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Note:

This story takes place in an Alternate Universe set immediately after the end of 'The Return' miniseries published by Wildstorm comics.

Embracing Dark Desires.

By

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Chapter 2

WilyKit was furious. She had been working hard for the last five days. Doing all that Lion-O said, helping Cheetara, Tygra, Panthro and even Snarf fixing things around Cat's Lair. She hated it. She couldn't even understand why she had to help them, why she had to lower herself to these menial labours. The recently freed Thunderians should be happy to get a chance at working here, rebuilding the castle of their lord. But no! Lion-O had refused to have them working here. When she asked him why, he only told her that the people were busy cleaning the cities and making them more comfortable. It irritated her to no end that the only help Lion-O accepted were the materials and spare parts they were using in the never ending repairs. Other thing that irritated her was the fact that even when she had played nice and ate the garbage they brought to the Lair and intended to pass as food and even agreed to wear the red and blue leotard Cheetara gave her, Lion-O had still not given her a Thundercat insignia and he wouldn't tell her why. Fortunately, WilyKit didn't care much about that symbol anymore and was much more frustrated by the lack of people helping with the repairs. The only good thing for her was that the power in the Lair was back on.

"I can't believe all this!" WilyKit muttered angrily as she scrubbed the walls of the great meeting hall with a rag, trying to clean them enough for the new paint to be applied, "The slaves…" She stopped herself and sighed, the Thunderians were no longer slaves, she sometimes forgot it, "The people are dying to work for us and Lion-O refuses? What kind of a fantasy world is he living in?"

"A better one than before." Said Tygra, who entered the halls casually, "The fact that Lion-O is the lord doesn't mean he can use people any way he wants."

"You heard what I said?" WilyKit asked, her anger rising again. Tygra had been hovering around her ever since she rejoined the team. Trying to listen to whatever she said out loud when she thought she was alone or spying on her every move; as if she was a criminal! WilyKit was tired of it, really tired.

"Only what you said about people dying to work here." He replied, "And that thing about Lion-O living in a fantasy world, was there more?" Tygra then walked to her.

"What?" She asked, immediately on the defensive, "Are you going to lecture me?"

Tygra shook his head, "No, you're not a girl anymore, WilyKit. You said so yourself."

"Then what is it?"

"I'm just wondering, why are you so angry all the time?"

"I'm not angry!"

"You are now. Anger is practically flowing out of you."

The young female crossed her arms and took a deep breath, managing somehow to calm herself, "There, better?"

"A little." Tygra offered a smile, "I know it's frustrating that we have to do it all by ourselves. I tried to convince Lion-O to get us some help, but he says we were able to build the Cat's Lair on Third Earth with little to no help, and he's confident we can do it again. I think he's right, we have to set an example, WilyKit. We have to show our fellow Thunderians that we can rebuild our world if we put enough effort into it."

"Set an example, how? None of them ever comes here." She said, "It's been five days since Mumm-Ra's defeat and I have yet to see one single Thunderian in Cat's lair!"

"Yes, there's a reason for that."

"And that reason is?"

"There's no need to show them Cat's lair until it's repaired, is it?"

"I assume that's why Lion-O goes to the cities everyday?"

"You could say that. Besides, the people need to see their leader, to make sure he's back and ready to help them." Tygra explained.

"You went to the city with Lion-O and Panthro yesterday." WilyKit said, her voice acquiring an accusing tone, "When will I get to go? I'm the only one who's never gone to see what's happening there!"

"I'm afraid you still can't go, and I can't tell you why." Tygra said, "Lion-O's orders. I'm sorry, but I'm sure he has his reasons."

"Yeah, orders from our lord." WilyKit grumbled, "I'm getting tired of being here! I want to go to the city too!"

"Your turn will come soon." This time it was Cheetara who answered, the female Thundercat had been searching for Tygra and when she heard the tone in WilyKit's voice, decided to intervene, "You just have to be patient."

WilyKit sighed, of all the Thundercats, Cheetara was the only one she still respected enough to not talk back to, "Fine, I will." She said, "I was wondering if I could go out?"

Tygra was about to say something, but Cheetara cut him off, "Of course WilyKit, go out, we'll finish the work here."

