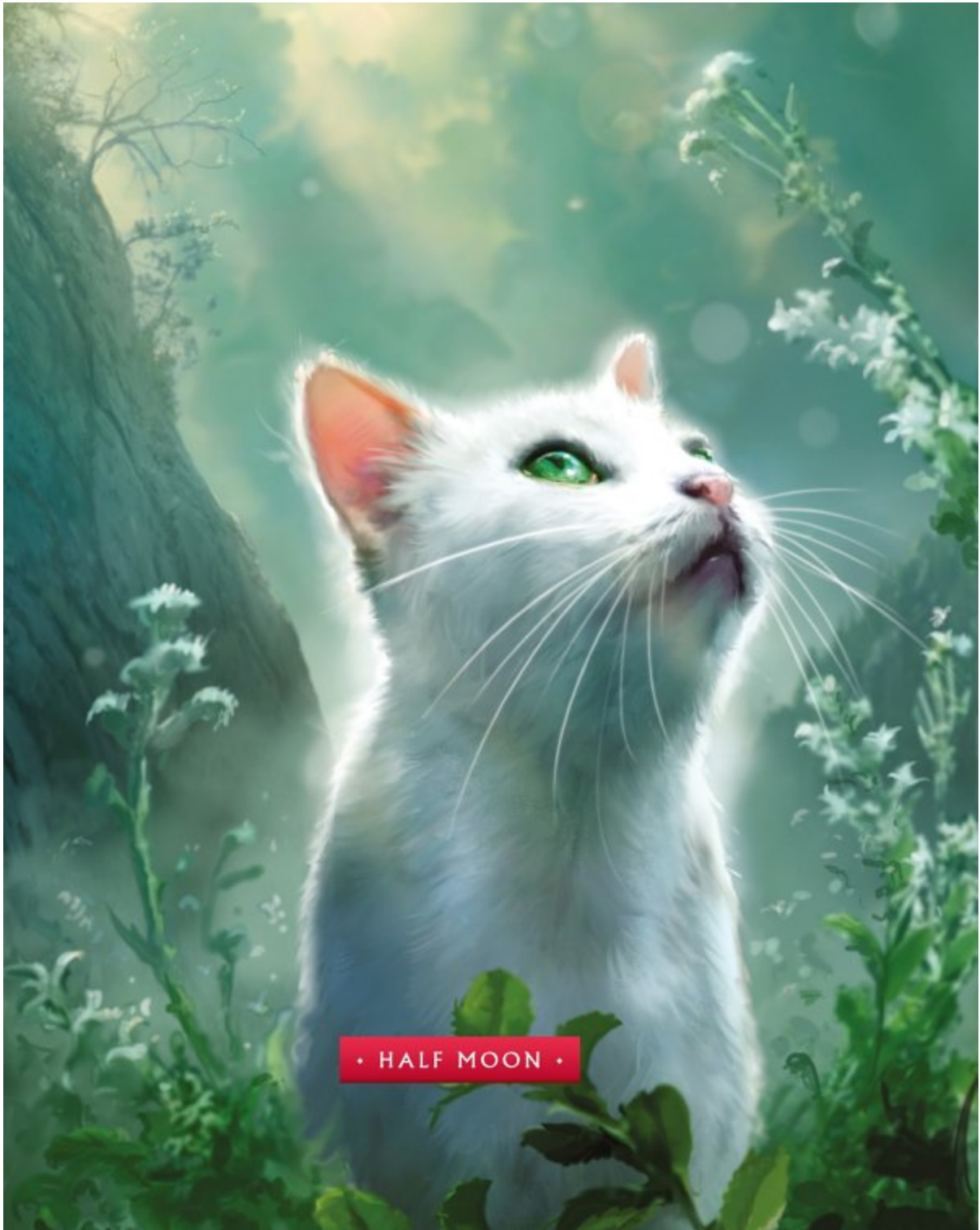
I was among those cats that had once lived beside the lake. My name then was Half Moon; by the time some of us left the mountains, I was the Teller of the Pointed Stones, leader of the cats that lived beneath the waterfall. We battled hard to survive among the rocks and the snow, but we brought too many hungry mouths to feed in a place that barely emerged from the cold season.



When I had almost forgotten how it felt to have a full belly, and when my pelt hung loose on my jagged bones, I had a waking dream, a vision as clear as the mountains around me. I saw a soft and sheltering place, safe from the cruel winds that sharpened the mountain peaks, with room for many cats to live and raise kits. There was no chance of my old bones traveling farther than the eye could see from our rocky home, but I gave my blessing to those cats who were brave enough to leave in search of what I had seen. When these far-traveling cats reached Highstones, they looked down on moorland, forest, and winding river and knew they had found their home.

There were trees for the cats who loved to hunt by stalking and climbing, a broad shallow river for those willing to get their paws wet, and a large stretch of moorland for swift-heeled cats to catch rabbits out in the open. Of course, it took many seasons for the five Clans to emerge with distinct, hard-fought boundaries and the shared laws known as the warrior code. But the seeds of those Clans were sown in the personalities of the

early settlers, in their differing preferences for hunting in trees or in open moorland, or risking wet fur in search of a plump fish. They fought and quarreled, shared loss and disaster, but every sunrise, every paw step, every blow struck and prey killed drew them steadily closer to the Clans they would become. And farther from their memories of the cats they had left behind . . .



• HALF MOON •

Half Moon



• ALLEGIANCE •
The Ancient Tribe

• POSITION •
Stoneteller

• TRAITS •
Brave
Hopeful
Loving
Determined

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“We can never be sure of our future, Gray Wing. All we can do is trust that what we believe is right.”

– HALF MOON, *THE SUN TRAIL*

HALF MOON WAS a white she-cat with green eyes, daughter of Rising Moon and Chasing Clouds, who lived beside the lake with the ancient cats. She was one of the first to suggest moving away to find a new place to live. When the cats cast their votes, she showed no hesitation in pushing her stone into the circle that meant “leave.”

She loved Jayfeather (who she knew as Jay’s Wing) and was heartbroken when he didn’t follow them into the mountains, not knowing that Rock had forced him to return to his own time through the tunnels.

When the ancient cats reached their new home in the mountains, Half Moon demonstrated her courage in learning new hunting skills, and when she first explored the Cave of Pointed Stones, she was able to read the signs revealed by moonlight in the water. She was delighted when Jayfeather reappeared in the cave behind the waterfall, but devastated when he told her that her destiny was to become Stoneteller. Despite her abilities, all she wanted was to be Jayfeather’s mate and raise kits together, not to lead the mountain cats. Jayfeather wanted that too, but he knew that fate did not guide their paw steps side by side. At last Half Moon accepted what Jayfeather told her and took on the burden of becoming her Tribe’s Healer.

Later, as a very old cat, Half Moon received the vision of the Sun Trail, which told her that some of her cats should follow the path of the sun to find a new home. Jayfeather had told her that her ancestors would send her signs, and through all the seasons she still loved and trusted him. When Jayfeather left the mountains for the last time, he heard Half Moon’s spirit calling to him, telling him that she would wait for him forever.



• GRAY WING •

Gray Wing



• ALLEGIANCE •
WindClan

• POSITION •
Early Settler

• TRAITS •
Gentle
Caring
Compassionate
Paternal

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“It’s hard to believe that I never wanted to leave the mountains. Now I can’t imagine any other home than here.”

–GRAY WING, *PATH OF STARS*

WHEN THE TELLER of the Pointed Stones told the cats about her dream of a different place to live, the young tom Gray Wing made it clear he would not leave the mountains. He insisted that he belonged in the Cave of Rushing Water with his mother, Quiet Rain, and younger brother, Jagged Peak. But Gray Wing was courageous and loyal, and when Jagged Peak put himself in danger by following the departing cats, Gray Wing went after him.

Having traveled almost to the edge of the mountains, Gray Wing and Jagged Peak caught up with the other cats and joined the quest to find somewhere else to live. Gray Wing’s best friend, Turtle Tail, who had cherished hopes of one day becoming Gray Wing’s mate, was overjoyed to see him again—unaware that Gray Wing was secretly in love with Bright Stream, who loved his brother, Clear Sky.

No cat expected the journey to be easy, but snow, turbulent rivers, and hostile wildlife made every paw step a challenge. The lowest point came when Bright Stream died, snatched away by an eagle the cats were trying to hunt. Gray Wing, who was unable to save her, blamed himself for Bright Stream’s death, and for the death of her and Clear Sky’s unborn kits.

When they reached their new home, the mountain cats settled on the moor. Gray Wing preferred having the sky above his head to tree branches, and was dismayed when Clear Sky and some of the other mountain cats left the moor for the denser forest. He grew close to a loner named Storm but she became Clear Sky’s mate instead, then left the forest when she was expecting his kits. Gray Wing went to look for her, finding her just as the abandoned Twoleg den where she had given birth was being knocked down.

Gray Wing found one kit alive in the rubble, but was unable to save the rest of the litter or Storm. Gray Wing named the surviving kit Thunder and took him back to the moor to raise him when Clear Sky refused to have anything to do with his son.



Gray Wing was able to help both the moor cats and Clear Sky's group escape a devastating forest fire, but was permanently weakened by inhaling the smoke of that fire. After Tall Shadow stepped back from leading the cats on the moor to care for her injured brother, Moon Shadow, Gray Wing emerged as leader in her place. His heart ached when Thunder, now almost grown, decided to leave the moor and live with Clear Sky, but he found love with his old friend Turtle Tail and helped to raise her kits as if he were their father. Although Gray Wing eventually stepped away from leadership and never became a true Clan leader, his clear-sighted compassion and his gift for planning battles meant that future generations of cats would know him as Graywing the Wise.



Skystar



• ALLEGIANCE •
SkyClan

• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Distant
Withdrawn
Cold
Controlling

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“All I want is for every cat to be safe. To have borders to protect us and make sure we have prey.”

—CLEAR SKY, *THE FIRST BATTLE*

CLEAR SKY WAS eager to leave the mountains—unlike his littermate Gray Wing. He persuaded Bright Stream, who was expecting his kits, to join the group on their quest to find a new home. When Bright Stream was carried off by an eagle early in their journey, Clear Sky fell into a deep depression.

Clear Sky began to recover as the cats settled into their new home, and he established a camp among the trees where his talents for leaping and hunting high in the branches served him well. Separated from the cats who had chosen to make a home in a hollow on the moor, Clear Sky encouraged rogues to join him. Gradually he grew so obsessed with keeping his cats safe that he began to enforce boundaries around their territory. He and his guards attacked any cat who crossed his borders, and no other cat was permitted to hunt there—not even his old friends from the mountains.

Clear Sky also insisted that all cats must care for themselves and contribute to the group, so when Jagged Peak injured his leg falling from a tree, Clear Sky drove him out.

When he met the rogue she-cat Storm, Clear Sky fell in love. Eventually, she left, unable to bear his obsessions and the way he ordered her around.

Storm bore three kits, but only one survived the collapse of the Twoleg den where they lived. When Gray Wing took the surviving kit, Thunder, to his brother's forest camp, Clear Sky rejected him. Later Clear Sky regretted this and after a fire ripped through the forest, he encouraged the young cat to live with him. However, Clear Sky retained his fierceness toward intruders and even his own cats, qualities that led Thunder to leave.

After the Great Battle, Clear Sky realized that his fierceness in protecting his larger group rather than any individual cat had led to horrifying violence. While still protective of the cats under his leadership, he became less fierce toward other cats, and gentler with the weaker members of his own group. As Skystar, he became the first leader of SkyClan.



• JAGGED PEAK •

Jagged Peak



• ALLEGIANCE •
WindClan

• POSITION •
Early Settler

• TRAITS •
Curious
Adventurous
Honest
Haughty

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You can’t protect any cat forever, Gray Wing, no matter how hard you try to. That’s a lesson I must learn, too.”

– JAGGED PEAK, *THE BLAZING STAR*

JAGGED PEAK WAS the brother of Gray Wing and Clear Sky, from a younger litter. As a kit he was bright and brave, impatient to get out of the cave and begin learning skills of hunting and mountain survival. When the cats cast votes whether to stay in the mountains or leave, Jagged Peak voted to leave and was frustrated when his mother, Quiet Rain, said that he was too young to go. Refusing to be left behind, Jagged Peak crept out of the cave and went after the departing cats.

He tracked the group for a good distance before he was attacked by an eagle and had to be rescued by Gray Wing, who had followed him. But his spirit stayed strong after the danger, and the two cats journeyed on together until they caught up with the group.

