Gift from the Stars

By Azmom

Chapter 2

Linda sat at her desk sipping her cup of coffee and regarded the stack of adoption forms in front of her. In the background could be heard soft music coming from a music storage unit that Panthro had given her for her last birthday. She had just spent the better part of an hour filling out these papers and she had barely made a dent in them. However, she understood why the Adoption Agency Department on New Thundera needed so much information. They didn't want to give a child to a family only to yank him or her out of the family later.

They asked so many questions: What was their yearly income, where did they live, what kind of work did they do, what position did they hold? With Bengali these questions were easy to answer but for her, it was a bit tricky. When they asked for their dates of birth, she had answered for Bengali, The 12th day of Yenat in the year 1543 of the Medorna age. Simple enough, the agency would understand immediately, but how did she explain that she had been born on November 11th, 1981 A.D. of the First Earth Age? Linda was sure that she would get plenty of calls on that one. She sincerely hoped that Bengali's status as a Thundercat would be a big plus on their side.

"Hey Beautiful," Bengali bent down and placed a kiss on Linda's neck, causing her to shiver pleasantly. He looked over her shoulder at the stack of forms. "What are you doing in here?"

"Paperwork." she answered him. "I swear, these people want to know everything about us. I wouldn't be surprised if they ask for my grandmother's bank account information next!"

Bengali laughed, his resulting warm breath caressing her neck. Linda lost herself for a minute in the pleasant sensations it produced. She turned to her mate and kissed him passionately, then asked, "Are you in here just to tease me, Tiger Man?"

Bengali laughed again then stood up and helped Linda out of her chair. "Actually, I have a surprise for you. Do you think the forms can wait for a few days?"

Linda eyed her husband suspiciously. "What are you up to?"

Bengali took his wife in his arms and began a slow waltz with her, keeping time with the music. "Do you remember a few weeks ago when I was late getting to Cats Lair?"

She nodded. "You mean the day Dr. Voren called with the results, right?"

"That's the one. I never told you why I was late, did I?"

Linda shook her head. "No, with everything that happened that day, it completely slipped my mind. Why were you late?"

He spun her around then continued, "I have a friend who has a cabin on the shores of Crystal Lake. I was late because I was working out details with him to use his cabin this week." He dipped her and asked, "How would you like a small vacation?"

Linda came up and smiled at him. "That sounds great. What made you think of it?"

"Well, the past year has been hard on both of us and I knew that no matter what the doctor said, you would need some time away. I thought it would be a nice surprise." He smiled at her. "So what do you think?"

She put her arms behind his neck and gazed lovingly into his eyes. "I think you are too good to me."

He bent down and kissed her. "Nothing's too good for you, Beautiful."

"I think if I hear any more of this sweet stuff, I'm going to be sick!" Linda and Bengali looked over and saw WilyKat standing in their doorway and laughed.

"Hey Kat, what are you doing here?" Linda asked the young man.

"Bengali asked me to help you out with the cabin." WilyKat addressed the older man, "The Thunder Strike is loaded with the supplies you asked for Bengali. All that's left to load is the clothes you guys are going to bring."

Linda grinned at her husband seductively, one eyebrow cocked. "Who says we're going to need clothes?"

WilyKat turned from the doorway in disgust. "That was WAAAYYY too much information!" Laughter followed him down the hallway.

A few hours later, Linda found herself in one of the most beautiful places she had ever been to. Crystal Lake lived up to it's name, the water was so clear you could almost see to the bottom, and the location of the cabin couldn't be more perfect in Linda's mind. It was nestled next to a chain of snow-capped mountains near an ancient pine forest. In the distance she saw a small family of deer drinking from the lake while over head a pair of eagles soared in a hunting pattern. Linda was glad to see these majestic birds had thrived.

Back during First Earth, these proud symbols of her country's greatness had come close to extinction. However, a small group of environmentalist had took it upon themselves to lobby

congress to create strict laws against the killing of these birds and had provided a protective area for the eagles. Over the course of 20 years, the birds population had risen from less than 50,000 to over 100,000. When she had disappeared from that time frame, they had been talking about taking the Bald Eagle off the Endangered Species list.(1)

The cabin itself was perfect for their little vacation. It was completely made in the old log cabin style with a railed wooden porch going all the way around the cabin. On one side of the front door were two rocking chairs, on the other side was a rocking porch swing made for two, which gave a spectacular view of the lake and mountains. The roof of the cabin was a mossy green, not so much because of vegetation but because the tile was flat ceramic made in a way she had never seen before. It seemed to be textured to look like moss, and Linda thought that this kind of tile would cause havoc during a rain storm, but when she investigated the inside, she noticed that there were no signs of warping or water stains.

The inside was just as breathtaking as the outside. A massive fireplace laid claim to almost one whole wall, promising to bring warmth throughout the entire cabin. A stove and built in oven was connected to the fireplace with an array of pots, skillets, and other cooking utensils hanging over it on a chained hooking device. Linda saw that the device was connected to a pulley system, allowing her to raise or lower it as she wished. The furniture found inside was all simple, but expertly made. There was a small round table with four chairs, and plush sofa, and another rocking chair next to the fireplace.