"Thank you Cheetara, you're the best!" WilyKit smiled a truly honest smile and dashed out of the room. She wanted to go to the forest and look for her brother. She hoped he still was near Cat's Lair.

"Why did you do that?" Tygra asked, "She has to finish her work here first."

"She was about to yell at you and leave without permission anyway." Cheetara said, "I thought you had already noticed that."

Tygra crossed his arms, slightly frustrated, "Yes… you're right."

"You should be more careful when you talk to her." The female Thundercat advised.

"I know, and I'm sorry Cheetara it's just that I can't understand her anymore. WilyKit has changed so much… it's as if she's a completely different person."

"Mumm-Ra raised her from childhood into young womanhood." The cheetah said with a sad, regretful voice, "I would expect that to change anyone."

"Do you think she blames us for it?"

Cheetara's face filled with concern, "No, I don't think she does. I just hope she understands it was the only thing we could do to spare her and Wilykat from working on the thundrainium mines…" The woman made a short pause to clear her thoughts on the matter, "What I know for sure is that she's hurting, Tygra. Not just for her brother's death, there's more, much more she's not telling us… I only hope she opens up to one of us soon."

"I too hope she does." Tygra said and looked out the window, "I really do."

WilyKit made her way into the forest and started her search, her eyes scanning everything around her. She spent hours anxiously searching for any trace of her brother's presence. She was sure WilyKat was in the woods, she could practically feel him in here. Nearing the sunset, a tired WilyKit sat on a rock to rest. Wiping the seat from her forehead, the young female had to admit that this situation reminded her of the first time she had been sent on a mission by Mum-Ra: a tracking mission. Closing her eyes, she slid to the grassy ground and rested her back on the rock, allowing the memory to fill her mind.

Mumm-Ra stood before his cauldron, WilYKit and WilyKat behind him. Both twins were currently handcuffed with gold bracelets and chains the wizard held tightly. With a wave of his hand, Mumm-Ra sparked some life into the waters of the cauldron and with another gesture, called both twins to his side. By now, the twins are almost adults. WilyKat has grown into a handsome young man, with a muscular, yet slim body. WilyKit on the other hand has developed into an extremely attractive and beautiful young woman. Silently, the twins approach their master's side and stare at the cauldron.

"*Look, children." Mumm-Ra ordered, "Three fugitives from the mines have somehow made their way into the mountains and as you can see, they are building some sort of weapon using materials they stole."*

"*It looks like an explosive device." WilyKat offered, "Sire, why aren't the mutants there already?"*

"*My brother is right my lord." WilyKit said, "This has happened in the past and the mutants always captured the fugitive slaves before they could do anything."*

"*Slithe and his men are idiots." Mumm-Ra answered, "They couldn't trap this Thunderians if their lives depended on it!"*

"*What makes them so special, master?" WilyKat asked.*

"*Two of them are former soldiers and the third was an engineer." The mummy explained, "They are smart enough to avoid the mutants for as long as they want."*

The twins waited for the wizard to continue.

"*That's why I need one of you to help the stinking mutants." Mumm-Ra explained, "I can trust you have been trained well enough to capture the three fugitives."*

"*Will both of us go?" WilyKit asked.*

The ever-living laughed, "Of course not my dear kitten! Only one of you will go!"

"*Then let me be the one, my lord." WilyKat offered.*

The mummy looked at the young man and smiled, "Not today my boy. This assignment is something more suited to your sister's abilities."

"*Me?" WilyKit was shocked, "But master… do you really think I can* do this?"

"*You've been well taught my dear." Mumm-Ra said, "I trust you will find those fugitives and bring them justice just fine. Don't worry, your brother and I will be watching your progress from right here."*

WilyKit felt a mix of revulsion and pride. Revulsion for what she would have to do to warrant her brother's safety: chase and condemn three Thunderians to their grave. However, she admitted she didn't truly care much about them; her main concern was to do a good job to keep her brother safe from her master's wrath. And yes, she felt pride, because she was sent into a solo mission for the master first. It was sick and she knew it but she couldn't help it, she always loved to have her skills recognized.