Jagged Peak especially admired his brother Clear Sky and went with him to the forest when the cats split into two groups. He enjoyed learning to hunt in trees but was badly injured when he fell from a high branch. As soon as it became clear that his injured leg wouldn’t heal properly, Clear Sky banished him, and he returned to the moorland cats. Here he grew embittered because he felt he was useless. But Jagged Peak discovered an affinity for young kits and was able to become a valued member of the group on the moor by the care he gave them. While his limp never fully disappeared, he gradually became stronger and was eventually able to raise his own family in WindClan.



Thunderstar



• ALLEGIANCE •
ThunderClan

• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Courageous
Loyal
Mighty
Noble

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Unite or die! If we are to survive, we must act together. This dispute must be ended with words, not deeds.”

–THUNDER, *MOTH FLIGHT'S VISION*

THE SON OF Storm and Clear Sky, Thunder was born in the Twolegplace and rescued from a collapsing Twoleg den by his father's brother, Gray Wing, who took him to Clear Sky's camp in the forest. He was bewildered by Clear Sky's rejection of him, and anxious about what would happen to him, until Gray Wing brought him to the moor and persuaded the moorland cats to take him in.

Though Thunder was raised on the moor, his instincts were to hunt among trees, using cover to creep up on his prey, and he found it hard to hunt on the open land, where there was nowhere to hide. But he worked hard to perfect his skills, wanting to make Gray Wing proud.

Thunder's first chance to shine came during the forest fire. He was the first cat to leap over the flames when River Ripple showed the cats the way to safety, and joined Jackdaw's Cry in returning through the flames to rescue Moon Shadow.

After the fire, Clear Sky and the other forest cats temporarily took shelter with the cats on the moor, and Clear Sky was impressed with the promise of his strong young son. Thunder was proud to be praised by his father, and went with Clear Sky when the forest cats returned to their camp. But Clear Sky's aggressiveness alienated Thunder's compassionate nature, and when Clear Sky drove another cat, Frost, out to die, Thunder went with him, taking him to the moorland camp.

While he struggled to find the place where he truly belonged, Thunder was always strong and determined. He fought bravely in the Great Battle

and won the respect of the cats around him. In the end he became the first leader of ThunderClan.



Shadowstar



• ALLEGIANCE •
ShadowClan

• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Intelligent
Reserved
Wary
Sharp

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Never put anything—not even your own life—above your Clan.”

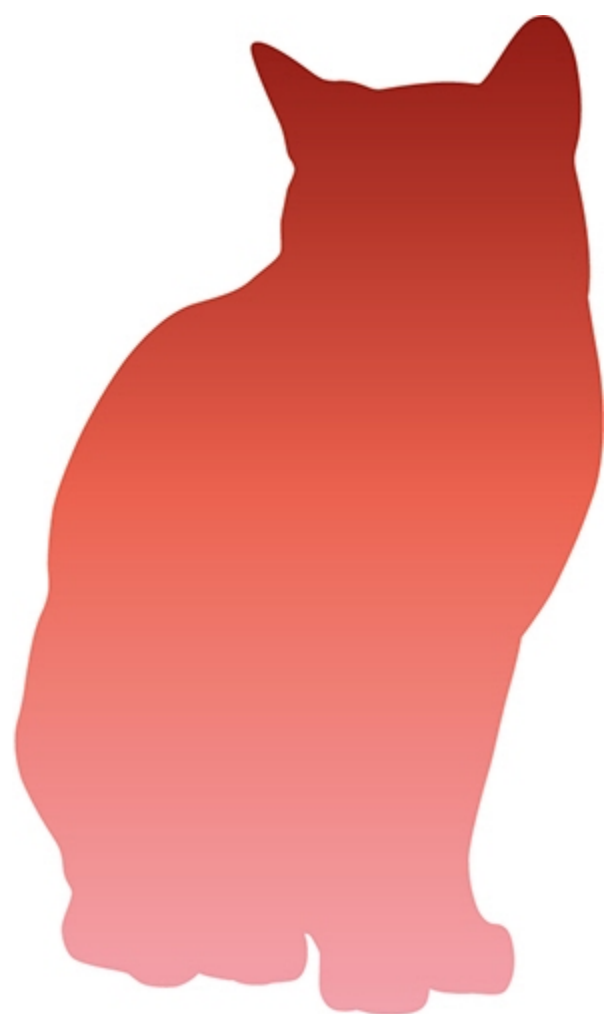
–SHADOWSTAR, *SHADOWSTAR’S LIFE (PATH OF A WARRIOR)*

TALL SHADOW WAS a thick-furred, black she-cat with green eyes. She left the mountains with Clear Sky and the others and became the leader of the group after the death of Shaded Moss.

She was always a watchful and thoughtful cat, tending to be suspicious of strangers. She was reluctant to allow other cats to join the group and at first sent Gorse and Wind away, even though the rest of the group would have welcomed them in. This caused a quarrel among her cats; some of them even called for her to step down as leader and for Gray Wing to take her place, though Gray Wing himself had no wish to do this. Her insistence on watching the camp also angered some cats, who felt that she should be taking a more active leadership role.

However when her littermate, Moon Shadow, was badly injured in the forest fire and later died, Tall Shadow found her anxiety and grief was too much to bear. She willingly gave up the leadership to Gray Wing, although later she resumed her authority and for a time the two cats acted as joint leaders.

Eventually Tall Shadow became the first leader of ShadowClan as Shadowstar and led her cats into new territory across the Thunderpath.





Dappled Pelt and Cloud Spots



• ALLEGIANCE •
Riverclan

DAPPLED PELT

• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Adventurous
Reckless

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



• ALLEGIANCE •
Thunderclan

CLOUD SPOTS

• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Curious
Thoughtful

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Some wounds cannot be healed.”

–DAPPLED PELT, *MOTH FLIGHT'S VISION*

DAPPLED PELT WAS a tortoiseshell she-cat with a compassionate nature and an instinctive talent for healing. She had a sharp memory for which herbs could best treat her denmates' injuries and illnesses. She came with the cats from the mountains and settled on the moor with Tall Shadow's group.

When Jagged Peak was injured by falling from the tree, Dappled Pelt went to the forest and lived for a half moon with Clear Sky's cats while she took care of him. But her loyalty to the moorland group never wavered and she was glad to return home.

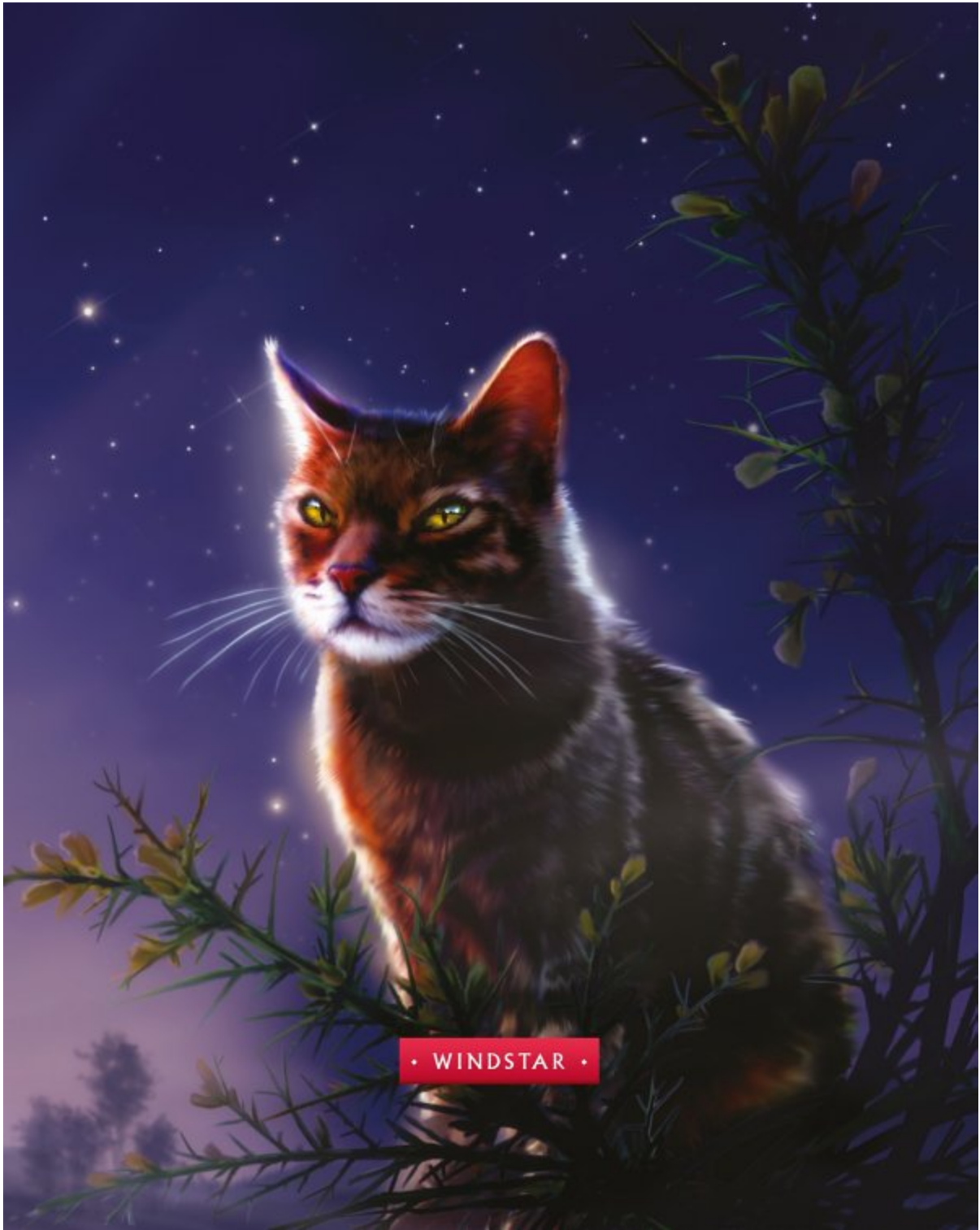
On first leaving the mountains, Dappled Pelt discovered a natural affinity for the water, learning to fish minnows from the river with her paws. While exploring the moor, she became good friends with the helpful and friendly River Ripple and was delighted to find plentiful herbs around the river. After the Great Battle, she joined River Ripple's group of cats and eventually became the first medicine cat of RiverClan.

Cloud Spots was another mountain cat who settled on the moor. He was interested in healing, particularly in figuring out why certain herbs worked on certain illnesses, and in researching more curative plants. He and Dappled Pelt were close friends and worked well together, her warmer nature complementing his focus on the effects of different herbs. He was not a strong fighter and in fact did not participate in the Great Battle, instead staying in the moor cats' hollow, preparing to treat injuries from the battle.

Cloud Spots was a shy and reserved cat, and he tended to be brusque with his patients. He was especially impatient when dealing with sickly kits, often explaining in great detail the effects of a particular herb rather than

sympathizing with a kit's aches and pains. He did, however, form a close bond with young Pebble Heart, who would one day become ShadowClan's first medicine cat, and taught the kit all he knew about herbs and the treatment of illnesses and injuries.

Despite the time he spent on the moor, Cloud Spots was happier in the dense undergrowth of the forest. When Thunder left the moor for the forest after the Great Battle, Cloud Spots went with him and settled there. He would become the first medicine cat of ThunderClan.



Windstar



• ALLEGIANCE •
WindClan

• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Determined
Resilient
Fierce
Independent

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“I am WindClan’s leader and I must show I have courage. It will give my Clan courage.”

–WIND RUNNER, *MOTH FLIGHT’S VISION*

WIND RUNNER WAS originally a loner named Wind, who lived on the moor before the arrival of the mountain cats. With her mate, Gorse, she was hostile when they first arrived, accusing them of stealing prey. But gradually both cats grew to appreciate the advantages of living with a group.

A thin and wiry cat, Wind was able to race across the moors speedily and was a good hunter. She would even follow rabbits down into their burrows, as brave and quick belowground as she was out in the open. She showed Gray Wing and the other moor cats this way of hunting, though Gray Wing felt trapped in the narrow, dark spaces. When Jagged Peak was trapped in a tunnel collapse, Wind and Gorse were able to dig him out and clear his nose and mouth of dirt so he could breathe again, saving the young cat’s life.

Before long, Wind and Gorse became regular visitors to the camp on the moor. For Wind, the turning point from loner to group member came when she realized she was expecting Gorse’s kits, and she asked that she and Gorse officially become part of the camp, eager for her kits to have the protection of this larger group. They willingly took longer names to be like the rest of the mountain cats. Wind became Wind Runner and Gorse became Gorse Fur.

