

EXT. THUNDERCLAN CAMP -DAY

**ACT I START**

MintTail dashes quickly across the camp from the med den to the nursery, herbs and a stick in her mouth.

MINTTAIL  
Everycat out of the way!  
BentBranch is kitting!

INT. THUNDERCLAN NURSERY - CONT

BentBranch writhes and cries out on the moss floor of the nursery. MintTail sets the herbs and stick down in front of BONETOOTH.

MINTTAIL  
BoneTooth! Give her the stick to  
bite on!

BoneTooth quickly gives the stick to BentBranch to bite on.

BONETOOTH  
Bite down hard, BentBranch. It'll  
be over before you know it.

INT. THUNDERCLAN NURSERY - LATER

BentBranch purrs proudly, though exhausted as she and Minttail lick the newborn kits.

BoneTooth gently holds back her own curious kits with her tail.

BONETOOTH  
They're beautiful.

MintTail gently passes the bigger kit to BoneTooth.

MINTTAIL  
Keep licking the kits...

BoonTooth licks the kit.

MINTTAIL  
I'm going to fetch some feverfew  
and chickweed for BentBranch.

BentBranch suppresses a cough.

BONETOOTH  
Do you have names picked out for them?

BENTBRANCH  
This one's Rustkit, and that one is Foxkit.

INT. THUNDERCLAN NURSERY - DAY

TumbleKit tussles through the nursery bedding with FoxKit. Foxkit pins the older kit with a happy squeak. Tumblekit rolls Foxkit off himself and bounds over to BoneTooth

TUMBLEKIT  
Can WildKit and I show FoxKit around camp?

BONETOOTH  
Not just yet, TumbleKit. FoxKit is still a bit too young to explore the camp.

TUMBLEKIT  
Aww.

FOXKIT  
Mreeep!!

BoneTooth leans down to touch TumbleKit's head with her nose.

BONETOOTH  
Why don't you come with me to take him to visit BentBranch and RustKit in the medicine den.

BoneTooth takes FoxKit by his scruff. And TumbleKit follows as she makes her way out of the nursery.

INT. THUNDERCLAN MEDICINE DEN - DAY

MintTail, sorting herbs, gives BoneTooth a nod as she enters. BoneTooth sets FoxKit down next to BentBranch and RustKit who are curled up in a nest in the corner.

She uses her tail to corral TumbleKit close to her as she walks away from the sick cats and towards MintTail.

MINTTAIL  
Oh. Goodday BoneTooth.

BONETOOTH

Hi, MintTail, could I talk to you about FoxKit for a moment?

MINTTAIL

Oh- He hasn't started coughing too, has he!?

BONETOOTH

No, no, it's not that, thank StarClan. Actually, I'm worried about his speech. He should be talking by now, shouldn't he? But I can't get a single coherent word out of him.

MINTTAIL

Well, for now, just take him back to the nursery. I'll come by later to take a look. There's a few things that it could be...

BoneTooth nods and ushers the two kits out of the medicine den and back to the nursery.

INT. THUNDERCLAN NURSERY - NOON

FoxKit opens his tiny mouth wide as MintTail bends down to look at his teeth.

MintTail looks over her shoulder to BoneTooth.

MINTTAIL

His teeth seem to be growing in oddly. A bit crooked. I think he will be okay with a bit of extra time and effort learning to speak.

EXT. THUNDERCLAN CAMP - NIGHT

TWO DAYS LATER

LionLight, ThornStar, AcornLeap, MintTail, QuietFoot, DeadEar, DriftWing, BoneTooth, GoldenLeaf, CharPelt, BatEye, WeaselNose, RipTail, and PebbleFoot all sit quietly around BentBranch, and RustKit's quiet, dead bodies.

No cat speaks as they sit vigil.

EXT. THUNDERCLAN CAMP - DAY

TEXT: TWO MOONS LATER

WildKit, TumbleKit, and BrightKit sit in front of highledge. ThornStar looks down at them from the ledge.

THORNSTAR

WildKit! From now on you will be called WildPaw. Your mentor will be CharPelt.

WildPaw bounds over to and touches noses with CharPelt.

ThornStar turns to TumbleKit.

THORNSTAR

TumbleKit, from now on your name is TumblePaw. Your mentor will be AcornLeap.

TumblePaw bounds forward and stands on tiptoe to reach AcornLeap's nose.

Finally, Thornstar looks at BrightKit, who is sitting tall and waiting patiently for his turn.

THORNSTAR

And, BrightKit, your new name is BrightPaw. Your mentor will be QuietFoot.

BrightPaw walks calmly to QuietFoot, and they touch noses.

As the clan meeting disperses, FoxKit bounds up to TumblePaw.

