

Felindra's Fables

By Clare

NOTE: These stories are mentioned in my fic "Storm of Thundera"

The Foolish Son

A great many years ago, there lived a Puma Thunderian and his wife. The couple had three sons and three daughters and lived happily on Thundera with their children. The Puma and his wife, who was also a Puma, loved their offspring and they never wanted for anything, but there was one thing the children were not allowed to do. They were not allowed to go into one particular room in their parents' house.

This room had been kept locked since before any of the children were born and their parents would never tell them what was in there. If any of them asked, all their parents would say was: "There are some things best kept hidden."

But the couple's youngest son, Pumadro, was curious about the room. What could be in there that his parents didn't want him or his brothers and sisters to see? He badly wanted to know, but his parents, of course, wouldn't tell him and his brothers and sisters didn't know themselves. So the curiosity burned inside him until he could stand it no longer.

"I have to have a look in that room," he said to himself one day. "Just a quick look. I won't disturb anything."

Now, as well as being curious, Pumadro was also rather foolish. He did not realise that, when grown-ups tell you not to meddle with things you don't understand, they do it because they are worried you might be hurt. All he could see was a room he was forbidden to enter for reasons which had never been explained to him. So he slipped into his parents' room and stole the key to the room he was forbidden to enter. "I just want a look," he told himself. "I won't do any harm."

Making sure no-one was about, Pumadro made his way to the room and slid the key into the lock. For the first time in many years, the door was soon open. For a moment, Pumadro paused, wondering if the rest of his family had heard him opening the door. When he was sure they hadn't, he slipped into the room and, to his great disappointment, found it empty, except for a table with an old book on it.

"Is this all that's in here?" he wondered. But he had come this far, so he decided he might as well have a look at the book. He walked over to the table and picked the book up, but, before he could open it, his mother called to him, telling him it was dinner time. Pumadro decided the book would just have to wait and placed it back on the table. Then, he left the room, but he completely forgot to lock it up again.

And, almost as soon as Pumadro's back was turned, the book opened all by itself.

After dinner, Pumadro hurried back to the room. He could hardly wait to look at the book and find out what was in it. When he arrived in the room, he received the shock of his life. There was the book, floating in mid-air, its pages turning as if an invisible Thunderian was leafing through it. And, all around it, a brilliant red whirlwind swirled, growing larger and larger with each passing second.

Suddenly, the key Pumadro had stolen from his parents' room flew out of his pocket and was sucked into the whirlwind. Seeing this, Pumadro panicked; he knew there was no way he could make another and he also knew that he would be in terrible trouble if his parents found out what had happened. So he ran from the room and tried to close the door behind him, hoping that would stop the whirlwind from getting out. But he was not strong enough and was knocked to the floor as the whirlwind escaped from the room and began to cause havoc all over the house.

Pumadro chased after the whirlwind, watching as it sucked up his brothers' toy weapons and his sisters' dolls. All the while, it grew steadily larger and larger, until it was so large it could even suck up the furniture. Pumadro knew he had to stop it before it did too much damage, but he didn't know how and he dared not tell his parents because, if he did, they would find out he had disobeyed them. What was he going to do now?

Just then, his youngest sister, Catria, came running up to him. "Pumadro, have you seen my doll?" she asked. "I can't find her anywhere."

Pumadro *had* seen Catria's doll - being sucked into the whirlwind. And he knew how much she loved her doll, so he told her what had happened. When he had finished, Catria looked at him angrily. "That was a very foolish thing to do," she scolded. "You know we're not allowed in that room. What do you suppose Mother and Father will do when they find out?"

Pumadro hung his head, feeling really bad for letting his curiosity get the better of him. "I'm sorry," he said. "I'll find a way to get your doll back somehow. And all the rest of our stuff." But could he do it before the whirlwind became so large that it sucked up everything in the house?

Knowing they had little time to waste, Catria and Pumadro hurried back to the room where Pumadro had found the book. They arrived to find the book still floating in mid-air, its pages still turning as if of their own accord. But, now, it was glowing a brilliant crimson that lit up the whole room with red light. It even made Pumadro and Catria look as though they had turned completely red.

"Grab the book!" Catria called. "It might tell us how we can stop this!"

And Pumadro tried, but the book was out of his reach. So, since she was older and taller, Catria tried. She had to stand on tiptoe, but managed to grab the book and bring it down. It wriggled and tried to get airborne again, but she held on for grim life and managed to close it. She looked at the front cover, something Pumadro had not had time to do, and found that it was a book of spells.

"Then it must tell us how to stop this," said Pumadro. "Have a look, Catria."

Catria did that and, all the while, the magical whirlwind Pumadro had accidentally unleashed grew larger and larger. Now, even the doors and windows were being sucked up; there was very little time left. In the end, however, Catria found what she was looking for. She opened the book on the very last page and raised it above her head as she chanted:

"Winds of Felatta, heed my call
Cease your power, one and all
Return the things that you did take
And everything as before please make."

Suddenly, the whirlwind appeared in the room. Seeing it, Pumadro panicked, thinking it was now going to suck himself and Catria up as well. But it didn't; instead, it was sucked into the book, growing smaller and smaller until it disappeared completely. In the same instant, Catria and Pumadro found themselves outside the room and Pumadro found himself holding the stolen key. "We'd better lock the door," said Catria. "We can't let Mother and Father find out we were in there."

Pumadro nodded and slid the key into the lock. He turned the key and, soon, the room was locked once more. Pumadro and Catria then hurried to return the key to their parents' room before it was missed. But, at that moment, their mother appeared. "Catria! Pumadro!" she called. "What are you doing there?! You've been told never to go near that room." Then, she saw the key in Pumadro's hand. "I hope you're not going to try and open that door," she said. "Because, if you are, it would be a very foolish thing to do. I'm going to tell you a story about something which happened before either of you were born."

And she began to tell her two youngest children a story about a Thunderian sorceress called Felatta, who had wanted to be the most powerful sorceress on all Thundera. So she had written every spell she could find in a notebook, not realising that the book was absorbing magic with each spell she wrote down. In the end, the book took on a life of its own and had to be locked up in a room in her house, never to see the light of day again. "And we are now living in Felatta's old house," the mother finished. "That room is the same room where she imprisoned the book. That is why you must never open that door."

Pumadro and Catria nodded to show that they understood and promised themselves that they would never tell their mother what had happened. And, from that day on, Pumadro was never again foolish enough to open the door to the forbidden room.