Wind Runner was strong and intelligent, but some cats were wary of her because she tended to be pushy, making decisions that should have been made by the leader. While most of the mountain cats wanted to bring the

two valuable cats into their group, they felt that Wind Runner was likely to take over.

After the Great Battle, Wind Runner naturally stayed on the moor, although she and Gorse Fur separated themselves and their kits from most of the mountain cats for a while, leaving the hollow. Eventually the tough and determined she-cat became Windstar, the leader of WindClan, with her trusted mate as her deputy, who would after her death become the second leader of WindClan.



Riverstar



• ALLEGIANCE •
RiverClan

• POSITION •
Leader

• TRAITS •
Kind
Calm
Friendly
Enigmatic

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Why did you leave the mountains? Did you need something to fight over so badly?”

– RIVER RIPPLE TO CLEAR SKY, *THE FIRST BATTLE*

RIVER RIPPLE WAS an elegant, silver-furred cat. He was very good-natured and most at home in and around the water. When the mountain cats arrived, he was a loner living beside the river at the edge of the forest. Though he was friendly toward the mountain cats when he encountered them, he was proudly independent and showed no interest in joining them. During the forest fire, it was River Ripple who showed the moorland cats how to escape the flames—and for that, they were forever grateful.

Long before the mountain cats came to the forest, River Ripple had grown up as one of another group of cats, in a Twoleg park far away. While he treasured his independence after coming to the forest, he accepted the role given to him by the spirits of former cats after the Great Battle and became an inspiring leader, the founder of RiverClan.

Riverstar was always willing to give other cats the benefit of his wisdom and experience, and so it is not surprising that he was the cat to first propose the system of formally apprenticing each young cat to an older warrior. This openness to sharing his knowledge with others is perhaps Riverstar’s greatest legacy to the cats of the Clans.



• MOTH FLIGHT •

Moth Flight



• ALLEGIANCE •
WindClan

• POSITION •
Medicine cat

• TRAITS •
Restless
Absent-minded
Intelligent
Compassionate

• APPRENTICES •
Acorn Fur

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Being a medicine cat is my destiny. It’s what I was always supposed to be.”

– MOTH FLIGHT, *MOTH FLIGHT’S VISION*

MOTH FLIGHT, A soft-furred, white she-cat with green eyes, was one of the first cats to be born to the group of cats living on the moor, the daughter of Wind Runner and Gorse Fur. She had a dreamy, restless, and curious nature, which at first made her seem unwarriorlike despite her swift feet and true heart. Gentle and playful, she was likely to be distracted from a hunt or battle by the discovery of a feather drifting across the grass or a bunch of berries growing on a bush. At one point, her distractibility almost led to Gorse Fur’s death, when he had to shove her out of the path of a monster and was almost killed himself. In a rage, Wind Runner fought with Moth Flight, and her daughter left the Clan.

But it was these qualities of imagination and curiosity that were to decide Moth Flight’s destiny and lead her to the Moonstone. After leaving WindClan, Moth Flight followed the signs of the green moth that only she could see—to a cave in the mountains beyond the Clans’ territories. There, she found the Moonstone, and the spirits told her to take the knowledge of this sacred place back to the Clans. They told her to return to WindClan, that she would become the first medicine cat, and gave her visions of who the other first medicine cats, one for each Clan, would be. They explained that she and the other medicine cats would be not just cats with the knowledge of healing herbs, but responsible for seeing visions, interpreting signs, and guiding their leaders to make the best choices for their Clans.

Moth Flight fell in love with the SkyClan medicine cat, Micah, but their romance turned to tragedy when he died before she could birth their kits. She struggled to balance her medicine cat duties with motherhood and made

the heartbreaking choice to give each of her four kits to another Clan. Putting her duties above all, Moth Flight created the rule that medicine cats must not take a mate. She will always be remembered as the first true medicine cat.

Cats Outside the Clans



Introduction: Rock Speaks

EVER SINCE CATS first decided to live together—in Tribes, Clans, whatever they chose to call themselves—there have been others that preferred to live alone. The Clans may believe that there is no way to survive except by the warrior code but, nevertheless, they have to acknowledge the tenacity of the Tribe of Rushing Water, the cheerful contentment of certain kittypets and rogues who have crossed their paths, even the ruthless battle-hunger of Scourge's BloodClan.

For the Clan cats, the warrior code has served them well, providing them with food and shelter and well-defended territories, as well as neighbors to turn to in times of great need. But the forest is not littered with the bodies of loners and rogues who have starved to death or been killed like prey, and kittypets do not swarm from Twoleg nests like bees to join their groups. There are other ways to live—ways that might suit some cats even better than being a warrior. And every so often, it is cats from outside the code who have shaped the destiny of a Clan.



Ravenpaw and Barley



• ALLEGIANCE •

Loner



RAVENPAW



• TRAITS •

Shy

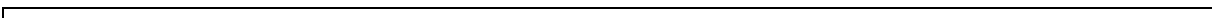
Honest



• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



• ALLEGIANCE •
Loner

BARLEY

• TRAITS •
Helpful
Reserved

• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You didn’t have to send them away just because of me.”

—RAVENPAW

“I didn’t. I sent them away because this is our home. Yours and mine.”

RAVENPAW'S FATE WAS sealed the moment Bluestar appointed Tigerclaw to be his mentor. Ravenpaw was never going to be a ferocious warrior, leaping into battle at the head of a patrol. He preferred to seek peace through compromise and agreement. Tigerclaw saw this natural reserve as cowardice and pushed his apprentice to the point of hysteria. When Ravenpaw had the misfortune to witness Tigerclaw killing Redtail, then lying about it to their Clanmates, he put himself in more danger than he could have imagined.

Firepaw saved Ravenpaw from Tigerclaw's vengeance by taking him far from his forest home to the farm that the warriors passed on their way to the Moonstone. Here, Ravenpaw found the peace and freedom from borders that his heart had longed for. And most important, he found the dearest friend he would ever have: Barley, the plump black-and-white mouser who lived in a cozy barn with a feast of mice at his claw-tips.

Barley was no stranger to the horrors of bloodshed, though. He had been born in Twolegplace among the cats of BloodClan. When he insisted on staying with his littermate Violet, against Scourge's orders, he was forced to watch his sister being attacked by Scourge's closest supporters—none other than Scourge and Violet's remaining littermates. Violet barely survived and became a kittypet soon after. Barley escaped to the farm and lived in solitude until the happy arrival of Ravenpaw.

Neither of them forgot Ravenpaw's Clan origins, and they helped the cats from the forest many times over, joining the battle against BloodClan with relish and then allowing all four Clans to hunt and rest at their farm before they embarked on the Great Journey. Ravenpaw was much missed by his ThunderClan friends, but not a single one of them would have forced him to return to the place where he had known such abject misery because of Tigerclaw.



Ravenpaw and Barley lived happily together for many seasons. Near the end of Ravenpaw's life, StarClan encouraged him to take Riley and Bella, the kits of Barley's kittypet sister, to SkyClan so that they could become warriors. He, Barley, Riley, and Bella helped SkyClan to fight off aggressive invaders, and Leafstar welcomed the young cats as apprentices. Ravenpaw, badly injured and already ill, died in SkyClan with Barley by his side. His old leader, Bluestar, appeared from StarClan to offer him a place among the spirit warriors, but he chose instead to wait to be reunited with Barley in whatever afterlife they could share.



• SCOURGE •

Scourge



• ALLEGIANCE •
BloodClan



• POSITION •
Leader



• TRAITS •
Cold
Calculating
Vengeful
Ruthless



• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“My littermates said I was too small . . . too weak. But I have proven them wrong. I’ve learned how to be strong . . . how to live for blood.”

– *HE RISE OF SCOURGE*

SCOURGE WAS BORN on the edge of Twolegplace, the kittypet son of Quince and Jake, who went on to father Firestar and Princess with another kittypet, Nutmeg. Initially named Tiny, Scourge was a puny, protesting kit who was treated with dismissive scorn by his littermates, Socks and Ruby. Determined to prove that he was their equal, Scourge began exploring the woods that lay beyond the backyard fence. An encounter with a ThunderClan patrol led to his first fight, with the powerful apprentice Tigerpaw. Scourge was soundly defeated—and he never forgot the injustice of the uneven battle. He decided not to return home, but instead to live wild in Twolegplace, finding his own food and shelter.

Scourge tried to rip off his kittypet collar using an ancient dog’s lost tooth, but the tooth got stuck in the fabric without loosening the collar one bit. If other stray cats chose to interpret this as a trophy from a fight with a dog that Scourge had killed, he had no intention of stopping them. His reputation grew among the Twolegplace cats, and Scourge felt the first seductive stirrings of power. He sought out the strongest, cruelest cats to support him and used them to punish weaker cats that disobeyed the rules he introduced. He called his disparate rabble of followers BloodClan, not that he had any interest in a code of honor like that of the forest Clans.

When a former BloodClan cat came to him with the leader of ShadowClan, asking for an alliance against the other Clans, Scourge recognized Tigerstar at once. He agreed to help, with no intention of falling in with Tigerstar’s plans. When Scourge led BloodClan into the forest, he

showed the Clans his true colors; when Tigerstar attacked Scourge in a rage, Scourge killed him, ripping all nine lives from him with a single blow.

But the Clan cats were braver than he anticipated and, in a ferocious battle, Scourge met his match in his half brother, Firestar, leader of ThunderClan. Scourge struck the first deadly blow, but Firestar had been given nine lives by his warrior ancestors and recovered to strike back. Without belief in StarClan, Scourge had only one life to lose and he died at Firestar's paws, leaving his rogues to scatter back to Twolegplace in shame.



Sol



• ALLEGIANCE •
Rogue



• TRAITS •
Mysterious
Treacherous
Self-serving
Manipulative



• MENTORS •
Leafstar



• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“That’s what absolute power is. Controlling every cat in the territories by the lake!”

– SOL, *SUNRISE*

SOL WAS A ginger, black, and white loner with a deep desire to destroy the warrior Clans. This anger came from an incident in his early life. An encounter with SkyClan cats led him to join their Clan in the gorge, but though he tried to fit in with his new Clanmates, he was too selfish, too impulsive to be guided by the warrior code. Trying to help Leafstar only caused more trouble and, in a last desperate attempt to impress her, Sol took three kits and hid them far from the gorge so that he could play a triumphant role in finding them. But his plot was discovered and Sol was banished from the Clan, and warned by Leafstar that he could never be a true warrior. From that moment on, Sol was determined to hunt down every Clan cat he could find and prove to them that their code was worthless.

Sol’s luck turned when he met Midnight, the badger with a deep connection to the Clans. He used her to glean information about the Clans and when he arrived by the lake, he was able to use that knowledge to appear mysterious and wise to the Clan cats.

He went first to ThunderClan, insisting he meant no harm and that he was only curious about the cats he had heard so much about. But he quickly began sowing seeds of discontent, telling Jaypaw and Leafpool that a terrible darkness was coming. This coincided with Jaypaw’s own vision of blackness descending upon the forest. But as Sol had no connection to StarClan, Leafpool was disinclined to listen to him, and Firestar sent Sol away.

During a ferocious battle on ThunderClan territory that involved all four Clans pitched against one another, the sun vanished, plunging the forest into

the darkness that Sol had prophesied. His prediction of the eclipse was a fortunate guess: He may have foretold a “coming darkness” and the loss of the sun, but this could have been interpreted as any kind of momentous change to affect the Clans. The fact that the sun actually disappeared played monumentally to his advantage, and set Sol on the path that almost led him to destroy the Clans forever.

Sol soon found an able audience with Blackstar, who was already in the depths of despair because of the troubles faced by his Clan in their new home. Sol encouraged Blackstar to give up the warrior code, to let his Clanmates hunt for themselves and take care of their own ailments. Under Sol’s influence, Blackstar forbade his warriors from attending Gatherings, and his medicine cats from going to the Moonpool.

ShadowClan began to collapse from within, to the dismay of other Clans. It fell to Jaypaw’s faked StarClan sign to restore Blackstar’s faith and lead to Sol’s banishment. But that wasn’t the last the Clans heard of this cat. When the warrior Ashfur was killed in mysterious circumstances, many ThunderClan cats believed Sol was responsible. Brambleclaw led a patrol to track him down, and the ThunderClan cats eventually found Sol in the ruins of Purdy’s Twoleg den. They escorted both cats back to the hollow, where Sol was taken prisoner and accused of Ashfur’s murder. All this time, Sol remained calm, poised, unruffled, as if he knew more than the warriors would know in a dozen lifetimes. The other Clans were outraged to learn that Firestar had brought the troublesome cat back to the lake and insisted he be exiled once and for all.