The cabin had two bedrooms, one larger than the other. Both had good sized beds with hand made coverlets and bed sheets, hand carved dressers, and in the larger room there could be found a beautifully crafted cedar chest. On all the windows hung lace curtains and a crocheted cloth covered the kitchen table, suggesting a feminine touch.

She walked outside, heading toward the Thunder Strike and saw Bengali talking to a Thundarian man in front of the cabin. The man was in his late forties and kind of reminded her of a grizzly bear; he had a thick beard and mustache which covered half of his face and was dressed in numerous furs. He had a young girl standing next to him who was his complete opposite. She was about 14 or 15, just showing the first signs of womanhood. She was wearing a light dress and had caught the attention of WilyKat. The poor boy was almost tripping over his feet as he brought the supplies into the cabin.

Bengali walked over to Linda. "Well, the cabin is ours for the next week. My friend Greyene said we could use it anytime we want."

Linda nodded distractedly, silently laughing at the younger Thundercat's attempts to gain the young lady's attention. Every time he walked past her, he strutted and tried to flex his developing muscles. "That's good. Who is the girl with him?"

Bengali looked in her direction, and laughed when he saw what WilyKat was doing. "That's his daughter, Nilam."

At that moment WilyKat, paying more attention to the girl than to what he was doing, ran right into the cabin's porch, dropping everything in his hands. Nilam let out a small cry and ran to the downed Thundarian. Both Linda and Bengali stifled their laughter so as not to embarrass the young man and continued watching as the small drama unfolded. Bengali knew that WilyKat wasn't hurt very much, but he was playing it up, basking in the girl's tender administrations. Before long, the two young people were laughing and holding hands.

The girl's father walked over to Bengali and Linda. "Is that boy always so clumsy? I thought he was a Thundercat?"

Bengali laughed. "Actually, he's usually quite nimble, it's just that your daughter's beauty has knocked him for a loop, so to speak."

Hmm! Greyene looked at WilyKat with a protective father's objective gaze. "I'm going to have to keep my eye on that young man."

Linda hid a smile, remembering how her own dad had acted when she had brought home potential suitors. She hoped that WilyKat would fare better with Greyene than some of her own beaus had with Rich.

"Nilam!" her father bellowed, gain the girl's attention. "Time to go, sweetie. Say good bye to your friend there."

WilyKat walked Nilam to her waiting father where she gave him a tentative kiss on the cheek. WilyKat watched as Greyene and Nilam rode out of sight, a dazed look on his face.

"Hey Kat" Bengali called out to the young man, but the teenager was still watching the departing vehicle. Bengali tried again. "Kat!" Still nothing. "WILYKAT!!!" The young Thundarian finally came out of his trance. "Huh?"

"Are you going to help us with these supplies or what?" asked Bengali as he and Linda picked up a few boxes.

"Oh, yeah, sorry about that." He grinned sheepishly as he ran to take his dropped supplies into the cabin.

Linda started laughing as they headed inside.

"What is so funny?" asked her mate.

"WilyKat just reminded me of a joke I heard a long time ago." she replied. Bengali's cocked eyebrow let her know to continue. She waited until WilyKat was out of ear shot then told her husband the joke. "There is a joke that says that God gave men two heads and only enough blood to run one at a time. WilyKat just demonstrated that today."

Bengali looked confused as he placed his box on a near by table. "Two heads, I'm not sure I understand."

Linda smiled. "Well, you have one head here," she said, running her hand through his hair, then trailed her fingers down his chest and farther, "and one down..."

"Whoa! Ok, I get it!" Bengali laughed, jumping back. Linda giggled while her spouse tried to adjust his pants. "You've got a bit of an evil streak in you Beautiful, you know that?"

She laughed as she headed to the door. "I've never heard you complain before."

Bengali walked up behind her and folded his arms around her, the result of her playful antics evident on her backside. "Who's complaining?" he said, nuzzling her neck, "I was just stating a fact."

From outside, WilyKat was heard yelling, "Hey, you two can do that mushy stuff later! We need to get the supplies unloaded so I can get the Thunder Strike home before dark. Panthro will kill me if I'm late!"

Soon all the supplies were in the cabin and Bengali and Linda waved good bye to WilyKat as he headed towards Cats Lair in the Thunder Strike. He or one of the other Thundercats would return at the end of the week to pick them up. Finally, the couple were alone.

"I'm starving." Linda said. "Let's see what I can whip up."

Bengali pulled his wife in close, one hand pressing her body intimately against his own, the other hand tenderly caressing her face. "I'm hungry too, but not for food." He kissed her deeply, a promise of pleasure and desire. However, his stomach had other ideas as it growled, announcing its empty state.

Linda gave her husband a bemused smirk. "Not hungry for food, hmm?"

"Well," he grinned, "Perhaps I could eat something first." They both laughed as they headed into the cabin.