FOXKIT

Congratulations! I can't wait until I get to be an apprentice! You have to tell me all about your first day when you get back tonight!

TUMBLEPAW

Don't worry, FoxKit. It won't be that long before you're an apprentice!

FOXKIT

I know. You're so lucky to have AcornLeap as a mentor! I was hoping to be his apprentice.

TUMBLEPAW

Hey, maybe you'll have ThornStar himself as a mentor. That would be so cool!

AcornLeap calls for TumblePaw from the camp entrance, where he, the other mentors, and the new apprentices are waiting.

ACORNLEAP

Do you want to see the territory or not, TumblePaw? We don't have all day.

TumblePaw barely gives FoxKit nod goodbye before dashing excitedly to join his mentor and leave the ThunderClan camp for the first time.

INT. THUNDERCLAN ELDER'S DEN- DAY

FoxKit sits in front of LionLight, listening to stories about BentBranch.

LIONLIGHT

BentBranch was a strong warrior, and very brave, too. She was quite absent-minded as an apprentice though.

A question hangs in the air like a dark cloud.

FOXKIT

What about my dad?

LIONLIGHT

Ah. Well... No cat knows for sure who he was...

LionLight leans in, happy to gossip, not thinking about who she's talking to.

LIONLIGHT (CONT'D)

Some think he was some rogue or loner. Possibly some cat from another clan. He's certainly not in ThunderClan.

FoxKit looks down at his paws.

FOXKIT

Oh...

TumblePaw bursts into the Elder's Den, delicately setting a ball of moss down at his paws.

TUMBLEPAW

I'm here to do your ticks-

He sees FoxKit.

TUMBLEPAW

Hey! FoxKit!

LionLight grumbles and flicks her tail.

LIONLIGHT

It's about time, TumblePaw!

FOXKIT

Oh! I can help with the fleas  
while you do the ticks, TumblePaw!

LIONLIGHT

Hmph. I don't have fleas.

PebbleFoot rolls his eyes at his fellow elder and mate.

PEBBLEFOOT

Yes you do LionLight. I can see  
'em from here.

LionLight glares at him briefly, but there's mischievous a twinkle in her eye.

TumblePaw gingerly picks up the mouse-bile soaked moss ball, and the two young cats get to work, nosing and pawing through LionLight's coat.

EXT. THUNDERCLAN CAMP - DAY

ThunderClan is gathered at the base of HighLedge, watching Foxkit's apprentice ceremony.

THORNSTAR

... Your mentor will be DeadEar.

FoxPaw touches noses with DeadEar as they are assigned as apprentice and mentor.

DeadEar guides FoxPaw to the camp entrance.

DEADEAR

Come, FoxPaw, let me show you  
around the territory.

EXT. SHADOWCLAN BORDER- DAY

DeadEar stops and waits for FoxPaw to catch up.

DEADEAR

This is the ShadowClan border.  
It's actually not a bad spot to  
catch voles if your careful not to  
cross the scent markers.

FoxPaw catches his breath and nods.

DEADEAR (CONT'D)

What can you smell?

FoxPaw sniffs the air, and then sniffs the ground. He takes a moment before answering.

FOXPAW

Um, well, I can smell something  
sour, a squirrel, and I think...  
vole?

DeadEar nods curtly.

DEADEAR

That sour scent is ShadowClan's  
border markers.  
Why don't you try taking the lead  
along this border. Put that goofy-  
lookin' nose of yours to good use.

FoxPaw looks at the grassy forest floor as he passes DeadEar to take the lead.

FOXPAW

Oh, okay...

FoxPaw does a good job of following the border. His ears are pricked and his nose twitches.

FoxPaw hesitates, and then turns to DeadEar.

FOXPAW

Wait! Do you smell that?  
That...faint, weird musty scent?

DeadEar takes a moment to sniff the air.

DEADEAR

Hmm...  
Smells like a fox passed through  
here a few days ago. Beyond the  
border, here, is unclaimed lands.

(MORE)

DEADEAR (CONT'D)

So long as the fox isn't trying to move into ThunderClan territory, I wouldn't worry.

DeadEar gives FoxPaw a friendly nudge.

DEADEAR (CONT'D)

I'll let ThornStar know there's been a fox in the territory. You've got a strong sense of smell.

EXT. GATHERING ISLAND - NIGHT

All of ThunderClan follows ThornStar to the fallen tree.

FoxPaw shakes a bit as he digs his claws into the tree trunk, and makes his way across to the island. DeadEar follows close behind him.

DEADEAR

Get a move-on, FoxPaw.

FoxPaw finally sets paw on the island. As he makes his way through the tall grass, his eyes widen.