Seasons later, Sol came back to ThunderClan. Many ThunderClan warriors viewed him with deep suspicion, but others believed he had chased off a fox that had been about to attack a pair of apprentices and welcomed him. Sol took advantage of the young cats who had barely known him before and encouraged them to plan an attack on WindClan. At the same time, he secretly visited WindClan to stir up anger toward ThunderClan. Luckily Dovewing and Ivypool overheard his plot, and ThunderClan was ready for the attack. In the battle, Hollyleaf took on Sol and defeated him, threatening to kill him if he dared show his face in the forest again. Sol left, but behind him lay fretful, disunited Clans, vulnerable to the influences of the Dark Forest.

Sol came close to destroying the Clans by the lake, but the code held strong, and Sol remained as alone and bitter as he had always been.





Rock



• ALLEGIANCE •
The Ancients



• POSITION •
Healer



• TRAITS •
Wise
Cryptic
Spiritual
Secretive



• MENTORS •
Leafstar



• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Be glad that you will never be burdened with the knowledge that I have.”

– ROCK TO JAYFEATHER, *THE FOURTH APPRENTICE*

ROCK WAS DISCOVERED by Jaypaw in the tunnels beneath ThunderClan after they moved to their home beside the lake. Rock was an alarming sight, lurking in the darkness: hairless, hunched, with bulging, sightless blue eyes. No cat knew when he first entered the tunnels—if, indeed, he had ever lived in the open air. He was already a legend when a young cat of the Ancients, Fallen Leaves, entered the tunnels to begin his initiation as a sharpclaw. Rock kept count of the cats who survived the test and made it back out to the hillside, marking each success with a scratch on a piece of wood.

Rock watched Lionpaw and Heatherpaw play in the underground cavern, tolerating the disturbance because so much solitude could weigh heavy, even on him. When three WindClan kits got lost in the tunnels and Jaypaw, Breezepaw, and Hollypaw joined the others to search for them, Rock revealed himself to Jaypaw, recognizing in the blind medicine cat someone who would understand the messages he had to pass on. He helped Jaypaw find the kits and escape from the flooding caves, and he sent his scratched stick out with them, to remind Jaypaw of the history he had stumbled upon.

When Jaypaw traveled to the mountains to stay with the Tribe of Rushing Water, Rock walked in his dreams and took him to the Tribe of Endless Hunting, showing him that there were ancestors other than just StarClan. More than that, these cats were connected to the Clans, because they had come from the lake and then sent some of their kin to settle in the forest. Rock, together with the Tribe of Endless Hunting, had been waiting

for Jaypaw to come for a long time, knowing that the future of the Clans lay in his paws.

Rock guided Jaypaw to walk among the Ancients as Jay's Wing, where he played a crucial role in sending the cats to find a new home in the mountains. There was nothing Rock could do to prevent the battle with the Dark Forest, but he could show Jaypaw just how important it was that the cats beside the lake survived, keeping alive the circle of sharpclaws, prey-hunters, cave-guards, and warriors that had rolled out since the very first sunrise over the lake.

But he also blamed the very existence of the Three for the threat that faced the cats by the lake. If Jayfeather, Lionblaze, and Dovewing had not come, they would not have fulfilled the prophecy that involved the Dark Forest rising. In his rage, Rock blamed the Clans too, for clinging to the memories of the cats who had done them wrong, preserving their existence in the Place of No Stars and giving them enough power to walk in the dreams of restless warriors.

Rock didn't take part in the Great Battle, but he watched from the tunnels, knowing that the prophecy had come true and the Three—with Firestar—had saved the cats that lived beside the lake in this age. There would be others, and others after them. And Rock would watch over them all, tireless, blind, and alone in his underground world.



Darktail



• ALLEGIANCE •
Rogue



• TRAITS •
Arrogant
Cunning
Vicious
Ruthless



• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“Territory belongs to those strong enough to defend it—or to take it.”

HUNGRY FOR VENGEANCE on the father who rejected him, Darktail invaded the Clans and brought disaster. Born in the Twolegplace near the forest territories, Darktail was the only surviving kit of a kittypet, Smoke, and the WindClan warrior Onewhisker. Smoke wanted Darktail to become a WindClan cat, but Onewhisker refused to allow him to join his Clan and soon left the forest territories with the rest of the Clan cats. Bitter over this abandonment, Smoke raised Darktail to hate the Clans.

After Smoke's death, Darktail became a rogue, allying with other dangerous cats. When he came across SkyClan in the gorge, he saw his chance to unleash his rage. He promised to help SkyClan find the other Clans, only to attack with his rogues and drive SkyClan out of their home.

When a patrol of Clan cats came to the gorge seeking SkyClan, Darktail pretended that his cats were SkyClan so that he could learn about the other Clans. When they realized truth, the Clan cats escaped, but Darktail and his allies followed them back to the lake territories and attacked WindClan, causing Darktail's father, Onestar, by then Clan leader, to lose a life. The rogues established a camp near ShadowClan and befriended young cats, swaying enough to their side to take over ShadowClan.

As the other Clans fought Darktail and his rogues, Darktail whispered warnings to his father in battle: what hope would Onestar have of reaching StarClan if he killed his own son? Onestar, horrified, called to WindClan to retreat, and Darktail and his followers, calling themselves the Kin, were victorious. They took over RiverClan's territory, taking the injured as prisoners.

A violent and tyrannical leader, Darktail recruited kittypets only to toss them into battle, punished his followers harshly for any misstep, starved his prisoners, and secretly murdered cats who opposed him. When the Clans finally united, including SkyClan, Onestar confronted the kit he had left behind and the two fought and died together.

Even after death, Darktail's hatred of the Clans continued to grow. In the Dark Forest, he chose to follow Ashfur, leading the Dark Forest attack on the living and StarClan cats, only to be killed once more by Violetshine and Needletail, cats whom he had tormented in life but who defeated him at last.



Mapleshade



• ALLEGIANCE •
RiverClan



• POSITION •
Warrior



• TRAITS •
Deceptive
Manipulative
Resentful
Sly



• MENTORS •
Bloomheart



• COAT •



• EYE COLOR •



“You will live to regret this day forever, ThunderClan, and that is a promise.”

– MAPLESHADE, *MAPLESHADE’S VENGEANCE*

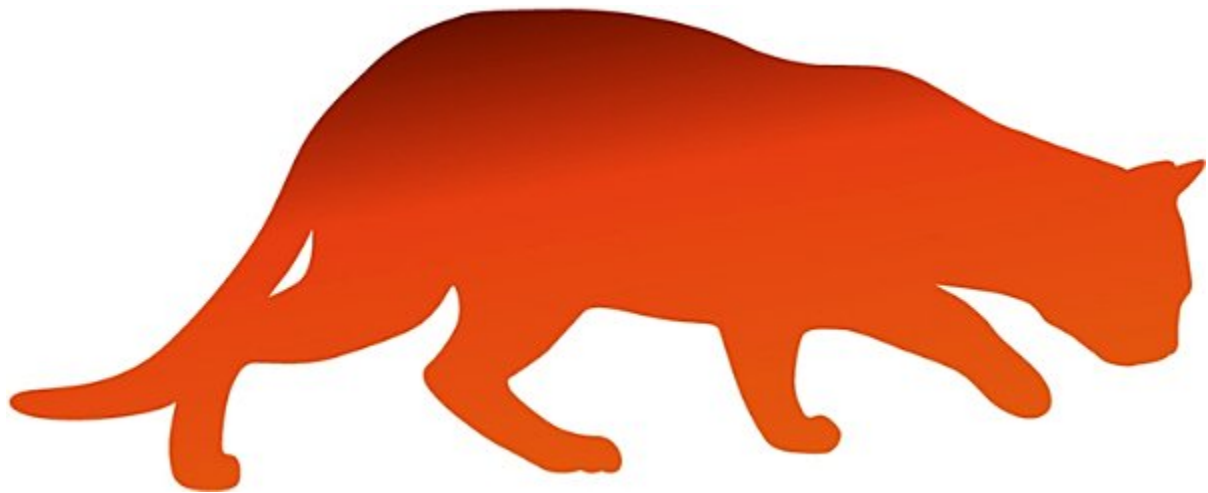
BORN IN THUNDERCLAN, Mapleshade was a keen and loyal apprentice, and a bold, skillful warrior. Her single-minded pursuit of the warrior code and the courage with which she faced every enemy—cat, fox, or badger—stirred up whispers among her Clanmates that she would soon be deputy, and then leader. Mapleshade reveled in their admiration and burned inside with ambition.

But then she made the tragic mistake of falling in love with a RiverClan warrior named Appledusk. She managed to keep their relationship a secret, creeping out at night to meet him beside the river, until the moment she gave birth. None of her Clanmates stepped forward as the father of her kits, and the medicine cat recognized the proud, handsome RiverClan warrior instantly in the shape of the tiny heads and the way they held their stubby tails.

Mapleshade was cast out by her Clanmates, banished for betraying ThunderClan and the warrior code. In desperation, Mapleshade tried to swim across the river with her kits, to seek refuge in their father’s Clan. But the river was swollen from leaf-fall rain, and her kits were swept away. Mapleshade almost drowned trying to save them, but they were already gone, whisked out of her grasp like sodden little leaves. She made it to the other side, but to her horror, Appledusk blamed her when he learned what had happened. He wanted nothing more to do with her, and RiverClan refused to let her stay, not even for one night.

Cast out by the one cat she loved, and by the Clan she had hoped would give her shelter, Mapleshade became a rogue. Her hatred for RiverClan and

ThunderClan festered and, while she killed three cats in her quest for revenge while alive, she continued to plot against both Clans when she walked in the shadows of the Dark Forest. When she saw young Crookedkit—rejected by his mother, cut off from his Clanmates, restless with unfocused ambition—she pounced. She promised to make all his hopes come true in return for one thing: that he would hold his Clan more precious than anything else in the world. Crookedkit agreed, not seeing that loyalty to an entire Clan was not the same as loving a single cat.



With the future RiverClan leader in her thrall, Mapleshade trained him to become the warrior she had been, while steadily stealing everything he loved most. She made him watch his mother drown, his brother fall in love with a ThunderClan cat, and his mate and daughters die of greencough. When his remaining daughter, Silverstream, fell in love with Graystripe and died giving birth to their kits on ThunderClan soil, Mapleshade rejoiced. Now another cat knew what it was to suffer the agonies of risking everything for love—and losing.

When the Clans moved to the lake, Mapleshade followed and plotted with the other Dark Forest cats to use discontented warriors in the living Clans in the greatest battle of all. Mapleshade could never make the Clans suffer enough for what had been done to her.

Bramblestar Speaks: The New Code



FOR SEASON AFTER season, the warrior code has guided our paw steps, rules passed down from our ancestors that every cat must follow. Sometimes, in our reverence for the code, we forget that each rule was decided by cats who came before us to address problems they faced and to let future cats benefit by their experience. The code has always been something that can be changed as the Clans change. Since we came to the lake, the Clans have grown more dependent on each other to survive, and the code must reflect that.

After our fight to save StarClan and defeat Ashfur, it was clear that suffering could have been avoided if the Code were different. If there had been any peaceful way to stop the impostor in my skin as he ripped the Clans apart, he would have lost power long before causing so much damage. And other leaders, like vicious Brokenstar or scheming Tigerstar, could have lost their leadership before their worst crimes. Even brave Bluestar of ThunderClan could have retired to the elders' den when she fell into paranoia against her Clanmates. But, for leadership to keep its meaning, we couldn't just eliminate the rule that a leader's word is the Code. Instead, we decided that, if a leader becomes a danger to their Clan, both the majority of that Clan and all the other leaders would have to agree to ask StarClan to strip them of their nine lives.

We also had to consider cats moving between Clans. Cats have always found mates outside their Clans despite the rule against it, and sometimes this has led to disaster: Mistystar and Stormfur, for instance, grew up unaware that they were half-Clan and were persecuted by Tigerstar because of it. Sometimes leaders allowed cats to change Clans to be with their mate or kits—even Graystripe left ThunderClan to raise his RiverClan kits—but these Clan-changing cats were seen as traitors by their former Clan and distrusted by their new one. True loyalty is the most important trait a warrior should have, and it is hard to rely on a cat with paws in two Clans. We needed an accepted route by which a cat could change Clans and prove

they had truly pledged their loyalty to their new Clan. I hope that we have found that route, and that the Clans will be better for the new elements of our Code.

The New Warrior Code



DEFEND ALL THE Clans, even with your life. Your first loyalty is to your Clan, but all cats who follow the warrior code are your allies. Each Clan must ensure that no other Clan falls.

