

Forbidden Paths and Devastated Truths

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1 - Prolouge

A celebration caused a vigil. Two cats sat down watching their Clan mates sleeping. The glossy white tom almost fell asleep but his friend kept waking him up. She was a black she-cat with one green eye and one silver eye. She was too excited to sleep. A moment later, their leader, a grey-blue she-cat, padded out of her den and gave them a signal that it was okay for them to talk now.

"I thought I would never taste air again!" the white tom exclaimed.

"You mouse brain! We were not supposed to talk, not to breathe!" she commented. "At least try to make some sense..."

"You're one to talk!"

"True," she agreed. They got up and then walked toward to the fresh-kill pile. She grabbed a large rabbit for them both. They shared it with gulping bites and finished it off quickly.

"Don't you feel like anything is missing in your life?" the black she-cat asked. The white tom looked at her with concern. "Well? Do you?"

"Kind of. If I knew what you are talking about..." he trailed off, trying to sun himself.

"Did you even listen?" She asked in an irritated tone.

"Yes no, maybe so..."

She was disgusted by her friend's attitude. He was acting just like if he were still an apprentice!

"Whatever, I'm gonna go sleep." She almost went to the apprentice's den, then realized that she earned her warrior name and went to the warrior's den.

"Hey, Mouse-brain," laughed a brown-red she-cat. "You should've never earned your warrior name. You know why?" The black she-cat flinched. During gatherings, the brown-red she-cat always gave away ThunderClan's secrets. "You're the one that always faints. I bet a mouse that in right of the middle of a battle, you'll pass out again and they'll take your life as we know it, well I won't miss you though," As she finished, she got and stalked away to get a piece of fresh-kill.

The black she-cat sighed. She lied down, thinking if she were right to earn her warrior name... She let her dreams take her to a star-filled night. She felt the wind whispering in a soft voice.

"MoonLotus, drink the water..." She jumped, trying to find the voice that spoke to her. She did as she was told. As she drank, a shaft of moonlight shone upon her. She felt something tucked around her throat. MoonLotus awoke finding a collar around her neck. She tried to take it off. It didn't break. Was she destined to be a kittypet? No, StarClan would be more reasonable than that... All that she knew, was that the whole clan would be staring at her...

2 - The Gathering Night

It was the sacred full-moon truce. Everything was peaceful except for the sound of excited apprentices. MoonLotus yawned. After her vigil, she received a strange gift that had made everyone stare at her. She went embarrassed, the other clans would be just as curious as her own. Her heart started to beat faster every time she took a step.

"Yuck! The stench of ShadowClan," MoonLotus tried to calm herself. Snowclaw wiped his nose with his paws. "At least we'll only see or smell them at Gatherings, right?" MoonLotus looked at him, acting like if he were still an apprentice.

"We can see them in the middle of a battle too. Don't you think?"

"ShadowClan may be clever, but they don't have strength," he stiffened. He jumped up on the log to the Island. I wonder if Snowclaw could be a little smarter. MoonLotus then remembered her apprentice days. Her mentor was her own father, Rah, quite unusual in clan life. He was a bright tortoiseshell tom, but had stayed at camp for this gathering. MoonLotus remembered the one time she had forgotten the mouse-bile to take care off the elder's ticks and almost got her ears clawed off by Snowclaw's mother, Rosemarybreath. She chuckled. Good times, but now I'm a warrior! She soon smelled all the four Clans. She sat in the clearing, a little embarrassed. She thought everyone was looking at her Collar.

"Hi," a black she-cat with a white paw startled MoonLotus out of her thoughts. MoonLotus gulped. Is she thinking about my Collar?

"Oh, hi," MoonLotus trembled with embarrassment.

"How's the prey running?" the black she-cat asked. Her piercing blue eyes sparkled and made MoonLotus' fur stand straight.

"Fine, how about yours?" MoonLotus asked.

"The rabbits are running plentifully, thank you. My name is Icegaze by the way," the black blue-eyed she-cat answered. She smiled. Icegaze didn't seem to really care if MoonLotus wearing the Collar. Every other cat was looking curiously at her...

"My name's MoonLotus," she tried to smile. "Hey! Have you met Snowclaw?" she asked. Icegaze tilted her head, as if she were confused.

"No, but is he here?" she asked. She looked around the Island.

"Yes, but he's really not that hard to find... oh there he is, Snowclaw!" MoonLotus yelled out his name. The glossy white tom turned his head. His pure red eyes didn't meet MoonLotus'. He walked towards her and Icegaze.

"Hi," he greeted. "I guess MoonLotus told you my name," he smiled. His eyes glowed with red flames that made Icegaze twitch. She seemed to recognize Snowclaw's red eyesight. MoonLotus sensed something between them. She then turned around and saw another black figure. It was a tall tom, looking around with his golden eyes, then they stopped at MoonLotus. Oh no! She turned herself from his golden gaze. She felt embarrassed because she was the only cat who was wearing a Collar. She then heard hisses.

"Shut up!" Her eyes widened with horror. "Ha! Look what StarClan brought to us! A half-Clan kittypet!" laughed a brown tom with a red under-belly.

"I'll make you regret for saying those mouse-brained words!" hissed a bright tortoiseshell tom. He has a Collar just like me! MoonLotus thought, but, he can't just fight in the middle of a Gathering! A black tom with a brown under-belly stepped in between them. He must be Flystar, she had never seen ShadowClan's leader before.

