

Lover Scorned (Part One)

By J.T.G

Tygra slowly opened his eyes; and then promptly shut them again as he winced. The back of his head was sending shooting pains all through his body. He reflexively placed his hand to the back of his head, feeling for blood. He found it. The fur in the back of his head was all matted with dried blood. He tenderly felt around, until he came across the wound. It was sticky and still very sensitive. Tygra removed his hand and took in his surroundings. He was in a small holding cell. The cell was filthy and smelt of a nauseating mix of blood, sweat, and urine. Tygra tried to stand up, but quickly sat back down as the effort made him extremely light headed and nauseous. *Ok, so it's evident I may have a concussion*, Tygra thought. He closed his eyes and tried to remember how he came to be here. The whole situation was blurry, but after a while he started to remember?

The sun just started to rise over the distant mountains to the east of Cat's Lair. It looked like it was going to be a very hot, sunny day. Tygra was sitting at the main console in the control room, running routine diagnostic tests on the equipment, when Cheetara entered.

"Good morning Tygra." She greeted him, while stretching.

"Morning Tara." Tygra returned with a smile. He always seemed to smile more when Cheetara was around.

"I'm going over to the Warrior Maiden's Treetop Kingdom. Nayda said that she would like to join me on my morning run, of course I'll have to run normal speed. I don't mind though, the company will be nice. Anyway, our run will take us near the Berbil Village towards the end. Do we need anything that you can think of?"

"Hmmm, no I can't think of anything. You might want to ask Snarf though; he would know better than me."

"Well, I actually don't have time to go looking for him. Will you ask him when you see him? Then you can call me on the com system and let me know."

"Sure" Tygra nodded, "soon as I see him."

"Thanks Tygra. You're so good to me. Bye." Cheetara said, kissing him on the top of the head. Tygra thanked Jaga she didn't have a clear view of his face, because he knew he must be blushing.

"Uh, sure, no problem. Bye." With that, Cheetara exited the control room and in a flash of gold was on her way. Tygra extended the bridge and watched as she sped away. Tygra dammed his shyness. He wondered why he could not bring himself to simply let Cheetara know how he felt. Fear of rejection? *Coward! he thought to himself with disdain.* The truth was that he loved her, and that he had been in love with her for a long time now. He just never had the guts to do something about it. *You'd better do*

something soon Tygra, or you?ll loose your chance for good. He silently warned himself. Tygra shook his head and then returned to his diagnostics. It was not more than 5 minutes, when Snarf came bouncing into the control room.

?Oh, hello Tygra. I was looking for Wilykat. Have you seen him?? Snarf inquired.

?No, not this morning Snarf. Why??

?Well, he didn?t clean his room like I asked him to. He said that he had plans, but I told him not until his room was clean. It would appear he decided to go anyway, Snarf Snarf. He?s been getting a lot more rebellious lately. I wonder if something is bothering him??

?I wouldn?t worry too much Snarf. He is, after all, around that age when things start to change.?

?Maybe. Still, I think I?ll have a talk with him when he returns.?

?Ha, ha, ha, ha?just don?t be too hard on him Snarf. If you want him to open up, then anger is not the way to go at him. By the way, when Cheetara left for her run this morning, she asked me if you needed anything from the Berbil Village. She and Nayda will be going through the village toward the end of their run.?

?Oh, hmmm? YES! I have run out of Candy fruit. I wanted to make Candy Fruit pie tonight for dessert. I was going to head over there this afternoon, but if Cheetara is willing to do it that saves me a trip. Thank her for me will you?? With that, Snarf exited, still muttering something about Wilykat.

?He is so cute when he?s embarrassed! He didn?t think I caught it, but when I kissed his head this morning, he was blushing almost as red as Snarf?s fur! To tell you the truth, Nayda, his shyness was one of the first things that attracted me to him.? Cheetara explained.

?Among other things.? Nayda said with a wink.

?Careful Nayda, I may blush next.? Cheetara said with a smirk.

?He is very cute though isn?t he? So then ?Tara, why haven?t you made a move? I mean you?ve been telling me how you feel about him forever now?why not tell him??

?I don?t know. Fear of rejection? I know it sounds ridiculous but??

?It does! I can see no good reason why he would reject you! He would have to be an idiot!?

?No. Nayda, you don?t understand. He was in a relationship on ThunDERa. She hurt him very deeply. That?s why I think that Tygra is wary of getting involved again. He gave her his world and she threw it

away like garbage to be discarded. I can still tell when he thinks of her. He looks so profoundly sad. I just want to run to him and hug him, let him know it will be alright. I would really like to scratch that wench's eyes out for what she put him through!?