The chains binding her opened and fell to the floor with a loud clank, "Go." Mumm-Ra ordered, "JackalMan and a group of other mutants are waiting for you. They will be under your orders. Don't fail me kitten, all fugitives must be punished."

"*I won't fail you master, I swear."*

"*Are you sure those fugitives are here?" Jackalman asked. The canine was in a very foul mood; being ordered around by a former Thundercat was a horrible thing for him.*

"*Yes, I am sure. Now shut up and follow me!" WilyKit ordered. The young girl was enjoying this immensely. She was used to order slaves around every time she was in the cities with her master and sometimes she even got maidens sent to the pyramid just for her, but being able to give orders and even insult the mutants freely was great fun.*

Grumbling, JackalMan ordered his canine soldiers to follow the young girl's lead. By midnight, they found a small cave in the mountains.

"*They're in there." WilyKit announced, "Go and do your job, you stinky dogs!"*

"*We're not dogs!" JackalMan complained.*

WilyKit grabbed the mutant by the neck, being now tall enough to do it and squeezed hard, letting him feel her claws, "I will call you dogs if I want to, or perhaps you want to experience what Mumm-Ra will do to you if he sees you disobeying me?"

The jackal gulped, "No, it's my mistake… so they're inside the cave? We'll go see."

It didn't take long after JackalMan and his group entered the cave for the sound of battle to reach her ears. WilyKit tried to ignore it. She knew what was happening inside the cavern and was glad she wasn't there to see it. Trying to calm herself, she attempted to enjoy the night wind flowing over her bare shoulders and legs. It was a mistake, since suddenly, a pair of hands took advantage of her distraction and grabbed her by her wrists and turned her around to use her as a shield. She got a glimpse of her attacker, it was the old engineer and he appeared to be wounded.

"*They killed my friends." The engineer whispered, "They said you brought them here! I should have known that you or your brother would do just that, you traitorous cubs!"*

WilyKat felt a surge of anger inside her. What did this old man know about her and her brother's situation? Nothing! He had no right to tell her these things!

"Now you little whore, don't move! I'm using you as my ticket out of here!"

Right then, JackalMan and the other mutants rushed out of the cave, all of them had blood on their hands and pointy teeth. They froze at the scene.

"Do something you idiots!" WilyKit ordered, if the engineer escaped, her brother would surely die the next day. That thought made her angrier still, letting this old man go would condemn her brother to death! No, she would never allow that to happen, never!

"They can't hurt Mumm-Ra's pretty toy, can they?" The engineer, a man from the tiger clan, said, "Good, with you as my hostage, I will even get transport off the planet!"

"Let me go!" WilyKit ordered, "Let me go now!"

"I don't think so little minx." He said and struggled to drag her away from the still frozen mutants, "You're coming with me! I'll teach you how to be a Thunderian again!"

WilyKit growled, the fear of being separated from her brother and him dying because of the engineer turned into anger and hate, and the insults only added fuel to the fire.

"What is it? Will you miss Mumm-Ra? That dried up un-dead bastard?" The old Thunderian spat, "For Claudis sake! You're even worse garbage than Grune!"

WilyKit's world turned red with anger after she heard those words, "I'm not like Grune and I'm not garbage!" Twisting, the young female got free of her captor and stared at him with fire red eyes, "You are garbage, you miserable slave!" Blind with rage, Kit scratched angrily at the man's face, damaging it greatly. When the engineer fell on his knees, his hands covering his mutilated face as he squirmed in pain, she realized what she'd just done. All the anger and hate left her then, "I'm…sorry…" She stuttered, but after seeing only disgust in the man's eyes, she couldn't say anything else. Trembling fiercely, WilyKit walked away. Her mission was done. She didn't have to stay here.

"Curse you traitor!" The old engineer shouted. He tried to curse her again, but JackalMan and his men fell on him, biting and punching and hitting him with maces until he was nothing more than a bloody mess.

WilyKit entered the black Pyramid with slow, tired steps. She wasn't looking forward to meeting Mumm-Ra and listening to him praising her for what she'd done. The only thing that kept her going was the knowledge that her brother was safe.

"You did a good job." Mumm-Ra told her when she entered the cauldron room, "Now go and rest, I will have no need for you until tomorrow. Your reward is in your room."

