

DESTINY



PART ONE: DISCOVERY



The dappled grey sky was heavily studded with unsettling clouds concealing a circular moon. I walked inside the half-built Ballan library construction site. I sat down. Even if this was scary, I did not regret running away. I didn't even regret stealing \$20 from my Mum's purse. No. I longed for adventure, so here I was.

It was a shame that the library wasn't completed as I've always relied on books to take me to places beyond Ballan...my small town wasn't big enough to contain my dreams. The only place I feel at home is the library. When I walk through the doors an electric excitement fizzles through my body and I know I'm no longer in Ballan, I'm in a pick-and-mix of intergalactic worlds. But now I'm ready to have my own adventure. I had \$20 to spend, a stomach filled with overpowering guilt and I had hope. But I was alone and a solo adventure was not an option.

I sat on an unbuilt wall and started eating my sandwiches. I looked out the window and screamed. A dead white rat was on the sill. But it's not dead because at that moment the undead rat awakens and crawls up my wrist. I peered into its beady eyes, up close it could have been, well cute...Huh?

"That one's mine!" An unseen stranger called from a far corner of the site. "Get your own!" I shift my gaze towards the speaker taking in their appearance. I could only make out their silhouette. Horns... five legs... and... I nearly fell off the wall! A strange looking dog walked out of the shadows. It was no monster. The 'horns' were tufted-ears, the 'legs' four paws and a tail. It was likely a mutt. A long fox-like muzzle- like a whippet and large ears- like a kelpie but its creamy white coat suggested something different altogether. It was a strange pet, maybe not a dog?

"Where's your owner little buddy?" I coaxed reaching out my hand. By now the rat had gone, oddly scurrying towards the cat-like-fox-like-puppy.

"Yogurt, where have you been?" the foxish-cat-dog spoke. No, not spoke. Dogs can't speak, especially not dog-cat-foxes who befriend rats. It must be a prank. I looked around for someone hiding behind a pillar, phone at the ready shouting 'gotcha!'. But it was just me and the talking thing and the rat. Seeing this creature up close I noticed a hoop earring on its left ear, the kind a pirate would wear. The cat-dog-fox-thing looked up. "You're a human!" she cried, shocked, bolting away.

"It's a dream." I said to no one in particular, "it's just a dream." I was beginning to calm until a chunk of concrete fell on my head. I looked up. This was no dream. Another dogish-catish-fox was hanging from the ceiling beams struggling on the insecure, crumbling plaster. The flimsy bones broke, and the

little oddity fell with it. I saw the fear in their eyes and made a move to catch it. Once in my arms all fear was gone and replaced by interest. We stared into each other's star-lit eyes for seconds, but it felt like hours.

We felt unexplainably bonded, until... "Ooh-you're-a-human-cool-hi-I'm-technically-a-prince-cause-I'm-the-Chief's-kid-so-you-should-call-me-your-Majestic-Flipper-but-no-one-does-so-Flip-is-fine." He blurted breathlessly. I placed my scarf over the Prince's mouth- I was meant to be asking the questions!

"What are you?" I asked stiffly, wrapping my scarf back around my neck.

"Our formal name is Dylareethindas."

"Dylareethindas?" I muttered under my breath, "I thought you were a fox-cat-do-"

"Dog?" spluttered Flip. "Don't you dare associate us with dogs. We think of animals as our undeveloped cousins. Foxes are beautiful, cats are okay but dogs? Blergh!" He shuddered.

I found myself staring at his right ear. It was honey-coloured. "Do you like it? It signifies that the prophecy will be fulfilled in my lifetime. Pretty exciting, isn't it? Oh have I told you about the prophecy?" Flip recited:

WHAT WAS LOST WILL SOON BE FOUND

BUT NOT BY CHIEF OR CHIEFTRESS PROUD

WAIT FOR ONE WITH HONEY-EAR FOR HE'S A ROYAL, HE'S A SEER

GATHER AMONGST THE FULLEST MOON

THE PROPHECY FULFILLED SOON

WHAT HUMANS DESTROYED, HUMANS WILL FIX

SHALL MANKIND AND OUR PEOPLE MIX

AWAIT DESTINY

"There was a war a few hundred years back-" Flip was waffling on again. I thought over the last line- Destiny? My wondering was interrupted by two shrill whistles and a howl. I figured this was some sort of long-distance language.

"Howww-Eeee-Eeee!"

"The Chief is coming!" Flip translated.

"Eee-Howwl!"

"So is Mum." Flip added. I grimaced.

"Nice chatty attitude? Hoop earring?" I groaned.

"Yeah" came the little Foxcat's reply. Many soldiers were approaching, led by two leaders. One with a rat upon her shoulder.

"I'm Chieftress Chance." The Queen said smiling but Yogurt's arms were defiantly crossed.

"Hello human, I am Chief Conker." The leader, who I noticed had a torn ear, announced with a steely frown. Conker gave Flip a heads-up: "Pack your bags we are leaving tonight. The Librarians let us use their property as refuge, but we must not interrupt their comfort any longer."

"But...but..." Flip trailed off sadly. I don't know what got into me, I wanted to scream 'that's not fair! You don't have to hide like this' and the next thing I knew, I did.

Suddenly a strange blue glow bounced off the library walls. The Catfoxes looked at me in awe. Everything went black. When I awoke, Flip was staring at me. For once he said nothing, but his face was split into a giant grin. When he moved, I saw an amazing sight, the Catfoxes celebrating! Conker approached me. "You gave us a sign, there's still hope in the prophecy!"

I realized I hadn't told my new friends my name.

"My name is Eve-Destiny." I gushed, turning pink.

"Eve-Destiny, you're one of us!" Conker said, smiling,

"I guess the adventure is over now?" I shrugged.

"No" Said Flip "Our adventure hasn't even started!"

Everyone cheered. Even Yogurt.