?I see. However, if you don't bring it up to him, you'll never know if he's ready. Has he shown even the slightest hint that he might feel the way you do??

?Sometimes. There are times when I think he wants to say something to me, then loses his nerve. Also, I think that he thinks I'm interested in Lion-O.?

?HA! That's laughable, considering some of the things you've told me.?

?I know. Lion-O's a good man, but he's a little on the immature side. I know that it's not his fault that he was suddenly all grown up and didn't get to be a kid, but I could never see myself in a relationship with him. It's ALWAYS been Tygra. We are very close, and have been since before Lion-O was ever in the picture. I mean, I've known Tygra and Panthro since we were cubs. Lion-O's more like a little brother to me.?

?Then talk to Tygra. Let him know. If nothing else, he'll know how you feel. You can't wait for him to come forward, he's too shy.?

?I know I??

"Cheetara?, Come in Cheetara." Tygra's voice could be heard coming from Cheetara's Staff.

?Speak of the handsome devil.? Nayda whispered. Cheetara motioned her to be silent. Nayda shot her an evil grin.

?Yes Tygra, I'm here. What's up??

"Snarf said that he needs Candy fruit. Can you get it for him?"

?Sure, no problem.? Cheetara replied.

?We're actually right around the Village area now.? Added Nayda.

"Hello Nayda. How are you?"

?Fine Tygra, and you??

"I'm well, thank you."

?Well, I think I'm going to be heading back home now. Thanks for the run ?Tara. Bye Tygra.? As she backed away, Nayda mouthed the words ?Talk to him?.

?See you later Nayda, thanks for the company.? Cheetara said with a nod and smile to Nayda.

"Bye Nayda. See you when you get home ?Tara. Be careful."

?Will do Tygra. Umm, when I get there?we have to talk, ok??

"? Sure. Is something the matter?"

?Don?t worry, I?ll see you when I get home. Cheetara out.?

Tygra looked at the clock in his console. 7:15 am. He had been sitting in this seat since long before dawn. He needed to get up and stretch. Tygra got up and put his manuals away, and then called Panthro to come relieve him of watch duty. He then went to the weapons room to retrieve his whip, and headed out for a walk. He decided that he?d better stay close to the Lair, because Cheetara wanted to talk with him. *I wonder what could be so important? She didn?t sound upset.* Tygra wrestled with the idea of maybe telling Cheetara his feelings for her. There would probably never be a better time. It would be a private talk, with no interruptions. Almost immediately after this thought was finished, the doubt came rushing in. *No! Tygra, you?re going to do this! You?re an adult for Jaga?s sake, not a cub!* He silently scolded himself. He was about to turn and walk the other direction, when he caught a flash out of the corner of his eye. It had come from the top of the left side of mountain surrounding Cat?s lair. Twirling his whip around himself, Tygra disappeared in a brilliant blue light. He quickly jumped up the boulders to investigate. To his surprise, he found nothing. He scanned the area again and then sniffed the air. Someone had been there; a female someone. He was about to take a closer look, when he heard commotion down below. When he peered over the edge, he saw that Kat had returned, and Snarf had been waiting for him. They seemed to be in a heated argument. *Uh oh, looks like Snarf didn?t heed my advice earlier. Better get down there to mediate.* He took one last look around, and decided he would most definitely be back to find their guest. When Tygra made it to the ground, all he heard was Wilykat yelling.

?You?re Lion-O?s nursemaid Snarf, NOT MINE! Just leave me alone! I don?t have to explain myself to you, you fat old fur ball!? Wilykat snapped, the destroyed look on Snarf?s face having no effect on him.

?I-I?m?I?m sorry Wilykat. I won?t bother you again. Snarf, Snarf.? Snarf said as his eyes started to well with tears. He turned and walked away without looking back.

?HEY! Watch your mouth cub! Have some respect! What?s gotten into you?? Tygra said, picking Wilykat up by the scruff of his neck and placing him down on the steps.

?Nothing, nothing, nothing! Just get away from me!?

?I?m sorry Kat, something is obviously getting to you. I can?t just let it go. Especially with the behavior

it's producing out of you. All Snarf asked was that you clean your room before you leave. He never said that you couldn't carry out your plans. What was the big deal??

?I had stuff to do. My room could wait. It's as simple as that.?

?Really? And just what, or whom, was so important that it couldn't wait the 15 minutes it would have taken you to clean your room??

?I won't tell you.?

?Why? Clearly something is not right about the situation if you feel you have to hide.?

?Who's hiding? I just don't think it's any of your business.? Wilykat shot back with a sneer.