DeadEar pushes past his apprentice roughly.

DEADEAR

Keep up FoxPaw! This isn't a game. It's a learning opportunity.

FoxPaw follows his mentor to a spot in the clearing where he sits down next to him.

DeadEar gestures with his nose towards a brown cat with white spots sitting on one of the large tree branches at the head of the gathering place.

DEADEAR

That's OtterStar, the RiverClan leader...

He points FoxPaw's attention downwards to the roots of the tree below OtterStar where a bulky, ragged brown cat sits eyeing the crowd.

DEADEAR (CONT'D)

...and her deputy MudSplash.

DeadEar continues to identify the leaders and deputies from left to right.

DEADEAR (CONT'D)

The leader of WindClan is FogStar.  
And, that's his deputy, SootFace.  
FeatherStar is the leader of  
ShadowClan.

Finally, he nods towards ShadowClan's deputy, a russet colored tom with a white chin and belly.

DEADEAR (CONT'D)

That's her deputy, RussetWind.

DeadEar side-eyes his apprentice.

DEADEAR (CONT'D)

Looks an awful lot like you,  
doesn't he?

FoxPaw stands up suddenly and faces DeadEar desperately. The fur on his shoulders raises.

FOXPAW

Do you think RussetWind is my  
father?

DEADEAR

It's a theory..

FoxPaw opens his mouth, not yet sure what he might say.

FOXPAW

Are you saying that I'm half-clan?

DeadEar circles around FoxPaw and gently presses his haunches to sit him down.

DEADEAR

I'm sorry, FoxPaw. But, there's  
nothing wrong with being half-  
clan. Some of the greatest cats in  
ThunderClan were half-clan or even  
kittypets.  
Now hush.  
The leaders are about to speak.

FoxPaw sighs and turns to face the leaders to watch them talk. He glares at RussetWind.

EXT. WINDCLAN BORDER - NIGHT

ThunderClan makes its way back to its territory. FoxPaw lags behind, and TumblePaw slows down to walk alongside him.

TUMBLEPAW  
Hey, dude. You okay?

FoxPaw doesn't seem to hear him. His eyes bore into the pebbly lakeshore below.

TUMBLEPAW  
FoxPaw?

FoxPaw's fur spikes and he rounds on TumblePaw suddenly.

FOXPAW  
Who do YOU think my father is?

TumblePaw stumbles a bit in surprise. He stares at his friend, taken aback by his sudden burst of anger.

TUMBLEPAW  
I never really thought about it,  
honestly.

He nudges FoxPaw forward and walks alongside him.

TUMBLEPAW  
I just kinda assumed it was  
AcornLeap, or BatEye or something.

FOXPAW  
Well, apparently most of  
ThunderClan thinks it's  
RussetWind.

FoxPaw quickens his pace. TumblePaw keeps up.

TUMBLEPAW  
I mean... Do YOU think he's your  
dad?

FOXPAW  
I dunno..

EXT. THUNDERCLAN CAMP - SUNSET

TWO MOONS LATER

WildPaw, BrightPaw and TumblePaw sit beneath highledge, eyes trained on ThornStar as he addresses the rest of the clan gathered behind them.

THORNSTAR  
I, ThornStar, leader of  
ThunderClan call upon my warrior  
ancestors to look down on these  
(MORE)

THORNSTAR (CONT'D)  
apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code. And I commend them to you as warriors in their turn.

ThornStar gracefully descends the rockpile to stand in front of TumblePaw.

THORNSTAR (CONT'D)  
TumblePaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend your clan, even at the cost of your life?

TumblePaw confidently steps forward and touches noses with the clan leader.

TUMBLEPAW  
I do.

TumblePaw steps back and bows his head to ThornStar.

THORNSTAR  
Then, by the power of StarClan, I give you your warrior name. TumblePaw, from this moment on, you will be known as TumbleFawn. StarClan honors your spirit and level head and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan

All of ThunderClan yowls in celebration as ThornStar steps in front of BrightPaw.

THORNSTAR  
BrightPaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend your clan, even at the cost of your life?

Chest puffed with pride, BrightPaw steps forward. His nose meets ThornStar's.

BRIGHTPAW  
I do.

THORNSTAR  
Then, by the power of StarClan, I give you your warrior name. BrightPaw, from this moment on, you will be known as BrightSun.

(MORE)

THORNSTAR (CONT'D)

StarClan honors your kindness and  
bravery and we welcome you as a  
full warrior of ThunderClan.

ThunderClan yowls, cheering for the new warrior. ThornStar  
moves to WildPaw.

THORNSTAR

WildPaw, do you promise to uphold  
the warrior code and to protect  
and defend your clan, even at the  
cost of your life?

