

EXT. THUNDERCLAN FOREST TERRITORY - NIGHT

In a deserted clearing, BLUESTAR (an old gray she-cat) sits alone, staring up at the clear night sky. All around her in the shadows she can hear the breathing and stirrings of sleeping cats. SPOTTEDLEAF (a small tortoiseshell she-cat) emerges from a dark corner, her pawsteps quick and soundless. Bluestar dips her head in greeting.

BLUESTAR

How is Mousefur?

SPOTTEDLEAF

(with slight concern) Her wounds are deep, Bluestar.

Spottedleaf nestles herself on a patch of grass.

SPOTTEDLEAF (CON'T)

(reassuring) But she is young and strong; she will heal quickly.

BLUESTAR

And the others?

SPOTTEDLEAF

They will all recover, too.

Bluestar focuses her attention on the clear night sky.

BLUESTAR

We are lucky not to have lost any of our warriors this time. You are a gifted medicine cat, Spottedleaf.

Bluestar tilts her head in curiosity, studying the stars.

BLUESTAR (CON'T)

(with concern) I am deeply troubled by tonight's defeat.
ThunderClan has not been beaten in its own territory since I
became leader.

BLUESTAR (CON'T)

These are difficult times for our Clan. The season of newleaf is
late, and there have been fewer kits. ThunderClan needs more
warriors if it is to survive.

Spottedleaf raises her head.

SPOTTEDLEAF

But the year is only just beginning.

SPOTTEDLEAF (CON'T)

There will be more kits when greenleaf comes.

Bluestar's shoulders twitch slightly.

BLUESTAR

(worried) Perhaps. But training our young to become warriors
takes time. If ThunderClan is to defend its territory, it must
have new warriors as soon as possible.

SPOTTEDLEAF

Are you asking StarClan for answers?

Spottedleaf follows Bluestar's gaze at the swath of stars
glittering in the dark sky.

BLUESTAR

(inquiring) It is at times like this we need the words of ancient warriors to help us. Has StarClan spoken to you?

SPOTTEDLEAF

(with slight concern) Not for some moons, Bluestar.

Suddenly, a shooting star blazed over the treetops. Spottedleaf's tail twitched and the fur along her spine bristled. Bluestar's ears pricked, but she remained silent as Spottedleaf continued to gaze upward. After a few moments, Spottedleaf lowered her head and turned to Bluestar.

SPOTTEDLEAF

(urgent, but soft) It was a message from StarClan.

SPOTTEDLEAF (CON'T)

Fire alone can save our Clan.

BLUESTAR

Fire?

BLUESTAR

(panicked, confused) But fire is feared by all the Clans! How can it save us?

Spottedleaf shakes her head.

SPOTTEDLEAF

I do not know.

SPOTTEDLEAF (CON'T)

But this is the message StarClan has chosen to share with me.

BLUESTAR

You have never been wrong before, Spottedleaf.

BLUESTAR (CON'T)

(calm, with determination) If StarClan has spoken, then it must
be so. Fire will save our Clan.