?Are you hearing yourself Kat? This isn't you. You can't see that something is wrong??

?No! You have the problem, not me!?

?Who is it Wilykat?? Tygra demanded.

?Tygra I? YOU KNOW WHO IT IS!? Wilykat screamed, and he threw one of his smoke bombs to the ground. He was gone before Tygra could react. When the smoke cleared, Tygra quickly searched the immediate area for signs of which way Wilykat could have gone. Nothing. The cub was good, Tygra had to give him that much. *?I know who it is?? What on ThunDERa was that all about? Maybe I should find Kit, she might have some insight. First things first though.* Tygra thought, looking back up the mountain.

He climbed back up to the spot he had been investigating before. The scent still lingered there, but it was faint. Tygra realized that the scent was familiar to him, but could not place it. He sniffed again, this time taking in as much as he could. ?Great Jaga! It can't be! Not her!? Tygra bolted down the mountain and almost knocked Cheetara over.

?Tygra?! What's the matter??

?I'm sorry ?Tara, are you ok??

?Yes, I'm fine. But are you ok? You look terrified.?

?I have to find Wilykat now! I think that he's in trouble. At least, if what I'm thinking is correct. It would explain the mood swings he's been having the last week. If she has him.?

?Whoa! Tygra, slow down. If who has him? What are you talking about??

?A little while ago, I went for a walk around the perimeter of the Lair. I saw something up on the top of the mountain surrounding the Lair. I got up there and didn't find anything. Someone had been there

though, a female according to the scent left.?

?That?s impossible. No one can get within 800 feet of the Lair on all sides, without tripping the alarms. So how could someone have been up there without us knowing about it??

?Anyone who?s not a Thunderian would trip the alarms Cheetara. You didn?t let me finish. I went back up there after a fight with Wilykat and investigated again. I didn?t get it right away but... I knew I recognized the scent. After all, how could I forget the scent of my own mate??

?Tygra that?s? it can?t be. Can it? Mara??

?There is no mistake. It?s her. This also makes what Wilykat said to me make sense. When I asked who he was involved with lately, he got very angry and screamed that I knew who it was. I get it now. I don?t know if you?ve noticed lately, because I didn?t until Snarf brought it up. But Wilykat has been acting very snappy and angry lately. I just saw him reduce Snarf to tears. This is Mara?s doing.?

?How? What makes you think that she has something to do with Kat?s behavior??

?You know that the Tiger clans on ThunDERa had exceptional mental abilities right? Well those abilities don?t always manifest the same way. Some get the power to create very life-like illusions, like me. Others get the ability to send and receive thoughts. Then there are the empathy who can both sense and impose emotions on others. The empathy are scarce, very rare. Mara is an empath, and she has honed her ability to absolute perfection. That?s what she?s doing to Kat, making him angrier every time she sees him.?

?But why? Even if all of this is true, why would she do this??

?I don?t really know. Maybe she resents the fact that we escaped ThunDERa and left her behind? That?s not the way it happened, but that?s probably how she sees it. I think she wants to make us pay for a wrong she feels we?ve done her, and she?s using Kat as a tool. I can?t believe this. I figured that she perished when ThunDERa exploded. Now she?s here on Third Earth.?

?We need to find Wilykat fast, before she can do him any further harm. Tygra, I..I?m sorry.? Cheetara?s eyes began to fill up with tears. She felt so bad for Tygra. Not only was he going to come face to face with a very painful part of his past?he would possibly have to batter her as well. Cheetara made a silent vow then. She would protect Tygra at any cost. This was the man she loved, and anyone trying to harm him would have to come through her first. At this point Tygra broke down. Cheetara could practically hear his heart breaking all over again. She gathered him into her arms and they sank to the ground. She cradled him with one arm and stroked the fur on his head with the other. She tried to be reassuring, tried to make him believe it would be alright. Not an easy task, when she herself could only see this ending in disaster. She noticed the wind started to pick up. The leaves that were on the ground were now whipping wildly through the air. A bad storm was coming. Soon after, the rain started. It poured so heavily that they were soaked within seconds. ?Come on Tygra, we have to get going.?

?Wait. ?Tara there?s something I have to tell you.? Cheetara turned towards the tiger and smiled sweetly up at him.

?Shhh, I know.? She whispered, placing her fingers on his lips. With that Tygra bent down and gently pressed his lips to hers. She returned the kiss and pulled him closer to her. The lovers were so wrapped up in each other, they didn?t notice the uninvited guest who had joined them.

?I might have know I?d find you in that hussy?s arms! You don?t waste time do you?? Startled, Tygra and Cheetara turned quickly in the direction of the voice. Tygra?s face immediately drained of all color.