WildPaw bounds forward to touch noses with ThornStar.

WILDPAW

I do.

THORNSTAR

Then, by the power of StarClan, I  
give you your warrior name.  
WildPaw, from this moment on, you  
will be known as WildHeart.  
StarClan honors your strength and  
ferocity and we welcome you as a  
full warrior of ThunderClan.

As WildHeart steps back from the ThunderClan leader, her  
fellow warriors break into yowls again, chanting the names of  
the three newest warriors!

As the clan surrounds them, FoxPaw pushes his way through.

FOXPAW

Congrats guys!

BRIGHTSUN

It'll be your turn soon, FoxPaw!

SQUIRRELWING playfully bats at BrightSun's ear.

SQUIRRELWING

There's not going to any space  
left in the warrior's den when  
FoxPaw gets his warrior ceremony!

TUMBLEFAWN

Don't worry, SquirrelPaw,  
BrightSun would happily share your  
nest if there's no more room!

BrightSun flusteredly bats his brother across the ears.

BRIGHTSUN  
TumbleFawn! Stop!

INT. THUNDERCLAN APRENTICE DEN - EARLY MORNING

FoxPaw is sound asleep in his nest. The Apprentice's Den is empty except for him. DeadEar pads in quietly and prods FoxPaw with his front paw.

DEADEAR  
Wake up, FoxPaw. MintTail wants you and me to help her with gathering some herbs.

FoxPaw blinks the sleep out of his eyes and groans. He drags himself from his nest and follows his mentor out of the den.

FOXPAW  
Why so early? The sun's not even up yet.

Focused on the Medicine Den ahead of them, DeadEar doesn't bother to turn to FoxPaw to answer.

DEADEAR  
You'll see.

The two cats make their way into the den where MintTail waits.

MINTTAIL  
Good morning, FoxPaw.

MintTail leads the two out of the camp entrance.

EXT. THUNDERCLAN TERRITORY - CONTINUOUS

They speak as they walk through the territory.

MINTTAIL  
I'm glad you two can help. The JayMint is plentiful this year.

FOXPAW  
Jaymint?

MINTTAIL  
You've heard the stories about JayFeather, right? The great medicine cat decedent of FireStar.

FOXPAW

Of course, he was one of The Tree chosen to save the Clans from the Dark Forest.

MINTTAIL

Exactly. JayFeather gave us a very precious gift from StarClan after his death.

He not only left us the garden of herbs that he and LeafPool built, but he also left us JayMint. It's a powerful herb. But, it's very delicate and hard to care for.

The three cats slow as they approach the old abandoned two-leg nest where the garden grows. MintTail beckons FoxPaw forward with a flick of her short tail.

FoxPaw follows her to a bright aqua-colored sprout of leaves in the center of the garden.

MintTail leans down to inspect the JayMint.

MINTTAIL

See how the Jaymint glows in the moonlight? It must be harvested right before dawn, at the end of Greenleaf.

FoxPaw's eyes sparkle with wonder and he carefully sniffs the bluish glowing plant.

FOXPAW

Wow!

DeadEar approaches the plant and stands beside FoxPaw.

DEADEAR

We're lucky it wasn't trampled by that fox that's been sniffing around the territory.

FOXPAW

But, can't JayFeather just protect the Jaymint from foxes?

MintTail gently picks a bundle of stems from the plant.

MINTTAIL

Well-

JAYFEATHER

Just because I'm dead doesn't mean  
I can just magically control foxes  
now.

FowPaw leaps back in shock. The star-coated spirit of  
JayFeather has just appeared in front of him.

JAYFEATHER (CONT'D)

It's up to you living mousebrains  
to make sure the mint stays safe.

MintTail and DeadEar smile at the ghostly guest.

MINTTAIL

Greetings JayFeather!

JAYFEATHER

Greetings MintTail, DeadEar, and  
FoxPaw.

DeadEar gives JayFeather a cordial nod and bends forward to  
pick a bundle of Jaymint. He gives FoxPaw a meaningful nod,  
and FoxPaw follows suit, picking his own mint.

MINTTAIL

ThunderClan thanks you as always,  
JayFeather.

The group turns to leave.

JAYFEATHER

One more thing before you go.

He pauses, meaningfully and looks at FoxPaw.

JAYFEATHER (CONT'D)

FoxPaw.

FOXPAW

M-Me?

JAYFEATHER

Noooo. The other 'FoxPaw.' Yes!  
You.

JayFeather stares at the apprentice. MintTail gently nudges  
FoxPaw towards JayFeather, and he obeys her.

JayFeather's eyes darken. His figure grows eerie and uncanny.

JAYFEATHER

The Fox will be your Triumph and  
your Downfall.