"Thank you, my lord." She said, bowing a little, "My brother?"

"He's preparing you a bath." The wizard said as he entered her sarcophagus.

Once in her room, WilyKit gasped at the reward, it was a magnificent red dress decorated with diamonds and lined with gold. She had learned to appreciate gifts like those, and this was the best yet. Yes, she liked it, but it didn't help her feel better.

"I'm sorry for what you had to do today." WilyKat said, entering the room.

"I murdered those men." She whispered, "I let them die and I… even hated the old engineer for a moment… when he almost escaped using me as a shield… I truly hated him… because if he escaped… Mumm-Ra would kill you." WilyKit said and realizing she was crying, dried her tears with her new dress.

WilyKat hugged her then, "Don't cry… there was nothing you could do. I… I would have done the same thing. We're all we have left, sister. We're the only ones who can understand each other. For me, keeping you alive it's the only thing that matters."

Kit breathed her brother's essence and relaxed, "It's all that matters to me, too."

"…Mumm-Ra told me he was proud of you." WilyKat whispered, "I'm sorry."

"I don't care he's proud!" She yelled, "I don't believe he cares for me or you!"

It was then that a thought entered her mind and pulled her out of her memories. If her brother was alive, it meant Mumm-Ra didn't kill him. Why?

"Why did he let WilyKat live?" She asked to the trees around her, "I don't understand."

But she did. The mummy didn't want to see WilyKat dead, just in the same way he had tried to keep her from suffering when Lion-O and the other Thundercats entered the Black Pyramid. Mumm-Ra cared for them. It was a strange thought, to say the least. For whatever twisted reason he had, the ancient wizard cared for her and her twin enough to spare their lives and set them free.

"Does it mean he was telling me the truth?" She wondered, remembering the moments before his battle with the Thundercats, when Mumm-Ra told her that she wouldn't be able to say that her master didn't love her, "Damn it!… Mumm-Ra… loves me? And he also cares for my brother? That's just sick! But if…"

The young female abandoned that thought as she heard someone approaching. She stood up and waited. Surprisingly, Lion-O was the one who arrived.

"I've been looking for you." The young lord announced, "We have to talk."

WilyKit eyed him carefully, "About what?"

"Tygra is worried about you. He thinks that…"

"That I'm angry all the time?" WilyKit interrupted, "Well, I wouldn't be if he stopped spying on me!"

"He only wants to help you." Lion-O said, "We all want to help you."

"I don't need help!" She responded, once again feeling the anger rising inside her, "All I need is my space! Tygra has been on my back so much that I can't help but feel nervous all the time! He's driving me insane!"

"Calm down WilyKit, I'm not accusing you of anything! Listen, if that's the way you feel…" Lion-o paused for a second, "I'll talk to Tygra as well then."

"Would you do that for me?"

"I promise." Lion-O smiled, glad that WilyKit had calmed down, "It seems you like to be in this forest, why?"

Kit tensed a little; she couldn't afford to have Lion-O here. She wouldn't be able to search for her twin if he decided that the forest was a nice place to be.

"Is there a reason you like it?" He asked.

"Tygra doesn't follow me here." She said quickly, "It's also quiet and I can remember my brother without anyone interrupting or bothering me."

"Your brother… he wasn't…" Lion-O stopped there and for a second it seemed as if he didn't know what to say. In the end, he sighed and offered a small smile, "…I'm sorry. I guess it still hurts… You should try to only remember the good things you did with him, it'll keep the pain away."

"I know." She assured, pleased that Lion-O didn't care about the forest. Still, she was not very happy by the way Lion-O just reacted after she mentioned WilyKat.

"Anyway, let's go back to the Lair! I have a surprise for you."

"I hope it's a good one." Saying this, WilyKit followed the young lord.

Not too long after, inside Cat's Lair, Lion-O led the way until he and WilyKit were in the meeting hall. It looked just like before, if a little bit cleaner and the rest of the team was there. Tygra stood near the windows, Panthro and Cheetara stood together on the other side of the room and Snarf was standing right in front of her.

"There's something for you on the table." Said Lion-O, "Go on and take it, it's yours."

