

A woman in a dark red hooded cloak stands on a dirt path in a dark, misty forest. She holds a flaming torch in her right hand, which illuminates the scene. The trees are tall and thin, with bare branches. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and eerie.

A GRIPPING STORY THAT WILL LEAVE YOU
ON THE EDGE OF YOUR ROOM.

THE STORY
OF
LADY
SAPPHIRE

A STORY WRITTEN BY

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*The Story of Lady
Sapphire*

The Prequel of "I'm No Ordinary Girl."

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Destiny Constantin asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

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Once a year, before the glistening snow covers the kingdom, I travel to the Evergreen Forest. I collect magic made by the fairies that live in the forest's greenery. The frigid wind howls over me; I shiver even while wearing a long black cape over my gown. I stand in the middle of the Evergreen Forest, staring at the red maple tree. The magical tree sheds its leaves one by one. Miss Ruby needs at least fifty or more to produce enough serum to fill the syringe. It's that time of year again to travel through town, gathering the ingredients to create a spell that changed my life many years ago.

My mother never liked or accepted me the way I was born. She always tells me we must look our best because the people of Evergreen look up to us as the royal family. So why *was my sister not born like me? Why am I the black sheep of the family?* The questions run through my mind all the time, like a song on

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replay.

I sit on the cold dirt road under the red maple tree with my legs crossed. My feet throb from wearing boots all day and walking many miles. I would take the shoes off and rub my feet if it weren't so cold. I left the castle at dawn that morning and traveled across the stack stone bridge, then through the town's village to the Evergreen Forest. I reach into the right pocket of my black cape, searching for the letter my mother gave me—hoping I have gathered all the items on her list. I read through it, and it looks like I forgot the milk of a goat. Next, I will have to visit our servant, Miss Ruby. She takes care of the farm animals and prepares our meals. Mother has her do special quests too. Mother always says Miss Ruby is a loyal servant with a special gift that's important to our family. We must treat her differently than the other servants. I have never figured out why Miss Ruby is unusual among the other servants, but I'm on a mission to find the truth.

All the blood-red leaves have fallen off the maple tree. I get up on my knees and grab all of them. I place each in plastic wrap and put them into my woven basket. Dark gray clouds cover the bright sun. It looks like a storm is brewing. I walk through the woods back to the stack stone bridge. Raindrops twinkle down little by little and wet my long black hair. I reach behind my back to place the hood of my cape over my head to keep dry. Once I get to the end of the bridge, I turn left.

The bridge separates the castle from where the servants live. Most of them live in logwood cabins with brick fireplaces. The cabins are small but cute. They have two bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchenette, and a porch swing. When I was a little girl, I used to sneak out of the castle and go to Miss Ruby's cabin. She would read me the story about *Cinderella*. Then, we would eat

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cookies while we rocked back and forth on the porch swing.

All my parents ever did was pay attention to my sister, Cecily. She is the golden, perfect child. I always felt alone, so I would escape and run into the Evergreen Forest. The forest has been my sanctuary since I was eight years old—and will always be my sanctuary. I'm happy that my mother sent me out today. I can't stand another minute watching my sister practice waving to the crowd one more time. Cecily is a princess in training. I should practice too, but I can't until my mother inserts the red serum into my bloodstream. It's not my fault I was born with a scar shaped like a snowflake on the side of my face. It's not my fault that the left side of my face is droopy; I can't control my muscles.

Why can't I show the people of Evergreen the real me? My mother and father taught me to be honest, but my mother jabs this red serum in my arm every year. The serum's magic makes me beautiful, like my sister.

End of Sample

Read Destiny's story "The Story of Lady Sapphire" in the Coffee House Writer's Fiction Anthology available now on Amazon.