"Stop this at once! You two know that this is a scared truce! So StarClan help me, you will stop and we will talk about this at camp!" Flystar spoke with a firm voice. The two toms gave one final glare at each other and turned around themselves.

"Whoa," MoonLotus was surprised. The black tom with golden eyes went to sit besides the bright tortoiseshell. He seemed to be calming him down. MoonLotus couldn't move her eyes away until the black tom turned his head. MoonLotus looked away and joined into her friends' conversation.

"...your eyes look so cool. No wonder they call you 'Icegaze.' It suits you," Snowclaw complimented. Icegaze smiled.

"Your pelt seems shiny. How do you keep it so white, living in that forest?" she asked. Snowclaw chuckled.

"That's why they call me Snowclaw," he explained. Icegaze blinked while she was still smiling.

"Do you two have apprentices yet?" she asked. MoonLotus looked at her.

"No. We both were made Warriors yesterday," she answered.

"The vigil was terrible!" Snowclaw mentioned. Icegaze purred in amusement. "I didn't have a vigil, I'm a Medicine Cat, but the trip the Moon Pool was terrible! It was last leaf-bare, my paws nearly froze off!" she added. Snowclaw licked his paw.

"Wow. Was it warm enough to fall asleep at the Moon Pool?" he asked. MoonLotus rolled her eyes.

"If you had fallen asleep, I would've gotten a hive of bees, you mouse-brain," she joked. Icegaze's eyes were glued to Snowclaw.

"Yes. The cold was awful but StarClan sent me sleep," she answered. Snowclaw smiled as his eyes glowed even more. MoonLotus noticed and whispered in his ear.

"No I don't!" he spat. MoonLotus purred in amusement.

"You know you do," she giggled. Icegaze tilted her head, confused.

"What?" she asked. MoonLotus grinned.

"Well, it's clear tha- ow!" Snowclaw pawed at her, eyes flaming in anger.

"I told you mouse-brain to keep quiet!" he hissed.

"Well, sorry!" MoonLotus apologized. Snowclaw went on talking to Icegaze. MoonLotus turned her head to see if the black tom with the unusual glowing golden eyes was there. Where is he? MoonLotus thought. She kept on turning and then saw a black she-cat with brown paws, talking to him. MoonLotus lowered her head in despair. MoonLotus suddenly heard a voice behind her. She turned around and saw Snowclaw's former mentor, Burdockface.

"What's going on here?" he asked. MoonLotus looked at Icegaze and Snowclaw. "Come on now. We're going, unless you want Skystar to yowl a special invitation for you to go back to camp," he explained to MoonLotus and Snowclaw. MoonLotus nodded.

"Well, we are going to have to go anyways," MoonLotus told Icegaze.

"Icegaze! Let's go," a brown she-cat cried out from the other side of the clearing.

"Coming Rabbitfrost!" Icegaze shouted to her, "Snowclaw, tell me. I won't tell anyone," she promised in a quieter voice. Snowclaw couldn't stop looking at her. His eyes glowed, not in anger anymore as he walked up to her without anyone looking, he whispered softly and sweetly in her ear. Icegaze looked at Snowclaw like she hadn't just met him at all. She smiled at him and followed Rabbitfrost as a cream-golden colored she-cat yowled for WindClan to gather and go back to camp. MoonLotus knew what Snowclaw had said to her. She turned around and flicked her tail at him. He saw her and ran up beside her. MoonLotus looked around for the tall black tom with the pure golden eyes. She didn't find him. MoonLotus sighed. It wouldn't work out between us anyway, he has that she-cat with the brown paws, she thought, bitterly. She then heard of a voice, singing. She looked up to see the moon. She then collapsed to the ground, passed out...

"Is she okay?"

"What happened?"

"Is she dead?" Eyes stared at MoonLotus as she was in a coma.

"Everyone out, MoonLotus is just in a coma! She'll be fine!" a brown tom with a white paw explained.

"Oh MoonLotus, this wasn't the first time you've fainted," he said in sorrow.

"Spottedtail?" a voice asked.

"Yes Skystar?" he asked.

"Is MoonLotus going to be all right? Scarredface keeps on gossiping that MoonLotus will die if she's not turned into an elder right away," the leader told him.

"Scarredface? She's always grumpy. You should remember that from when she and I were apprentices. She might not like MoonLotus, but she does in her heart, way, way, way deep in her heart," he explained.

"I hope you're right. A cat is friendly at first, it is who they hang with that change their attitude.

Burdockface never had an attitude with me," she responded. Spottedtail lowered his head. He was always vouching for his sister's side.

"I guess you are right. What's her punishment for offending a warrior of her own Clan?" he asked, while he was still getting MoonLotus to take her medicine.

"Apprentice work and no Gatherings for 2 moons," Skystar answered, "I think her attitude doesn't come from someone in our Clan. But, maybe from another, come with me to my den," she ordered. MoonLotus opened one eye.

"What happened?" she asked. Spottedtail lowered his head, again.

"You fainted... again," he told her, "please stay here. I'm going to talk with Skystar," he told her. He turned himself and padded out to follow Skystar to her den. I fainted... again? MoonLotus wondered. She snuck without being seen to hear what Spottedtail and Skystar were going to talk about.

"...what about the prophecy?" MoonLotus recognized Spottedtail's voice.

"That is what I was going to ask you. Do you think that MoonLotus is one of the Four?" Skystar asked. MoonLotus gasped and Skystar and Spottedtail whipped around.

"Hey MoonLotus! What are you doing?"