Kit noticed a cloth wrapping something and hesitantly moved to reach for it. Very slowly, she unwrapped it to reveal a Thundercat insignia. WilyKit couldn't help but feel slightly amused. She didn't care about the emblem or its meaning anymore, but she couldn't deny that she had been vaguely curious about when would she get a new one.

"This marks your return as a real Thundercat!" Exclaimed Lion-O, "I'm sorry we didn't give you an insignia before now, but it's a detail that has just been fixed, right?"

WilyKit pressed the insignia against her belt and smiled to Lion-O and the others once the symbol was attached, "I think so. Thank you."

"And there's more, in five days you will come with me and Panthro to the city!" The young leader added, "I'm sure that you'll love the changes being made there."

"I'm sure I will." She replied with interest, "I appreciate it."

"Hey, everybody!" Snarf interrupted, "I thought we were going to have a party, Snarf!"

Lion-O laughed, "Yes, of course!"

And then, Snarf pulled out a hidden box from under the table. WilyKit was gladly surprised to see that inside of it was finally some half-decent food and drinks.

Hours later…

Resting on the blankets that still were her bed, WilyKit recalled the party and admitted that it had been fun. Looking at Tygra and Panthro and Cheetara joking and laughing with Lion-O brought memories of good times past. The small festivity really took her all the way back to the days on Third Earth, back when she had been only a carefree cub flying around on her space board along with her… brother. WilyKat, her brother, whom the other Thundercats couldn't or possibly didn't want to save! Her brother they now assumed to be dead!

"He's not! I know he's alive and I'm going to find him!" She whispered, wondering then what the others would say if she ever showed up in Cat's lair with WilyKat at her side. They probably wouldn't like it much. After all, WilyKat was the one who delivered them to Mumm-Ra and if the way Lion-O acted when she mentioned her brother earlier that day was an indication of what the other Thundercats felt about WilyKat, then that was a meeting they surely never wanted to happen.

"I guess they probably hate him and think he's a traitor… But he only did that for me, to make sure I could be free… he wasn't doing anything bad! They shouldn't hate him for it! I…" Confused about her feelings on the situation, WilyKit pushed her thoughts aside and focused on sleeping. After a couple of hours turning around in her blankets, she was finally able to fall into a restless dream plagued by nightmares she wouldn't remember the next day.

Somewhere, in a farm close to Cat's Lair…

WilyKat approached the house as silently as he could. He'd found a cave in the forest that he planned to use as a temporal residence until he found something better. So far the cave was the best he could hope for: it was large enough and had no humidity, it was hidden under a large tree and he could use it as a hideout just the same. But he still needed supplies, which he intended to obtain from the people living in this farmhouse. The fact he liked his cave didn't mean he was happy living in it. Not when only just over a week ago, he'd been living in the most important place on the planet, Mumm-Ra's black pyramid. He actually missed it. Mumm-Ra's library of ancient magic scrolls, (which was only a small fragment of what he still kept in Third Earth) and his own room where what he missed the most.

There was something, however, that he missed even more: his sister. He felt the all too familiar rage when he recalled her living with the Thundercats. He really wanted her to be happy, but over the past five days, he'd convinced himself that living with those traitors who only thought about themselves wouldn't do WilyKit any good. Unfortunately, he couldn't do anything about it. He wanted to get his sister out of Cat's Lair, but didn't have enough power to even try. If he attempted it, Lion-O and the others would probably fight him. All he could do was to stare at her from the distance every time she entered the forest to look for him. He hated that. He wanted to go to his sister, to comfort her and to hold her in his arms and tell her everything would be alright if they were together as they always had. But it was impossible. She was probably being indoctrinated into the code again, and little by little she would stop going into the forest and… no! WilyKat couldn't believe that. His sister would never give up on him, she would never do that!

"And because of it, I have to make sure that I survive." He muttered, looking carefully at the farmhouse in front of him. Only one light on the second floor was still on. Sitting there, hiding on the tall grass, made him remember the first time he had to go on a mission for Mumm-Ra.

"*Come here, my boy." Mumm-Ra called. The ever-living was standing in front of his cauldron and was very interested in something, "Come here and watch this."*

WilyKat did as he was told and gazed into the always burbling waters. There, he saw Bengali working very hard on something.

