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The concept of Jusenkyou is borrowed from the manga Ranma 1/2

ThunderCats: How the Other Half Lives

Part One: The Lady of the ThunderCats

By Knight Writer

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The vial of cursed water hovered above the bubbling cauldron, slowly revolving in place by the spell Mumm-Ra had cast to summon it from his vast stores of mystical oddities which he kept stored deep in the recesses of his vile pyramid. The Ever Living studied it with a critical eye as he pondered his latest plan to destroy his hated enemies.

May you live in interesting times. Mumm-Ra, above all others, knew how powerful a curse that ancient expression was. This water, he knew, bore that exact malignancy in its clear volume. But, how interesting?

That was the problem. Mumm-Ra was unfamiliar with far eastern magics, especially such ancient curses as what now floated before his undead gaze. The source of this water was long since dried and as such, he had nothing to use for research into what this liquid could inflict. Though he hated to think it, Mumm-Ra had no clue as to what it would do to his most hated enemy.

"Even so..." he muttered into the eternal gloom of the Black Pyramid. "At this point, any option is viable." The ThunderCats had not only increased their number by three, they had constructed a new stronghold to provide early warning against the Lunataks whom he'd had the Mutants revive.

Those freaks were to be his ace-in-the-hole against the Thunderians and that damned Eye of Thundera. Even so, they proved no more effective than Slythe and his band of useless assbags in bringing the ThunderCats low.

It's a desperate gamble, Mumm-Ra thought as he beheld the ThunderTank rolling toward the Berbil Village in the depths of his cauldron. His gaze locked on the noble form of Lion-O, his intended target of this mysterious curse. Nailing him with it would be simple enough, but what would it do?

There was only one way to find out.

"Ancient Spirits of Evil. Transform this ancient form... to Mumm-Ra, the Ever Living!" The malevolent magic which animated his rotted frame swelled with evil power, swelling dessicated

tissues and shredding bandages as he assumed his energized form. Time to see what ancient evil he had pulled from the depths...

Lion-O relaxed in the forward passenger seat of the ThunderTank as it rumbled past the lush foliage of Third Earth, feeling for once pleased with himself as Lord of the ThunderCats. Three of their countrymen had been rescued just six months ago, the early-warning post - dubbed the Tower of Omens - had recently been finished, and the ThunderCats were better prepared than ever to deal with their enemies.

A certified healer among our ranks, he thought. Pumyra will make life for Tygra a lot easier. Bengali's skills as a blacksmith had already come in handy. After the Lunatak TugMug had broken the blade of the Sword of Omens, it had been the white Tyger who had so easily repaired it. And Lynx-O! His braille board propelled his remaining senses to levels Lion-O could scarcely comprehend.

Satsified with himself, Lion-O breathed in the fresh scent of the forest. The ThunderCats were by no means safe and secure, he wasn't so foolish as to think, but they were at least prepared to deal with their enemies.

"LION-O!"

Panthro brought the ThunderTank to a sudden halt as Mumm-Ra appeared in a flash of ruby energy directly in their path. Irked, Lion-O leapt out of the ThunderTank and drew the Sword of Omens in a brilliant flash.

"I'd ask what you want, Mumm-Ra," he said as the Sword grew to its battle length, "but I'm sure you're not here to discuss the weather."

"No, Lion-O," Mumm-Ra bellowed. "Today is the day I end your reign as Lord of the ThunderCats!"

"We've heard that before," Panthro snarled as he took up a position beside Lion-O. His nunchaku whirled in a lethal pattern as he prepared them for battle.

"Why don't you give up, Mumm-Ra?" Lion-O asked, tense and ready for the ancient demon's first attack. "You know you can't win!"

"Oh, but I can! And it's as easy as drowning a cat!"

At first, Lion-O only noticed that his hair had suddenly become wet. An odd tingling raced across his body, gone as quickly as it had come. He shook his head slightly, confused at Mumm-Ra's gaping stare. Whatever he'd planned, it obviously hadn't come off. Lion-O glanced upward at the overturned vial which hovered just above.