Nevertheless, each Clan is proud and independent, with traditions that must always be respected.

AN HONORABLE WARRIOR DOES not need to kill other cats to win battles, unless they are outside the code or it is necessary for self-defense.

ELDERS, QUEENS, SICK OR injured cats, and kits must be fed before apprentices and warriors. Unless they have permission, apprentices may not eat until they have hunted to feed the elders.

A GATHERING OF ALL five Clans is held at the full moon during a truce that lasts for the night.

NO WARRIOR CAN NEGLECT a kit in pain or danger, even if the kit is from a different Clan.

A KIT MUST BE at least six moons old to become an apprentice.

THE DEPUTY WILL BECOME Clan leader when the leader dies, retires, or is exiled.

AFTER THE DEATH, RETIREMENT, promotion (to a leader status), or exile of the deputy, the new deputy must be chosen before moonhigh. A cat cannot be made deputy without having mentored at least one apprentice.

IF A CLAN MEMBER believes that their leader is no longer leading with honor and integrity, they can challenge them. Three-quarters of the Clan members, including their medicine cats, must agree. Their objections will then be presented to the leaders of the other Clans. If the other leaders agree, all medicine cats will request that StarClan remove the leader's

remaining lives and give them to the deputy. These objections cannot be raised by the deputy.

A WARRIOR OR MEDICINE cat may switch their allegiance from one Clan to another, but must meet a set of conditions. The cat wishing to change Clans must perform three tasks of their intended Clan's choosing. If they succeed, it will be deemed StarClan's will that they change Clans and their request will be granted.

PREY IS KILLED ONLY to be eaten. Give thanks to StarClan for its life.

NEWLY APPOINTED WARRIORS WILL keep a silent vigil for one night after receiving their warrior name.

A WARRIOR REJECTS THE soft life of a kittypet.

BOUNDARIES MUST BE CHECKED and marked daily. Challenge all trespassing cats—but a warrior must always remember that all cats follow the warrior code.



Firestar and Graystripe: The View from StarClan



GRAYSTRIPE ARCHED HIS *back in a long stretch, enjoying the warmth of late afternoon sunshine on his pelt. "It's been a good day," he meowed. "I still expect to be stiff in the mornings, but in StarClan, I feel as young as I did when we first met."*

Firestar met his eyes, affection in his green gaze. "Those were good days," he commented. "Remember all the adventures we had together?"

Graystripe purred. "How could I forget?" he asked. "We kept ThunderClan strong. But there were so many other cats who played a part." He shut his eyes for a moment, remembering battles and travels, the faces of Clanmates and kin passing through his mind. They weren't just memories now, most of those he had lost: they were here. "We all fought for the Clans, and for each other."

With a slow blink, Firestar agreed. "Every cat's got a story," he meowed. "One of the great things about being in StarClan is that you can see all of their adventures, not just your own."

"What?" Graystripe's eyes widened in pretend shock. "The great Firestar spends his time in StarClan spying on other cats' lives for his own entertainment?"

"It's not like that!" Firestar protested indignantly. "Everyone in StarClan watches over the living Clans. We care about them, and we still feel like part of our own Clans." He hunched his shoulders defensively. "You're not questioning my judgment, are you?"

Graystripe's whiskers twitched. "No, of course not. You've always had excellent judgment. Never a paw wrong. I remember one time . . ."

Firestar groaned. "Whatever you're about to say, I don't think I'll like it."

"Shh. Now this wasn't too long after you became leader. Things had just begun to settle down after the battle with BloodClan . . ."

“You warriors need to work harder on keeping the fresh-kill pile full,” Firestar announced from the top of the Highrock. “By the end of the day yesterday, there was only a shriveled old shrew left.”

From his spot at the foot of the Highrock, Graystripe saw Thornclaw and Brackenfur glare indignantly at their leader. *Every cat is trying their best*, he thought. “It’s been raining,” he meowed quickly. “Most prey has probably been staying in their burrows.”

Now other ThunderClan warriors were looking irritated. “We know how to hunt in the rain,” Dustpelt snapped, and Willowpelt bristled in agreement.

“The catch wasn’t bad yesterday,” she muttered. “Every cat ate well. There just wasn’t much left over. Who wants old prey, anyway?”

Graystripe and Firestar exchanged a glance as their Clanmates huddled grumpily together, their pelts fluffed against the soft misting rain. “I’ll send out a couple of extra patrols this afternoon,” Graystripe meowed hastily, and Firestar nodded. Graystripe quickly chose a few warriors, and they headed toward the camp entrance, tails drooping, Willowpelt in the lead.

As the rest of the Clan hurried off to shelter in their dens or beneath the trees, Firestar leapt down to stand below the Highrock with Graystripe. “That didn’t go very well,” he meowed, looking sheepish.

“I bet there will be more prey caught today, though,” Graystripe answered. Firestar sighed and, after a moment, Graystripe added, “Why don’t we go out on our own patrol? We can help fill the fresh-kill pile, and I don’t mind the rain if you don’t.”

As they got farther into the forest, the rain began to let up. Graystripe scented the air happily, breathing in the scent of wet leaves. There was the smell of mouse, too, and he crouched, pricking up his ears. He could hear tiny movements among the roots of a nearby beech tree, and, with them, the quick pounding of a small heart. Right . . . there. His eyes narrowed and then, spotting his prey, he pounced.

“Well done!” Firestar praised him as Graystripe came back with the mouse dangling from his mouth. “That’s a nice fat one.”

Graystripe scraped a shallow hole in the damp earth beneath some underbrush and dropped the mouse into it to store for later. When he looked up again, Firestar’s eyes were focused on a sparrow twittering near the edge of a narrow ravine a few tail-lengths away. Graystripe watched as his friend’s tail lashed and he began to creep forward. The sparrow hopped a

bit, then bobbed to peck at the grass, oblivious of danger as the huge ginger tabby got closer. Finally, Firestar's powerful back legs tensed, and he leapt toward the sparrow.

As his paws hit the wet grass, he skidded, his eyes widening. Graystripe watched in horror as Firestar slid, his paws flailing, over the edge of the ravine and out of sight. There was the sound of a heavy thump. Frozen with shock, Graystripe stared for a few heartbeats at the suddenly empty space where his leader had been. The sparrow fluttered away.

Then, jerking into action, Graystripe hurried to the ravine, careful not to let his own paws slip. There were muddy clawmarks on the stones at its edge. "Firestar?" he called anxiously. There was no reply, and he peered over the edge into the ravine.

Among the tangle of nettles at the ravine's bottom lay Firestar, unmoving. "*Firestar!*" Graystripe yowled again, horrified. The other cat didn't twitch. His eyes were closed and his mouth was partly open, his pink tongue lolling out. Graystripe felt cold. *Is he alive?* Looking closely, he gasped in relief as he saw his leader's sides moving in shallow breaths.

Firestar needed his help!

"Wait a minute," Firestar interrupted, the fur on his shoulders bristling. "This isn't the way I remember things happening at all."

"What do you mean?" Graystripe asked. His whiskers twitched and he looked hastily away from Firestar's indignant gaze.

"First of all, I don't remember any Clan meeting like the one you just described," Firestar told him. "But I do remember you once almost getting into a fight with Dustpelt when he complained about your snoring in front of all the other warriors. I suggested we go hunting so you'd both have some time to cool off."

"I don't snore," Graystripe muttered. "Never have."

"As I recall," Firestar went on, "you wandered off by yourself and then a fox came out of the woods and charged straight for me. I yowled for you to help me, but you didn't hear. When I dashed away from the fox, that's when I . . . er . . . fell into the ravine. But I certainly didn't get knocked unconscious. Or have my tongue hanging out."

Graystripe flicked his ears dismissively. "Well, I can't promise I remember every detail. But I think you're wrong about a lot of that. Anyway . . ."

Graystripe knew he had to think fast. What if Firestar was badly hurt? He looked back down into the ravine. Firestar appeared to be drooling a little, but his eyelids were moving slightly, as if he was close to awakening. The sides of the ravine were too steep for Graystripe to get down to him, or for Firestar to scramble up. He needed something that could reach down into the ravine. Something Firestar could climb.

Aha. Near the foot of a nearby alder tree was a thick fallen branch. Thinner branches grew from its sides at regular intervals. It looked long enough. If Graystripe could maneuver one end of the branch into the ravine, it should be easy to climb up.

Grabbing one end of the branch in his teeth, he strained, trying to pull it toward the ravine. Very slowly, the branch slid forward a paw-length, its smaller branches snagging against the ground and holding it back. Graystripe's mouth ached and he let go of the branch. *That's not going to work.* It was too heavy for him to move far. Looking around, he caught sight of a small log. He went over and rested a paw on it, testing, and it rolled easily. If he could get the branch balanced on the log, he could roll it. . . .

"That wasn't what happened!" Firestar's tail was lashing back and forth in outrage. "I suggested you find a log and use it to roll the branch over! That was my plan."

Graystripe cocked his head thoughtfully. "No . . . I'm pretty sure you were still unconscious. I remember because you looked so undignified with your tongue sticking out."

Firestar rolled his eyes.

"Anyway," Graystripe went on. "I carefully maneuvered the branch over to the edge of the ravine. I knew it was important to act quickly. . . ."

The branch was in place, and, as Graystripe had planned, it reached perfectly from the edge of the ravine to the bottom. But Firestar would need his help—his leader was still unconscious, drool running down his chin as he twitched helplessly, caught in some kind of nightmare. Heroically, Graystripe began to climb down the branch so that he could help his poor, undignified, injured friend. Just then, a terrible wind began to blow.

"That's not what I remember," A new voice came from behind them just as Firestar opened his mouth to protest once again. Graystripe turned to see who it was, then bowed his head to the ginger tom who was approaching them.

"Thunderstar," he meowed respectfully. He hadn't been in StarClan for long enough to get over his awe at speaking to the legendary founder of ThunderClan.

Firestar, more accustomed to the older leader, nodded a hello. "You mean you remember seeing this, Thunderstar?"

"Certainly." Thunderstar shook his head. "For warriors with lives as storied as yours, you both have terrible memories. I recall it perfectly: Firestar annoyed his Clanmates at that meeting, and Graystripe only made it worse. When you went hunting, Graystripe did wander off, but it was a squirrel that startled Firestar into falling into the ravine, not a fox, and he didn't get knocked out. You both spent a lot of time yowling in horror before Graystripe saw the branch. Using the log was Firestar's idea." He licked his paw and added casually, "After that, you were both very heroic, I'm sure."

Firestar and Graystripe exchanged a glance. "Hmm," Firestar meowed.

"Oh, is that what happened?" Graystripe asked blandly.

"It definitely was." With a flick of his tail, Thunderstar moved on, and the two cats watched him walk out of hearing range before they looked at each other again.

"It's a shame Thunderstar's memory has gotten so bad," Graystripe meowed, and Firestar nodded.

"Thunderstar might have misremembered some things," Firestar told Graystripe, "but I think he must be right that we both came up with the way to get me out of that ravine. We've always been at our best when we worked together. Even when you lived in RiverClan, we looked out for each other."

Graystripe nodded. "I think so too. And that reminds me of another pair of cats who supported each other, even though they ended up in different Clans. . . ."



Dovewing padded through the pine forest, her paw pads tingling with discomfort. She was a ShadowClan cat now, but she couldn't help shuddering at the cold dampness of the ground. It felt unfamiliar beneath her paws, nothing like the firm leaf-covered earth of ThunderClan territory, or the warm grass and soft soil where she and Tigerheart had lived among the guardian cats.

I'll get used to it, she thought. It hasn't been long since we came back. Her mate was the ShadowClan leader. Her kits would be ShadowClan warriors. *This is my Clan now,* she told herself again, firmly.

"Frog," Scorchfur muttered, gesturing with his tail, and Grassheart fell into a hunting crouch as she stalked slowly toward a large brownish-green frog at the foot of a tree. She slashed down with her sharp-clawed paw before the prey even realized she was there.

"Nice catch," Scorchfur praised the pale brown tabby as she came back to them, her tail high and the frog dangling from her mouth.

“Yeah, nice,” Dovewing echoed, a little dubious. The dead frog looked wrong to her, like the fur it should have had somehow been stripped off. It didn’t look like prey.

“You haven’t tried frog before, have you?” Grassheart’s meow was stiff but polite.

“No, ThunderClan cats don’t eat frogs,” Dovewing tried to keep the disgust out of her voice, but she wasn’t sure if she succeeded. The two ShadowClan warriors exchanged a glance, and Dovewing’s pelt prickled in embarrassment. “Um, I think I scented something over there.” She headed toward a group of spruce trees, relieved when she caught sight of a fat pigeon pecking at the ground among their roots.