"*That filthy, fugitive Thunderian blacksmith is working on a sword he hopes will be able to terminate me."*

"*He can't defeat you, sire." WilyKat said, "That man is just having a stupid idea."*

"*Indeed." Mumm-Ra agreed, "But he shouldn't be having them in the first place."*

"*What will you do about it, master?"*

"*Your sister did a great job a month ago, hunting down those fugitives." The mummy said, "I wonder if you're wiling to try doing something like that for me?"*

"A mission?" WilyKat stared at Mumm-Ra with an open mouth. "Do you think I'm ready to serve you in such a manner, my lord? Bengali is a Thundercat, I couldn't…"

"You are ready." The wizard interrupted, "I've trained you well enough. You have seen what the Thundercat's lies did, you know they will lie to accomplish everything, and I know you will not listen to this Thundercat's lies. You can do what I'm about to ask of you."

"And what will it be?"

"Find Bengali's hideout and destroy his sword. Also, you will capture him so he can be taken to the mines for punishment." Mumm-Ra said, "You have potential, boy. I've taught you how to use it already and I believe that potential will help you today."

"Do you really think so, master?"

"I'm sure of it." The mummy smiled cruelly, "Don't fail me. Bengali must be punished."

"I won't master, I will succeed." WilyKat assured.

"Good, now go my son. I'll have your sister here and we'll watch your moves closely."

WilyKat arrived in only a few hours to the old, ravaged hut Bengali was hiding in. As far as he knew, the house had a basement the young blacksmith spent most of his time working in. Kat considered it a waste of time. No matter what Bengali was doing, it would not be enough to defeat Mumm-Ra; but he had to admire his skill and his dedication, Bengali had been a fugitive for almost two years now, and he'd managed to stay hidden from Mumm-Ra's power and escape the Mutant raids. Not an easy feat. But this was a game he should never have started. Sighing, WilyKat steeled his resolve and entered the old hut as stealthy as he could, trying hard not to think about Bengali's sad fate, which was probably a very slow and painful death.

WilyKat suspected something was wrong when he made his way easily into the basement and didn't find Bengali there. The sound of the door closing behind his back confirmed it. Kat turned to see Bengali standing in front of him.

"You've grown." The white tiger said, staring at Kat appreciatively, "You're almost as tall as me."

"Tell me what you have been doing here." WilyKat demanded, "My master told me you're constructing some type of sword."

"So, you now call Mumm-Ra master?" Bengali raised his hammer threateningly, "Since when?"

"Since the moment you and the other Thundercats abandoned me and my sister in his hands!" WilyKat responded, anger starting to surge inside him, "Now answer my question, Bengali! What are you doing here?"

"Woah! Quite resentful aren't we?" Bengali asked, "I thought you would be eager to join me in this, don't you want to see Mumm-Ra destroyed?"

"Lord Mumm-Ra cannot die." WilyKat responded, "You should know that already."

"But you must want to get revenge on him. He's turned you into a slave!"

"Revenge on Mumm-Ra, why?" WilyKat said, "He's given me and my sister all we ever needed, he's looked after us, he's done so much for us! He's done more for us than you traitorous Thundercats ever did!"

Bengali actually growled at that, when he saw it was one of the twins entering his hideout, he had expected things to go different, "I see the wizard did a good job feeding you all that bullshit against us."

"Bullshit?" Kat was now allowing the anger to fill him, "It's the truth!"

"Not it's not, not by a long shot, kid." Bengali shook his head, "It seems you really need some re-education."

"Are you going to fight me?"

"I will if I have to." Bengali said dangerously, "But I prefer to keep things from getting messy, my work here is too important to be ruined in a fight."

WilyKat frowned. He was starting to get tired of Bengali's words. He was going to tell him all those lies about the code. Lies he had no interest in listening. All he cared about was his sister's life, and the only way to preserve her life was to succeed in his mission.

"You don't have to obey Mumm-Ra, if you help me, we can get the others free and together we can bring Lion-O out of the Book of Omens and…"

"Shut up!" WilyKat shouted, "I'm not here to listen to your empty promises! I'm sorry Bengali, but I'm here to take you back to the mines!"