?Mara?? Standing before them was a strikingly beautiful Tiger Thunderian. She had a long light orange and white mane that was whipping in the wind, despite the rain. She wore a light blue and violet body suit with a dark blue jacket over it, and an over sized belt hanging around her waste. Her boots were light blue with dark blue trim. They were similar to Tygra?s in design, with the exception that they went all the way up to her thighs. Sheathed in her boots were a pair of gold sai, which she started to remove.

?What?s the matter Tygra? No hello kiss? Are you even going to ask me how I?ve been? Or maybe you?d like to pick your jaw up off the ground to start??

?Mara I?I don?t?How are you here? How did you get off of ThunDERa??

?Now, see, those would be the wrong questions to ask. But, I guess I could enlighten you, for old times sake. The day that you and your fellow Thundercats escaped our doomed planet, I watched your ship take off with tears in my eyes. These were not tears of sorrow, rather they were tears of anger and hatred. You left me behind to die! I, who at one point, meant more to you than your own life! I swore then that now matter how or when, I would take my revenge!?

?That?s not true! That?s not how it happened at all. I searched for you that day. I searched every place I could think of twice. I couldn?t find you, and I was running out of time.?

?LIAR!? Mara hissed.

?No, he?s telling the truth! He almost didn?t catch up with us.? Cheetara said, secretly removing her staff from her arm guard.

?Shut your mouth Cheetara! I?ll get to you. I had been pinned beneath some debris, I think I even lost consciousness briefly. When I awoke the first thing I saw was the flagship lifting off. So I lay there, contemplating the after life. Then something happened. My anger over my abandonment took over. I decided I wasn?t going to die, not until I made you pay. Finding new strength, I removed the debris that held me and was free. As for how I got off ThunDERa? I bet you didn?t know that Claudus had ensured a safe route to a waiting escape pod did you? I did. I had helped him map it out. I hoped that I wasn?t too late. It turned out I was in luck. I found Claudus? body half way down the tunnel, apparently dead of a heart attack. I said a short prayer for him, and then continued to the pod. Now here I am, and the rest is history. You know, I gotta tell you? that young Kat? He has major hostility towards you older Cats. Even

before I started messing with his anger. I wouldn't worry too much about it though. Believe me when I tell you, Wilykat is the least of your problems! With that, Mara flipped the Sai in her hands so that the blades were out, and then jumped at Cheetara.

'Are you kidding?' Cheetara asked with a smirk, and then used her super speed to easily avoid the attack. Cheetara extended her staff to the 6ft mark, the ideal length for fighting. She re-gripped the staff and swung at Mara with a reverse strike. Mara easily used her right sai to deflect the blow, and countered with the butt of her left sai. Cheetara dodged then pivoted to her right, re-gripping the staff again as she turned. She raised the staff and attempted to bring it down in an overhead strike. Mara quickly flipped out the sai in an 'X' block, catching the staff. She then gave Cheetara a kick to her exposed ribs. The kick hit with such force that it sent Cheetara reeling backward and into a tree. Cheetara was on her hands and knees trying to catch her breath, the impact with the tree having knocked the wind out of her. She clutched her ribs and glared up at Mara.

'You see? You are less than nothing. A mighty Thundercat, and I beat you in under a minute.'

'You haven't beaten me yet wench!' Cheetara hissed.

'Stop it! Both of you! There is no need for this!' Tygra yelled, getting in between them.

'Don't worry hon, I'll be with you in a second. Your turn is coming.'

'I won't let you hurt her Mara. I don't want to fight you, but I won't let you continue this.'

'Oh really? And just how are you going to stop me?' Mara's eyes started to glow, and then she continued speaking. 'You can't hurt me, you love me. You love me more than anything in your world right now.' Tygra stopped and looked at her, then he shook his head.

'Come now, Mara. You know your powers don't work on me. My mental defenses are too strong. Now I'm going to ask you one more time, please stop.' Tygra's plea was cut painfully short as he was struck in the back of the head. He fell to the ground in a heap. Cheetara looked on in shock as she made out the figure who had stepped from behind him.

'Of course I knew my powers wouldn't affect you, but they made for a very good distraction.'

'Guess a good old fashioned rock to the head is still very effective.' Said Wilykat as he stepped forward.

'WILYKAT! How could you?!' Cheetara shrieked as she struggled back to her feet.

'Oh, do please, SHUT UP!' Mara said, throwing out a strong back kick. The kick caught Cheetara directly in the face and knocked her out cold.. 'Now, dear boy, you must tell me what the fascinating rope is made of. How did you get it to support your weight like that and lift you up?'