She caught it with a well-timed leap, killed it quickly, and dipped her head to give thanks to StarClan, then picked the bird up in her mouth and carried it back toward the hunting patrol.

“She’s just not one of us.” Dovewing’s steps slowed as she heard Grassheart’s hiss. “And she’s always poking her nose into every cat’s business because she’s our leader’s mate. Did you see how she scolded Flaxkit yesterday?”

Dovewing swelled with silent indignation. Any cat would have reprimanded Flaxkit: the little tom had been quietly pulling twigs out of the wall of the elders’ den, his stubby tail quivering with delight at his own naughtiness. Grassheart would probably have been even harsher with him if she’d been the one who’d caught him.

“It’s bad enough that ThunderClan’s always trying to tell the other Clans what to do without having one of them in our own camp bossing us around,” Scorchfur complained.

Taking a deep breath, Dovewing walked out of the underbrush toward them. “I’m not a ThunderClan cat,” she told them, dropping the pigeon at Scorchfur’s paws. “I’m part of ShadowClan now, and I’m loyal to our Clan. I made the choice and I’m not sorry.”

Scorchfur dropped his eyes. Beside him, Grassheart shifted uneasily. Neither spoke, but their tails switched. *They might not have wanted me to hear them say it, but they don’t think I belong*, Dovewing thought.

Her heart sinking, she bent to pick up the pigeon. “Let’s keep going,” she meowed grimly. Together, they walked on in silence. She could see Scorchfur and Grassheart glancing at her nervously. They were her Clanmates, but they didn’t know her. Not like her former Clanmates in

ThunderClan did. She thought miserably of her parents, Whitewing and Birchfall, and of her mentor, Lionblaze. And, most of all, Ivypool.



She and her littermate had once been close. Ivypool hadn't wanted Dovewing to mate with Tigerstar, had feared that the sisters would lose each other. And that was what had happened, wasn't it? Ivypool had been so happy to see Dovewing when she'd returned to the lake, but her joy had quickly soured when Dovewing had announced she was joining ShadowClan instead of coming back to ThunderClan. *She wouldn't even look at me when I left.* Guilt and hurt prickled through Dovewing's pelt.

Back in ShadowClan's camp, Dovewing found her mate, Tigerstar, sitting near his den, watching as the kits of the Clan raced around the clearing. She settled beside him, her pelt brushing against his as he laid his tail gently across her back.

"Got it!" Their daughter Pouncekit snatched the ball of moss from Hollowkit, and tossed it over Spirekit's back to her sister, Lightkit. The whole group of kits—Dovewing's, Berryheart's, and Yarrowleaf's litters—careened around, bumping into warriors in their game.

"Settle down now! You're in every cat's way," Yarrowleaf ordered, and the kits glanced at each other shamefacedly, then headed toward an emptier part of camp.

Should I have spoken up first? Dovewing wondered, looking around. *Do my new Clanmates think ThunderClan cats are bad parents?*

“Our kits are the fastest,” Tigerstar commented smugly.

“They’re a little older than the others,” Dovewing reminded him. *Ivypool’s kits are younger than ours, too.* She sighed. *If only they could all grow up together.* But they were ThunderClan kits, and she and her kits were part of ShadowClan.

“What’s the matter?” Tigerstar asked, cocking his head. “Did something go wrong on your hunting patrol?”

“Oh, I don’t know,” Dovewing meowed, flustered. She didn’t want to get her mate angry at their Clanmates, but she did want to confide in him. “I think some of our Clanmates don’t feel like I belong here.”

Tigerstar’s eyes narrowed and he began to get to his paws. “Did Scorchfur or Grassheart say something? I’ll talk some sense into them.”

“No! I don’t want them to feel like they have to be nice to me because *you* tell them to,” Dovewing nudged him until he sat down again. “They didn’t do anything wrong. It’s just that they don’t feel like I’m part of their Clan yet. It’s going to take time.” She sighed. “I miss my sister.”

By dawn the next morning, Dovewing had made up her mind. She needed to see Ivypool. This coldness between them couldn’t go on. Soon after the dawn patrol left camp, she asked Berryheart to keep an eye on her kits and headed for the border between ShadowClan and ThunderClan. As the forest began to change from pine to oak and ash, she felt her shoulders relax and her paw steps grow lighter. ShadowClan was her home now, but ThunderClan’s territory still felt *right*.

She waited patiently by the border as the sun rose. ThunderClan’s patrol would find her eventually. The sun was only a little higher in the sky when she heard them coming.

“I smell ShadowClan scent,” she heard Twigbranch meow, and then the younger cat appeared, at the head of the patrol. Her eyes widened in excitement. “Dovewing!” The gray she-cat bounded happily over to press her cheek against Dovewing’s, but the other two ThunderClan cats, Bumblestripe and Sparkpelt, drew back, surprised.

“What are you doing here?” Bumblestripe asked. “Is something wrong in ShadowClan?” His eyes met Dovewing’s without hostility, but she thought she saw a trace of lingering hurt. They’d been mates, and she was the one who had ended things between them.

“No, I came to—”

Sparkpelt, her tail lashing with irritation, cut her off. “Bramblestar told you, you’re not welcome here. You made your choice, so now you can’t just drop by whenever you like.”

Bramblestar *had* told her that. Dovewing hadn’t forgotten her former leader’s calm, firm words. He’d been disappointed in her, she knew. Still, it felt like claws ripping through her chest to be reminded, once again, that she didn’t belong here either, not anymore.

“I’m not trying to come onto your territory,” she answered, her meow steady. “I want to see Ivypool. Can you ask her to come here?”

The three ThunderClan cats exchanged doubtful looks. Dovewing leaned forward and spoke directly to Bumblestripe. They’d been so close once. He knew how much she loved her sister. “I just need to talk to her,” she meowed. “I can’t leave things the way they are.”

“Maybe you should have thought about that before.” Sparkpelt sat down, looking obstinate. “You’ll see her at the Gathering.”

“Ivypool misses you, too,” Twigbranch looked at Bumblestripe pleadingly. “It wouldn’t hurt to let her know. She’s not even far away. On our way here we passed her hunting.”

“Fine,” Bumblestripe meowed at last. “I’ll go see if she wants to talk to you.”

Dovewing thanked him and sat down to wait, her stomach twisting with anxiety. She hadn’t considered that Ivypool still might not want to talk to her. She tried to keep her mind off the possibility, asking Twigbranch about her first days as a warrior—the younger cat had been sitting her vigil the last time Dovewing had seen her. Sparkpelt watched silently, the tip of her tail twitching.

Bumblestripe came first, and Dovewing got to her paws when she saw her sister behind him. Ivypool came toward her, her head high and her blue eyes cool.

“Let’s go finish our patrol,” Bumblestripe meowed hastily. “See you at the next Gathering, Dovewing.” Twigbranch and a grumbling Sparkpelt followed him out of sight.

Once they had gone, Dovewing turned to her sister. “Hi,” she meowed softly. Something in her relaxed at her sister’s familiar scent, and she leaned in to touch their noses together.

Ivypool pulled back a little, avoiding the contact. “Why are you here?” she asked.

“I wanted to see you,” Dovewing answered. “How are you? How are your kits?”

Ivypool’s expression grew a little warmer. “They’re doing well. Bristlekit follows the apprentices all over camp. And Flipkit’s into everything, but Thriftkit likes to stick close to me or Fernsong. He’s with them in the nursery most days. I love them but I can’t spend the whole day in camp. I don’t have the patience.”

“It’s smart that you and Fernsong worked things out that way,” Dovewing purred. “You were always willing to figure out different ways to do things.”

“And how are your kits?” Ivypool asked. “I guess it won’t be long until they’re ’paws and I can see them at a Gathering.”

“They’re thriving,” Dovewing meowed, warm pride filling her. “Growing fast and getting stronger every day.”

“And life in ShadowClan?” Ivypool asked, frost creeping back into her voice. “Is it everything you hoped for?”

Dovewing looked down for a moment, scuffing a dry oak leaf with her paw before she met her sister’s gaze. “No, actually, it’s not going well. I’m not happy.”

Ivypool’s eyes widened. “What’s wrong?”

“They don’t trust me in ShadowClan. They act like I’m some kind of ThunderClan intruder just nosing into their business.”

“They just need to get used to you. It hasn’t been very long.” Ivypool meowed. “You’re their leader’s mate.”

“It’s not just that,” Dovewing told her. “I know this won’t last forever, but I’m worried that I *will* miss you, and Whitewing and Birchfall, and all the cats of ThunderClan forever. Every day, I wake up and I’m in the wrong camp. I feel like I’m being ripped apart.” Her chest ached with sorrow now that she’d admitted it, and she breathed deeply.

“Why stay then?” Ivypool’s ears pricked up. “Bramblestar would take you back, I know it! It’s not like you’d be the first cat to leave and return. Look at Graystripe, or Twigbranch. And you could bring the kits—they certainly wouldn’t be the first half-Clan cats in ThunderClan!”

“No.” Dovewing didn’t have to think about it. She couldn’t imagine abandoning Tigerstar like that. “I won’t come back. I love Tigerstar, and our kits, and I know our future is in ShadowClan.”

“Bramblestar would probably let Tigerstar come, too,” Ivypool meowed stubbornly. “He doesn’t *have* to be leader. Why should you be the one to give up everything?”

Dovewing took a deep breath, organizing her thoughts. StarClan had sent a vision to bring Tigerstar back to ShadowClan, and revived him when he’d died, so that he could be their leader. No cat could turn away from that. “I believe that it’s Tigerstar’s destiny to rebuild ShadowClan,” she told Ivypool. “We’ll always have a link to ThunderClan because of me, but I’ll be in ShadowClan beside him.” The words felt *right*. She might not be fitting into ShadowClan, not yet, but she would be essential to them, because she would stand beside Tigerstar and help him bring the new ShadowClan into being.

“Well, if you’re so sure, why did you come here?” Ivypool sounded disappointed.

“I need something from you,” Dovewing meowed. She hadn’t realized before quite what she needed, but now she knew, and only Ivypool could give it to her. She looked pleadingly into her sister’s face. “You’ve always stood by me, even when we were angry at each other. Even if you can’t stand up for me in my new Clan, just knowing that you still believe in me will make everything better.” She stared into her sister’s bright blue eyes. “Are we still . . . us? Are we still sisters? Don’t give up on me.”

Her paws were right on the border between the two Clans as she leaned toward Ivypool, desperate for her answer. Ivypool hesitated for what felt to Dovewing like long, long heartbeats, and then she leaned forward to meet her, rubbing their cheeks together.

“Of course I won’t give up on you,” she meowed. “I was angry about you leaving ThunderClan.” She dipped her head, shamefaced. “Maybe I’m still angry. But I’ll always be your sister. I’ll always believe in you.”

The miserable tightness in Dovewing’s chest loosened, and she took a deep, happy breath. Things were more comfortable then, and they spoke for a little longer, as the sun rose high above both their Clans. Dovewing told Ivypool about her time with the guardian cats far away, and more about her journey back to the Clans’ territory. Ivypool told her about how the Clans had acted when SkyClan had arrived to claim a place by the lake, and all the things that had happened in ThunderClan while she was gone.

When Dovewing had to head back toward ShadowClan’s camp, her paws felt lighter. She and Ivypool had headed down two different paths, but

she knew that no matter how far apart they were, they would always have each other.



Firestar shook his head. "I was surprised when Dovewing chose to leave ThunderClan. And disappointed. She'd always been such a loyal cat."

Graystripe purred. "Love leads us to new places. She has other loyalties now." His eyes lingered on Silverstream, the RiverClan cat who had been his first love, and their daughter, Feathertail, who were sharing tongues at the foot of a nearby tree.

"I'm glad she and Ivypool worked things out, though," Firestar went on. "They've always been close, and loyal to one another. It reminds me a bit of another story, one about ThunderClan cats who worked together, even when they couldn't be part of ThunderClan. . . ."

Alderheart nosed at the half of a squirrel in front of him, then took an unenthusiastic bite. It was fine, fresh prey, but it didn't taste as good to him as prey caught on ThunderClan territory would. It had been less than half a moon since he, Twigbranch, and Finleap had become the most recent cats to be driven away from their Clan.

It's kind of Tigerstar to give us exiles a place to stay, he thought, looking around the former SkyClan camp on what was now ShadowClan territory. But it's not home.