"So, it's going to be like that?" The white tiger asked, clearly disappointed, "I should have known you're not a Thundercat anymore, if you side with Mumm-Ra you're nothing but a miserable traitor!" Saying this, Bengali raised his Hammer and charged at Kat, intending on knocking him out so he could drill some sense into him later.

WilyKat expected this, after all, Bengali had always been very impulsive. He didn't want to fight him, he really didn't. All he wanted was to destroy his sword and take him back to the mines. But now he had to fight him. For his sister's safety, he had to. He waited for the first attack, a low lunge from the hammer and he jumped over it, landing a few steps away.

"You're faster." The tiger said.

"And you're slower. Getting old?" Kat said, Mumm-Ra once told him that mocking opponents in a fight was a good way to win the upper hand. He hoped it worked.

"Why you little…!" Bengali growled, clearly losing his focus.

"It's enough! I told you I only want to take you back to the mines!"

"I'd rather die!"

"I can't grant you that wish." WilyKat replied as he reached for a small crystal he kept under his belt, "I'm only here to capture you!"

"Just try it kid!" Bengali exclaimed, raising his hammer again, "Nobody will take me back there, not even Mumm-Ra!"

WilyKat dodged the next swipe of the hammer and taking advantage of Bengali's frustration, he was able to throw the crystal at him.

"What the…!" That was all Bengali could say. When the crystal hit him, he found himself encased in a green, hard substance he could not get free of.

"Don't struggle." WilyKat advised, "Your air supply will last longer that way." The young man reached for the communicator he carried in his belt and called the mutants.

"You were trying to duplicate the eye of Thundera?" WilyKat asked, holding an unfinished clone of the Thundercat's holy sword in his hand. Kat was waiting for the arrival of the mutants who would take the blacksmith fugitive back to the mines. Bengali, being encased inside the green substance, could not answer him.

"It's a very good job, but I wonder how were you planning to give it power? Perhaps you were only going to use it to lure my master into a trap?" It felt strange for WilyKat to call Mumm-Ra that, but for all purposes, Mumm-Ra was his master now.

"It's a shame, but I'll have to destroy this." Kat walked to the furnace and without further thought, tossed to sword into the flames, "I'm sorry, but it's your own fault." He said as he watched how the fire consumed the blade.

It was until late that night that WilyKat returned to the Black Pyramid, and like his sister before him he had no desire of hearing Mumm-Ra's praising. Once inside the cauldron room, WilyKat waited until the mummy, who was busy watching the waters of his cauldron, decided to regard him.

"You did well today, my son." Mumm-Ra said at last, "You'll find your reward in your quarters. I hope you like it; it's the ancient scroll you wanted to read."

"Thank you, my lord." WilyKat bowed, "What about my sister?"

"*She is safe and already asleep." The mummy answered.*

Bowing again, WilyKat walked out of the cauldron room. His sister was safe! Hearing that was all he needed to get rid of the feeling of guilt born from sending Bengali to his death; as long as he could keep his sister safe, he didn't care about anything else.

The memory ended and WilyKat focused again on the task at hand: get food, power cells and other supplies he would need to survive in the forest. Rushing on light feet, the young man approached the house and was able to enter it in absolute silence.

Once inside, it didn't take him long to find what he needed and even more. WilyKat stored power cells, canned food, drinks, oil and a communicator among other things inside a sack and frowned. This was stealing. The thought entered his mind just then. He'd never had to pay for anything before. Being Mumm-Ra's bodyguard granted him the power to grab all he wanted for free.

"But not anymore." He whispered. After a moment, WilyKat removed his right arm bracelet and placed it on the kitchen's table. It was made of gold, and it was more than enough to pay for the things he'd taken. Content with the trade, he prepared to leave.

"Don't move."

Kat turned to see a middle aged Thunderian, of the puma clan it seemed, pointing a laser gun at him. The man appeared to be furious.

"Well, if it's 'lord' WilyKat." The puma said as he recognized the one who entered his house uninvited, "How the mighty have fallen, right? Now that Mumm-Ra's gone you ended up as nothing but a thief!"

