

Felindra's Fables

By Clare

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

The Tiger Maiden and The Sapphire Brooch

There was once a female Tiger Thunderian who came from one of the wealthiest families on Thundera. She had many expensive jewels, but the most precious among them was a brooch made from a single large sapphire mounted on silver. This brooch was so valuable that she never wore it and kept it in her jewelry case to be admired.

The Tiger woman had a daughter called Tigarina. More than anything, Tigarina wanted to wear the beautiful sapphire brooch just once, but her mother would never let her. "It's too precious," the mother would say whenever Tigarina asked to be allowed to try the brooch on. "It was a gift to one of our ancestors and it has been in our family ever since. I can't risk you losing it."

With that, she would close up her jewelry case and she and Tigarina would go and find something else to do.

The years passed and Tigarina grew into a beautiful young Tiger maiden. When her fifteenth birthday came around, her mother presented her with a box and bade her open it. Tigarina did so and there, nestling on a bed of black velvet, she saw the brooch she had so admired when she was a little girl. "I think you're old enough to have it now," her mother said, as Tigarina thanked her happily.

"I'll treasure it always," the Tiger maiden promised.

A few days later, a herald came to the house where Tigarina and her mother lived, bearing a message. That message was an invitation, asking Tigarina to come to a grand ball which was being held by a family who were so wealthy that their influence was second only to that of the Thundercats. This family, who were White Tiger Thunderians, had a son only a little older than Tigarina, who had been looking for a bride. So far, he had had no luck, so his parents decided to hold a ball and invite maidens from every wealthy family on Thundera.

When she heard this, Tigarina sent for her seamstress and told her to make her a gown of the richest, whitest satin on Thundera. It would have an overskirt of sheer material, which would be embroidered all over in dark blue silk thread. And Tigarina's only jewelry would be the sapphire brooch her mother had given her.

"You've been in your box too long," she would say to the brooch, holding it against herself without actually pinning it on. "It's time someone saw your beauty."

Soon, the night of the ball arrived. Dressed in her finery, Tigarina travelled to the grand house where the White Tiger youth and his family lived. And, pinned to her bodice, she wore the

beautiful sapphire brooch, placed so that it caught the light whenever she moved. She could hardly wait until she arrived at the ball and everyone could see the beauty of her brooch.

But, unknown to her, the clasp on the brooch was faulty. This was one of the reasons her mother had never worn it, but she had never told Tigarina. So, as the Tiger maiden made her way towards the grand house, she had no way of knowing that her precious brooch, the one she had admired since she was a little girl, would fall off before the night was over.

Meanwhile, she entered the grand house and prepared to descend the stairs into the ballroom. As she stood at the top of the stairs, she gazed round at the ballroom filled with Thunderians of all breeds, all dressed in their finest clothes, and felt her heart pounding with excitement. And, at the bottom of the stairs, the White Tiger youth saw her and thought she was the most beautiful maiden on Thundera.

"May I have this dance?" he asked her, as she reached the bottom step.

"I would be honoured," she replied, taking his hand. "What is your name, by the way?"

"Silver," said the White Tiger youth. "And yours?"

"Tigarina."

"Tigarina," Silver repeated. "A lovely name for a lovely lady."

And so Silver and Tigarina danced with each other, both enjoying themselves more than they ever had before. But, in all the excitement, Tigarina did not notice that her brooch was coming unfastened. Then, during a fast dance, she heard something fall to the floor with a clatter, but she thought nothing of it. In fact, she was so caught up in the dancing, that she didn't notice her brooch had fallen off until the dance ended.

"Tigarina," said Silver, "where's your brooch?"

She looked down at herself and gasped. Her precious brooch was gone! It must have fallen off while she was dancing. And she had admired it so much. She could have wept, but she didn't because she knew that would not help her find her brooch. "It must have fallen off," was all she said. "We'll have to find it. I can't go home without it."

Silver agreed with her. "Attention, everybody," he said to the other guests. "This young Tiger Maiden has lost her brooch. But, if we all work together, we should be able to find it."

So all the party guests got down on the floor and began to look for Tigarina's lost brooch. The ballroom was very big, so it could take a long time to actually find the brooch, but they all wanted to help. Even Tigarina and Silver joined in the search, checking the floor for a tiny gleam of blue. But they found nothing and Tigarina began to wish she hadn't worn the brooch. What would her mother say when she found out she had lost it? If only she had checked the clasp was working!

Just then, however, she heard a shout from across the room. "I've got it!" She hurried over to see Silver's mother holding something in her hand - the beautiful sapphire brooch. "I found it under one of the tables," Silver's mother explained, handing the brooch to Tigarina. "The clasp must have come undone and it fell off while you were dancing." And she showed Tigarina that the clasp on the brooch was faulty. "You really should get it mended," she added.

"I will," said Tigarina. "And thanks."

For the rest of the ball, Tigarina left the brooch on a table near Silver's mother. She did not want to risk losing it again. So she spent the evening dancing with Silver, who, by the time the ball was drawing to a close, thought she was the most beautiful maiden on Thundera. As the clock struck midnight, signalling the end of the ball, he dropped to his knees and asked for Tigarina's hand in marriage.

"Of course I will," said Tigarina, kissing his hand.

And, one year later, Silver and Tigarina were married. The clasp on the beautiful sapphire brooch had been mended and it sparkled at Tigarina's breast as she stood beside her new husband.