'I don't know what it's made of. I just will it to do stuff, and it does. No big deal.' Wilykat said,

shrugging his shoulders. ?What are we gonna do with these two??

?Leave her here to rot for all I care. But we are bringing him with us.?

?She?ll alert the others when she comes to. They?ll come for him.?

?Let them! I can handle them. Besides, I have you my little wild card. You can fill me in on their attack strategies. They?ll never know what hit them.? Mara?s eyes started to glow as she continued. ?Then you will also have your most hated enemies destroyed.?

?Yeah, destroyed.? Wilykat muttered, his eyes glowing as well?.

?Mara!? Tygra said as he opened his eyes. Back in the cell again. But where exactly was he? There were no windows in his prison. Was he even still on Third Earth? Tygra got very worried as he looked through the bars of the cell door to the other empty cells. *Cheetara! What happened to her? Jaga please let her be ok!* ?First order of business is to get out of here. Scratch that, first order of business is to stop the room from spinning.? Tygra felt the wound again and winced. *Wonder who hit me anyway? Couldn?t have been one of the mutants, Mara hates them as much as she appears to hate us now. Is she working with Lunatacs? No, I?ve been in the dungeon of Sky-Tomb before, this isn?t it. That leave one? Mumm-Ra!* ?But for all her anger now, Mara isn?t evil. I can?t see her allying with anyone so blatantly evil as Mumm-Ra.? Tygra said aloud.

?You?d be surprised What desperation and a healthy want for revenge can bring about.? Tygra quickly turned to the door and saw Mara standing in the main entrance way to the dungeon. ?Who is Mumm-Ra??

?He is the Thundercat?s greatest and most powerful enemy here on Third-Earth. Mara is it necessary to resort to all of this? I?m sure if you just took the time to listen..?

?Listen to what? You telling me again how you searched so hard for me before leaving me to die? Save it! I don?t believe that for a second. You were bitter because I found new love on ThunDERa. You couldn?t handle the fact that I left you. I firmly believe that leaving me on ThunDERa was your way of getting back at me.?

?That?s ridiculous! Yes, it hurt me deeply when you left, but I would never stoop as far as revenge; much less revenge that would lead to your death. It took a while but I eventually accepted that I had lost you. I gave up hope of ever getting you back and for a very long while gave up on relationships all together.?

?Yeah, it sure looks that way. Oh, wait.. If forgot about your whore.?

?That?s not fair! You were allowed to start over with someone new, but I can?t? Cheetara was there for me when you destroyed my heart She helped me move on. I fell in love with her quite some time ago. I never acted on it though. Apparently she has also felt the same for a long time. Today, what you saw, was the first time either of us acted on those feelings.?

?Of course. Like I?d believe anything out of your mouth. It?s been fun Tyg, really. I?m going to go find this Mumm-Ra person, see if I can?t get him to help me dispose of all your friends. I believe I?ll start with Cheetara.

?Your problem is with me! You have me now! Why can?t you leave them out of it??

?Ah, but I want to destroy you without killing you. By killing your friends, I accomplish this perfectly. I want to make you feel as I did that day.. Completely and utterly alone, without hope. You see, I know you Tyg. You don?t care what happens to you, as long as you can save someone else. You have always been about self sacrifice. That being the case, I can only truly destroy you by destroying those you love most. Besides, for what you?ve done, simply taking your life is too light a punishment.

?? when I woke they were gone. She?s got him! Lion-O we have to go after them. I don?t know how long she?ll keep him alive, there is no time to waste. By Jaga, if she hurts them I?ll??

?Ok Cheetara, calm down. I understand. Of course we?ll go after Tygra and Wilykat. Before we can do that though, we need to get a clue as to where they went. It?s a shame that I was out catching fish with Kit behind the Lair?I left the sword in the chamber, so I never got it?s warning of Thundercats in danger. I?ll go and get it and call upon sight beyond sight..maybe I can see where she?s taken him. In the meantime, it?s been our experience that the inhabitants of Third Earth take special notice when something or someone out of the ordinary appears. You go and see if anyone has seen anything suspicious or new lately, maybe you?ll have some luck.?

?Fine, but we have to move quickly. I don?t know how much longer he?ll have left. I can?t loose him now Lion-O, we?ve just declared our love for one another.? Cheetara said, starting to cry. She didn?t notice the hurt expression that crossed Lion-O?s face when she made that comment. He quickly regained composure, not wanting Cheetara to see it. He put his arms around her in a comforting embrace. Knowing then that it was as far as he was going to get with her.

?I swear to you on my father Cheetara, we will get him back.?

To be continued?