Some of the other exiles were busy around the camp. Lionblaze and Crowfeather had just returned from a hunt, mice dangling from their jaws. Twigbranch and Finleap were working together to repair the warriors' den, while Mothwing and Jayfeather spread a few herbs they had gathered out to dry in the sunshine. Good cats, loyal cats, trying to build their lives together until they could return to their Clans. But Alderheart couldn't be happy, not when he was separated from his Clan.

"That's a big piece of prey for a cat who doesn't hunt," Crowfeather was standing over him, eyeing the squirrel. The other ThunderClan cats within hearing looked up, bristling at the former WindClan deputy's words.

"Uh, I wasn't eating the whole thing by myself," Alderheart meowed, feeling guilty.

"Leave Alderheart alone," Twigbranch was stomping toward them. "I ate half that squirrel. And he's got as much right to prey as any other cat. He's one of us."

"Sure, and if there's one thing we need here, it's another medicine cat," Crowfeather grumbled, glancing at Mothwing and Jayfeather. "There are too many cats here from different Clans, and no cat in charge. I can't wait until this is over and I can go back to WindClan."

"If it ever *is* over," Twigbranch muttered sadly. She caught Alderheart's eye. "Sorry, ignore me. Of course we'll figure out what's going on with Bramblestar and things will get back to normal. Someday."

There was a heartbeat of silence, as all the cats thought about that "someday." Since Bramblestar had changed so drastically, and since he had convinced several of the other leaders that StarClan's lack of contact was because of codebreakers within the living Clans' ranks, things had gone from bad to worse. No cat knew when—or if—this would end.

The silence broke as Mothwing got to her paws. "A ThunderClan cat's coming."

Alderheart scented the air. "Whitewing!" He jumped up just as his Clanmate entered the camp and hurried toward her. "Bramblestar hasn't exiled you, too, has he?"

Whitewing pressed her cheek against his in greeting. Her familiar scent was sour with distress. "No, but I need your help."

The other cats had come to circle around them. "Are you hurt?" Jayfeather asked, sniffing and then gently touching her side, his blind blue gaze intent.

"*I'm* not. But Cherryfall's sick. And there's only Flipclaw in the medicine den. Bramblestar won't even let Brightheart help, he says Flipclaw's the medicine cat now." Whitewing's tail drooped with dismay.

"Well, *Flipclaw*," Jayfeather meowed scathingly. "I'm surprised he hasn't managed to kill off half of ThunderClan by now."

"It's not his fault," Alderheart muttered. Flipclaw hadn't asked to be suddenly appointed a medicine cat, with no training and no interest in healing. But Alderheart shuddered at the idea of the young warrior trying to treat their Clanmates' injuries and illnesses—and at what state the medicine den and their neatly stored herbs might be in by the time he and Jayfeather returned. *If* they returned.

"Can you come, Alderheart?" Whitewing asked pleadingly. "I don't think we'll be able to sneak you into camp, but maybe we could bring Cherryfall to you somewhere near the border on ThunderClan territory. She's weak, but she can walk a little way out of camp, I'm sure. I don't think she could make it here, though."

Alderheart tensed. Going back onto ThunderClan's land would be a risk to them all, and to ShadowClan for sheltering them. The exiles were supposed to be long gone from the lake territories. But Alderheart was a medicine cat, and he was responsible for his Clanmates.

"I'll come," he told her. "We'll figure out a plan. What are Cherryfall's symptoms?"

"Thank you!" Whitewing meowed, her shoulders dropping in relief. "She's been coughing a lot, and she can't catch her breath sometimes and makes this terrible wheezing sound. And she's hot but she gets chills—I think she has a fever."

"It sounds like it could be the beginnings of greencough, but it might just be a cold." Alderheart exchanged a look with the other medicine cats. "Do we have any catmint I can take?"

"There's a little," Mothwing meowed, thinking. "It'll probably be enough. And there's tansy, if it turns out not to be greencough. And feverfew for the fever."

"We can show you how to rub Cherryfall's chest to help ease the coughing," Jayfeather told Whitewing. "Even Flipclaw could probably

learn how to do that.”

“We’ll get some herbs together,” Alderheart meowed. “And then we’ll make a plan for how I can treat Cherryfall without getting caught.”

“I can help.” Twigbranch had been listening, and now she came forward, her chin high with determination. “If Whitewing can get Cherryfall out of camp and close to the border, I’ll distract any patrols that pass by while Alderheart treats Cherryfall.”

Whitewing looked dubious. “If you get into a fight, you’ll be outnumbered. You might get hurt.”

Twigbranch held her head up proudly. “I’m a ThunderClan warrior, whether Bramblestar admits it or not. I’ll risk it to help my Clanmate.”

Alderheart gazed at Twigbranch admiringly. It seemed only yesterday that he and Needletail had found Twigkit and her sister, Violetkit, abandoned outside the Clan territories. He’d helped raise this strong warrior, and that filled him with pride. Even in exile, he knew he could count on Twigbranch.

They agreed on a spot to meet at sunhigh the next day, and Whitewing, with many thanks, left to return to ThunderClan’s camp. As he and the other medicine cats went to their temporary den to sort out which herbs he should take tomorrow, Alderheart worried. *I don’t know what will happen if we get caught. We’d all be in big trouble. But I have to help Cherryfall.*

“If we’re lucky, you won’t have to do anything but stand guard,” Alderheart mumbled around the leaf-wrapped bundle of herbs in his mouth. “Unless we run into a patrol, we’re just going to meet Cherryfall and Whitewing. I’ll take care of Cherryfall, and we’ll leave with no trouble.”

“I’m not *expecting* trouble,” Twigbranch answered. “I’m making plans just in case. If a patrol is coming, I’ll distract them as fast as I can. What if I pretend I crossed the border by accident chasing prey?”

They were approaching the border between ShadowClan and ThunderClan territories, and Alderheart breathed in, scenting the familiar smells of home. Something inside him ached: it would be hard to enter ThunderClan territory for only a little while before leaving again.

Reaching the spot where they’d agreed to meet, at the foot of an alder tree, he put down the herbs and looked around. “No cat in sight. I hope Whitewing can get Cherryfall out of camp.”

Twigbranch nodded toward a patch of wild onion growing nearby. "Let's cover up our scents as much as we can."

Wrinkling his nose at the smell, Alderheart joined her in rolling in the onion. He didn't like having to cover up his scent—he *belonged* here—but it was a good idea.

"Wow, that smells strong." At the sound of Whitewing's voice, he looked up to see her nearby, Cherryfall leaning heavily on her shoulder. The amber-eyed she-cat was thinner than the last time Alderheart had seen her, even though it had only been a quarter-moon or so, and she seemed exhausted, her head drooping.

"Okay," Alderheart meowed reassuringly, getting up. "First, let me just look at your throat. Would you open your mouth?"

Peering in, he saw with relief that, while her throat was irritated, there was no sign of the white patches that meant greencough. Flipclaw would never have been able to cope with an outbreak of something so contagious.

Cherryfall coughed and then staggered. "Sorry," she meowed when she caught her breath. "I feel dizzy." Whitewing anxiously stroked her tail over the other she-cat's back.

"I'll just listen to your chest and then—," Alderheart began, when a yowl in the distance made them all stiffen.

"That's Berrynose!" Whitewing meowed. "He must be leading the border patrol."

"I hear Rosepetal and Thriftear, too," Twigbranch added, her ears pricking up. "We can't let them find us here."

"I need to finish examining Cherryfall," Alderheart told her. "Just a little longer."

"Okay." Twigbranch looked around, scented the air, then charged into some nearby bracken. With a crackle of dry branches, a vole burst out and Twigbranch followed in pursuit, driving her prey toward the sounds of the approaching patrol.

Alderheart pressed his ear against Cherryfall's chest. In the distance, he could hear angry yowls—Twigbranch must have chased that vole straight into the patrol's path—but he focused on the congested, thick sound of Cherryfall's breathing. "Last thing at night, rub her chest the way Jayfeather showed you," he told Whitewing. "It'll help her breathe easier."

"I *have* left the territory! But I have to eat. And I'm a ThunderClan warrior, whatever any cat says," he heard Twigbranch growl. It sounded

like she and the patrol were moving farther away. "I've got a right to hunt on ThunderClan land."

Berrynose's response sounded furious, and Alderheart and Whitewing exchanged worried glances.

"You should go now," Cherryfall meowed. "I'll be okay."

Alderheart picked up the bundle of herbs and pushed it toward Cherryfall. "It looks like just a feverish cold. Take a few leaves of feverfew—those are the smaller soft ones—three times a day: when you wake up, at sun-high, and before you sleep. The tansy leaves are pointy and shinier than the feverfew. Eat four or five of them when you wake and again at nightfall. If you don't feel better in half a moon, or if you start feeling worse, get Whitewing or another cat you trust to come find me."

"Thank you, Alderheart," Cherryfall meowed, nosing thankfully at the bundle.

He stroked his tail across her side. "You'll get better quickly," he told her. "Don't worry."

Whitewing had been listening to the arguing in the distance while Alderheart and Cherryfall talked. "You'd better go," she told him, "and we'll head back to camp. It sounds like they're either going to drive Twigbranch back over the border or drag her to Bramblestar to decide what to do with her."

Alderheart tensed. "Do you think she needs my help?" He couldn't leave her alone if they were going to force her back into camp to be judged by this new, harsh Bramblestar.

Whitewing shook her head. "She'll be able to talk or fight her way out of this," she meowed with assurance. "Twigbranch is tough. And deep down, Rosepetal and Thriftear want to let her go."

Alderheart meowed a goodbye to his sister and his Clanmate and watched Whitewing help Cherryfall back toward camp. As he headed for the ShadowClan border, his steps slowed. This was his home. *I'll be back*, he promised himself. *I'll be part of ThunderClan again*.

He hesitated on the other side of the border, listening. After a few heartbeats, Twigbranch burst out of the woods. There was a long, bloody scratch across her cheek, but her green eyes were shining with excitement.

"They never suspected a thing," she meowed cheerfully. "Will Cherryfall be all right?"

"I think so," Alderheart told her, reminding himself to put a poultice of goldenrod on Twigbranch's scratch as soon as they got back to camp. "Thanks for distracting the patrol. She and Whitewing would have been in real trouble if they caught them."

"Glad to help," Twigbranch answered. She bumped her shoulder gently against his. "We're Clanmates, no matter what happens."

Fireheart purred with laughter. "Twigbranch is always full of ideas on how to help other cats," he meowed.

"She and Alderheart are a good team. They'll always put their Clanmates' needs before their own," Graystripe commented. "But some cats will struggle to get a little more for themselves instead. There's a story I've heard since I joined StarClan, one about a cat who lived long before either of us. . . ."

"If that's all any cat has to say, we might as well end the Gathering," Skystar yowled, annoyance prickling through his pelt, and leaped down from the Great Rock.

"Don't be like that," Windstar, the leader of WindClan, replied, climbing down more cautiously. "There's nothing we can do about Twolegs coming onto your territory, and it doesn't seem like it's anything to worry about." Reaching the ground, she shook out her fur. She was looking old, Skystar noticed, her sharp bones more distinct beneath her brown tabby pelt than ever.

"I worry," he growled, and she flicked her tail dismissively and headed for the rest of her Clan.

Riverstar, the leader of RiverClan, passed Skystar and nodded politely. "I'll see you soon," he meowed, then called out, "RiverClan, follow me."

Skystar watched RiverClan stream out of the Four Oaks clearing and looked for the remaining Clan leaders. Ravenstar, the leader of ShadowClan, and Skystar's own son, Thunderstar, leader of ThunderClan, had their heads together in quiet conversation. He felt a twinge of suspicion, watching them, but shook it off: the Clans had been at peace for many seasons.

A soft pelt brushed against his, and he leaned into the comforting scent of his mate, Star Flower. "Why don't the other Clans listen to me?" he asked her.

Star Flower's warm green eyes were confident. "They haven't seen what you see. Not yet. But—" She broke off as a deep warning growl sounded from the edge of the hollow. "Dogs!"

Three dogs were gazing down on the gathered cats, their bodies tense and menacing. One was a large, muscular white dog, his fur shining brightly in the light of the full moon. The other two were darker and smaller, but moonlight glinted off their teeth and eyes. The largest one barked twice, its eyes fixed on the cats below.

The cats and dogs were all frozen for a heartbeat, and then Skystar shouldered Star Flower toward the other side of the clearing. "SkyClan!" he yowled. "Run!"

The other leaders added their yowls to his and soon cats were streaming from the clearing, while others dashed up trees. With excited yaps, the dogs dashed down the sides of the hollow toward them.