"The bracelet I left in the table should be enough to pay for what I'm taking, and even more." WilyKat said, slightly offended, "There's no need to call me thief!"

The man snorted, "I don't want that garbage; it's tainted by that bastard who found it funny to turn us into slaves! Now drop my things and get the hell out of my house!"

"I need them." WilyKat said, "But the bracelet is really valuable, you don't have to keep it if you don't want it, you can sell it or something."

"I don't think you understand." The man said, "Drop my things and leave my house or I'll shoot you right were you stand."

"Why are you doing this?" WilyKat asked, "I'm giving you something that's worth hundreds of times what I'm taking, why are you refusing?"

"I don't like being robbed, especially not by traitors to the Thundercats like you!"

"I didn't betray them!" WilyKat yelled, "They betrayed me!"

"That's not what I heard." The farmer said, "Snarf told us you took lord Lion-O straight into a trap!"

Snarf. WilyKat growled, that bigmouthed rat! He should have expected that. After all the useless Snarfs couldn't keep their mouths shut.

"I heard 'lady' WilyKit returned to the Thundercats." The farmer continued, he was feeling good, torturing WilyKat with words was almost as good for him as hitting Mumm-Ra with a shovel, "But I bet your whore of a sister only did it to try and keep her privileges, didn't she?"

"My sister is not what you said. Take it back." WilyKat hissed.

"I'm telling you the truth, it hurts, huh?" The puma asked, "You know what, traitor? I just changed my mind; I'm not going to just let you go. I'm taking you to the Thundercats first thing tomorrow. Come here, I'll have to tie you down!"

"No, you will not." WilyKat grumbled, there was no way in hell he would be taken to the Thundercats, "You're going to take back what you say about my sister and let me go or I'll have to hurt you."

"Have you noticed I'm the one holding the gun?" The farmer asked.

"It won't help you if I decide to hurt you. Now do what I say or you will regret it."

The farmer laughed, "I think not. Your sister IS a slut, I hope Lord Lion-O realizes she's just a climber and throws her out! You and she deserve it for letting us all rot under Mumm-Ra's rule for years! Weren't you Thundercats? Why didn't you do anything for all of us?"

WilyKat tensed and realized he was about to jump at the man, he took a deep breath and managed to calm down. He shouldn't do it. It wasn't the man's fault to still believe in the lies of the Thundercats. But what he said about his sister… he did deserve punishment for it, and he would deliver it. Slowly, he searched in his belt until he found the last of his small crystals. He was about to toss it when a flash grazed his shoulder and pain ran wild all over his arm.

"That was just a warning." The farmer said, "Move again and the next one will be a full hit on your chest."

WilyKat saw red. The pain caused by the shot and the humiliation along with the insults on his sister turned into anger and hate. It happened in a matter of seconds. A furious WilyKat moved with an incredible speed and slashed at the man's neck with his sharp claws. The farmer, too scared to do anything to defend himself from the demon with red glowing eyes could only watch as his throat was practically sliced open. Grunting, the man fell to the floor and died.

"Husband?"

WilyKat looked in front of him. He saw a woman and her two daughters, the younger, a little girl, was already crying. The older, a young adult about his age; stared at him with only hate in her eyes. The mother seemed to be in shock.

And then it happened.

The mother yelled.

The younger daughter cried.

The older daughter cursed him and rushed to grab her father's gun.

And WilyKat, realization finally hitting him, grabbed the things he stole and jumped out of a window. He didn't stop until he disappeared into the shadows of the night.

The story continues in chapter 3.

Notes:

If you didn't read 'The Return' miniseries, here's a quick recap:

Lion-O entered the Book of Omens for an undetermined (five to ten years it seems) period of time. Mumm-Ra gains control over the ancient spirits of evil (It's not explained how he did it though) and defeats the Thundercats, conquering New Thundera in the process.

Mumm-Ra sends all the Thundercats into slavery. He keeps the twins and raises them from childhood to young adulthood, keeping them as his personal servants.

When Lion-O comes out of the Book of Omens, he frees the other Thundercats. Together, they defeat the Mutants and Mumm-Ra as well. In the end, WilyKat is thought to be dead and a traitor (of sorts) and WilyKit returns with the team.