Skystar looked for his Clanmates. His deputy, Sparrow Fur, was herding a group of apprentices up one of the large oak trees, and he spotted one of his daughters, Flower Foot, racing from the clearing, shoulder to shoulder with two WindClan warriors.

His heart dropped in dismay as he saw a familiar cat trapped in the clearing. Feather Ear, Thunderstar's daughter, was snarling and arching her back, trying to look threatening, but there was a dog on either side of her, blocking her escape. As he watched, she crouched as if to run beneath the larger dog's stomach and it moved closer.

We're the nearest cats to her, Skystar realized. He didn't even know if any other cat had seen her plight. The clearing was in chaos.

There was no time to think. Skystar threw himself forward, dashing past the white dog and slashing at its muzzle with his claws extended. "Go!" he hissed at Feather Ear. The dog jerked back with a yelp of pain, and the she-cat bolted.



Leaping again to rake his claws across the dog's chest, Skystar hit the ground hard, twisting his body to roll back onto his paws. By the time he was upright again, the dogs had moved closer, cutting off his escape route. He snarled, his tail bushing out, and looked around frantically. Beyond the dogs, he could see cats fighting fiercely—had more dogs joined the fight?—and his breath caught as he saw a familiar golden tabby pelt.

Why didn't she run? I told her to run!

He was distracted, staring at Star Flower, when the dog charged him again. There was a flash of white—fur and teeth—and the stink of dog, and he was flying backward. He heard Thunderstar screech in rage, and *pain* shot through him.

And then everything stopped, and the moonlit hollow was replaced by darkness.

He woke up in a sunny clearing. The sky was blue overhead, and a warm breeze ruffled his fur, bringing the scents of prey and healthy growing plants.

“Hello, Skystar,” a soft voice purred. Skystar blinked and looked up at the cats surrounding him. His brother Gray Wing was closest, gazing down at him with calm golden eyes. “You were so brave saving Thunderstar’s kit,” Gray Wing told him.

“Great.” Skystar got to his paws, shaking grass from his pelt. The pain had disappeared. “Send me back.”

The cats around him—Gray Wing, their younger brother Jagged Peak, Shadowstar, the founder of ShadowClan, and his mother, Quiet Rain—exchanged glances. There was a short silence, and then Quiet Rain meowed quietly, “I’m afraid we can’t. It doesn’t work that way.”

“Of course it does. I’ve done this before.” Skystar looked back and forth between them. “I need to go back *quickly*. We’re in the middle of a fight, and Star Flower is in danger.”

Shadowstar rolled her eyes. “Trust Skystar not to keep track of how many lives he has.”

Jagged Peak hissed at her. “*Ssssshhh*. Try to have a little compassion.”

How many lives? There was a strange hollow feeling in Skystar’s stomach. Surely he wasn’t at the end of his nine lives? There had been a couple of battles, and a few illnesses, and one terrifying and painful moment beneath the round black paws of a Twoleg monster, but he hadn’t died *nine* times, had he? Skystar looked to Gray Wing for confirmation—Gray Wing wouldn’t lie to him—and his brother nodded solemnly, his eyes softening.

“I’m sorry.”

Skystar gasped for air, his belly suddenly feeling hollow and sick. *Dead? Forever?* He took another, deeper breath and squared his shoulders. “It doesn’t matter!” Skystar began to pace, his tail switching from side to side. “Star Flower’s in danger. *All* the cats are in danger. If you say I’m at the end of my lives, fine, I won’t argue with that. But send me back anyway! You must understand why I need to go.”

“We know how worried you are,” Shadowstar began, her voice more sympathetic. “And we’re proud that you lost your life thinking of another cat. You saved Feather Ear.”

“Then reward me by *sending me back*,” Skystar snapped. “Just until the end of the battle, so I can make sure Star Flower and my family are all right.” Remembering the sharp teeth of the dogs, he shuddered hard and

glared at them all. "I'm not asking for another whole life. A few heartbeats, that's all I need."

"Maybe there's some way?" Jagged Peak shifted his paws nervously. "We could try to figure out, if it's only for a little while?"

"I wish we could," Quiet Rain meowed.

"There isn't a way." Shadowstar's yowl was fierce. "Leaders get nine lives, and that's it. It doesn't matter what's going on when they die. It wasn't easy for me to let go of my last life either, Skystar. But the rules apply to every one of us, even you."

Hot rage surged through Skystar, his vision blurring. Without a moment's thought, he leaped at Shadowstar, knocking her to the ground. She kicked at him, trying to throw him off, and he raked his claws down her sides, hissing angrily.

A solid weight hit Skystar's side, knocking him onto the grass. Breathing hard, he looked up at Gray Wing, who held him down, his paws on Skystar's shoulder.

"You can't do that," Gray Wing growled. "It's not Shadowstar's fault. It's not any of our faults."

Skystar tried to catch his breath, glaring at his own paws as he panted.

"I'm sorry," Gray Wing meowed more gently, letting go of him. "But your lives are over. We know how you feel, but it's time to trust in the living cats to take care of themselves."

As Skystar's breathing calmed, shame settled heavily onto his back. "Sorry." He looked up at Shadowstar, who was licking her fur smooth, her tail twitching angrily. "I shouldn't have done that. But Star Flower and my kits—my whole Clan—they're out there without me to protect them."

Shadowstar sniffed. "You were always the weirdest cat," she told him, but her eyes softened a bit. "So selfish when you're trying to do the right thing. I've never known what to make of you."

Her words stung, but she sounded less angry than he'd feared, so Skystar simply dipped his head to her.

"Come on," Gray Wing told him, and Skystar got to his paws again.

"Where are we going?" Amid all the guilt, anger, and worry that weighed down his pelt, Skystar felt a glimmer of hope. Gray Wing had always done everything he could for Skystar. Maybe he did know a way for Skystar to get back to the forest, just for a little while.

"I'm going to show you something. It will help." With a wave of his tail, Gray Wing led him across the clearing to the edge of a pond.

"I'm not thirsty," Skystar's meow was flat with disappointment.

Gray Wing sighed. "Just look at the water, Skystar."

Skystar looked down and stiffened in excitement. He could see Star Flower. "No!" The white dog was advancing on her, its teeth bared. Star Flower was standing over Skystar's body, snarling at the dog. *She's in terrible danger. Run, Star Flower!* His paws splashed at the edge of the pond, as if he could somehow plunge through.

But Star Flower wasn't alone. Another cat had seen the danger she was in: Thunderstar dashed toward her and the fierce dog, his voice raised in a ferocious yowl.

As Skystar watched, his son and his mate attacked the dog from two sides, slashing at its face and legs. The dog turned from one to the other, snapping and growling, but gradually backing away. Finally, it turned and ran.

Skystar took a deep breath of relief. Star Flower was okay, even without him there to save her. He watched as his mate walked back toward his body and gently lowered her head to touch her nose to his fur. Her tail drooped, and he swallowed hard. "Goodbye, Star Flower," he whispered. "I'll miss you. But you'll be all right without me. And SkyClan will survive."

Firestar shook his head. "That's so sad," he meowed. "He only wanted to make sure the cat he loved was safe. You know, I feel like Skystar's been misunderstood."

"Some cats think his reckless behavior is why SkyClan eventually had to leave the forest and was lost for so many generations," Graystripe told him.

"Nonsense." Firestar's tail twitched irritably. "Even if he had done terrible things, StarClan wouldn't punish his Clan like that. Plenty of cats have done much worse, and their Clans have thrived."

"I agree. Skystar wasn't a bad cat," Graystripe purred. "And StarClan doesn't punish living cats, they just try to help the Clans. It took me a long time to understand that. Things are simpler here."

"They are," Firestar agreed. "But whenever I start feeling much wiser than the living cats, I try to remember that we StarClan cats are so clever because we have so many generations of stories to learn from."

*“And plenty of friends to discuss them with,” Graystripe reminded him,
and the two Clanmates purred with laughter.*







“Never trust the shadows. My warriors wear the night
like second pelts. If you wrong SHADOWCLAN,
you will never be safe in the dark.”

—BLACKFOOT





“Nothing can stand against the force of water, just as
nothing can defeat RIVERCLAN warriors when we
rise up together.”
— LEOPARDSTAR





“We’re THUNDERCLAN. We protect one another.
We’re bound by kinship and loyalty and the warrior
code.”

—SQUIRRELFIGHT





“No matter what trials we must endure, WINDCLAN
will last forever.”
—TALLSTAR





“May STARCLAN light your path. May you find
good hunting, swift running, and shelter when you
sleep . . .”

—MISTYSTAR

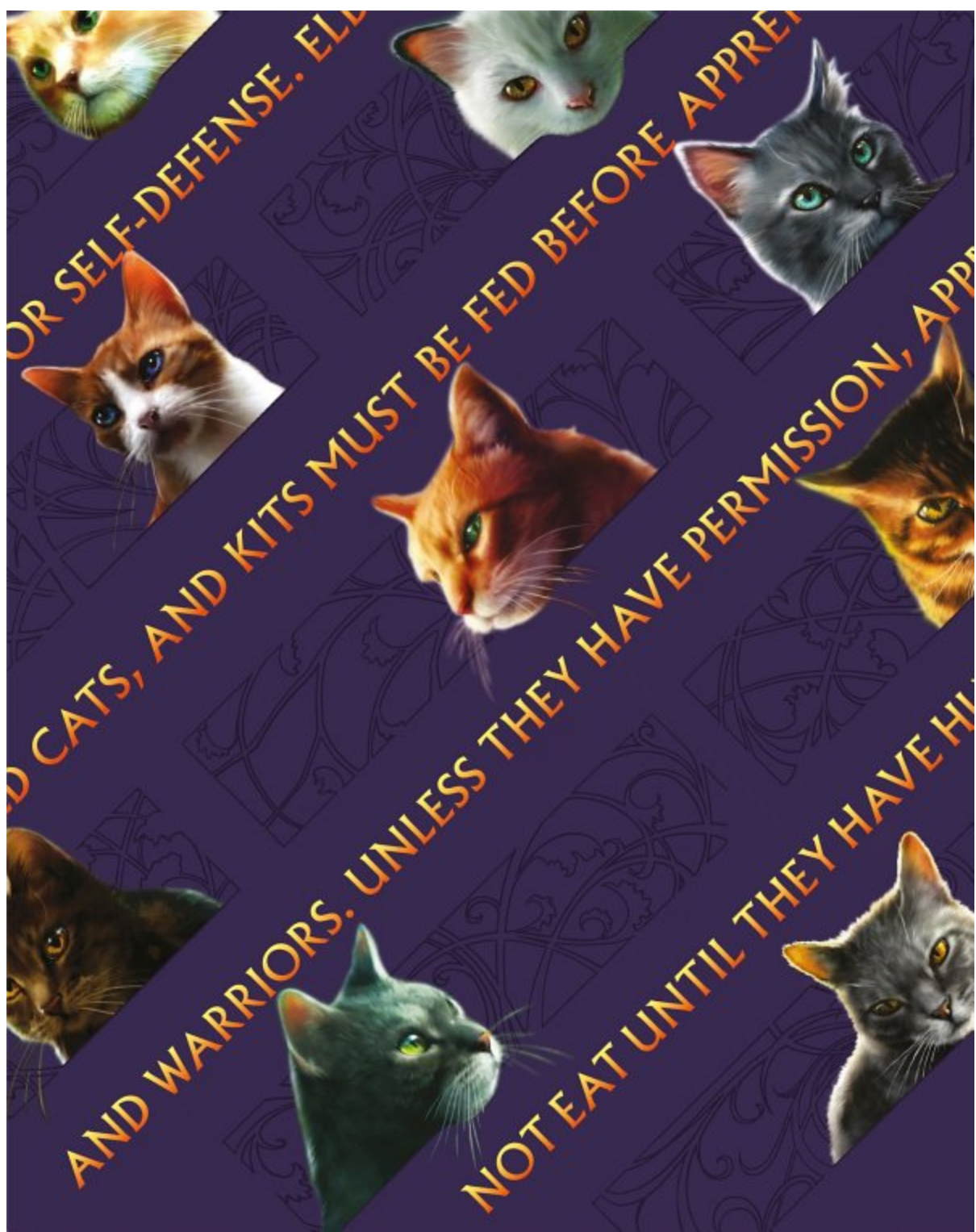




“SKYCLAN will survive . . . We are strong, skillful,
and more honorable than any of the five Clans of the
forest.”

— CLOUDSTAR





About the Author

ERIN HUNTER is inspired by a love of cats and a fascination with the ferocity of the natural world. She is the bestselling author of the Warriors, Seekers, Survivors, Bravelands, and Bamboo Kingdom series. Erin lives in the UK.

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