"Is that it?" he asked, at first not noticing the falsetto tone of his voice. "You called me out just to drench me?"

"Lion-O..." The horrified note in Panthro's voice caused him to turn to the now ghostly-white Panther.

"What?! Hey, what's wrong with my voice?" And why do my clothes feel so loose? he asked himself as entirely new sensations began to make themselves known.

"Oh... BWAHAHAHAHA!" Lion-O spun about to see Mumm-Ra doubled over in hysterics. "I... I never *dreamed*...! This is just *too* good!"

"What?! What have you done to me, Mumm-Ra?!"

"Why... HAHAHAHA!... Why don't you look down?!" With that, Mumm-Ra faded from view, his baleful laughter echoing on the breeze.

"What has he done to you...?" Panthro's mortified voice served to ratchet his dread even higher. He noticed how Panthro had grown... taller? No, Lion-O thought, I've shrunk! As such, Lion-O looked down at...

"Huh?!" Where there was once a heavily muscled torso, Lion-O saw beneath his incredibly loose tunic a pair of full, firm... "BREASTS?!"

Panthro couldn't tear his gaze away from Lion-O's new svelte - and definitely female - body. His face had narrowed and softened, wide golden eyes now resting over a pert nose and full lips all of which was framed by his now flowing mane. Hard, bulging muscle had melted into a trim and toned physique on par with Cheetara's. The overall effect was attractive, in a disturbing sort of way.

"Oh, hell," he muttered as Lion-O studied his... her?... new body.

"This... this has gotta be some kind of trick," Lion-O said, her voice wavering. "I just need to check on something."

"Sure," Panhro replied as Lion-O stepped behind a handy tree. What the hell was...

"GREAT JAGA'S BEARD!" Panthro heard Lion-O scream from the cover of a copse of elm. The now-female Lion staggered into view, her face a mask of abject horror. "I don't *believe* this!"

"You okay, Lion-O?" Panthro asked lamely, still numb with shock.

"Do I *look* like I'm okay?!" she shouted back. "What the hell is going on, here?!"

"Calm down," Panthro admonished, hiding the rising tide of horrified fascination at the strange sight of the now-female Lord of the ThunderCats. Water that could change one's *gender*?! What the hell else could Mumm-Ra throw at them? "Let's get back to Cat's Lair and have Pumyra take a look at you."

"Yeah... sure..." Lion-O's voice was small and flat as she spoke. Her now-overlarge boots flopped comically with each flapping step as she strode back to the ThunderTank, and remained on the ground when she leapt in. With a strangled curse, she leaned over the side and retrieved her errant footwear.

This'll knock Pumyra's socks right off, Panthro thought as he engaged the mighty engine and plotted a course back to Cat's Lair.

Mumm-Ra's roaring laughter faded into echoes as he beheld the effects of the strange curse on Lion-O within his cauldron. To *think* that such magics existed! It was enough to make the undead mage believe that the laws of the mystic were truly mad.

"Oh, how he will suffer!" he chortled as Ma-Mutt cocked his head to the side in confusion. "His insufferable male pride just went out the window, my hellish hound! How shall he adjust to his new body?" Mumm-Ra gazed closer at the pretty new Lion-O. "Not very well, I'd think. No, not very well at all. Geh...HEHAHAHAH! Unbelievable!"

It had been a desperate gamble, using that strange water. He had not been certain that its weakened magic would even affect Lion-O, much less that it would be so drastic! A realization came to him, then, which merely raised his hateful elation to new heights. The true magic of that liquid had been to effect a change between one's natural form and an alternate form. Weak as its magic had been, it was possible that Lion-O would not be able to revert to his true body.

"As such, that shapely form *is* his true body now," he muttered as the banages returned to his shrinking frame. Dozens of ways to torment his feminine foe came to his mind, each more fiendish and twisted than the last.

"May you live in interesting times, Lion-O," Mumm-Ra said as he shuffled to his sarcophagus. It's a damn shame I don't have any more of that water, he thought as his back settled against the cold stone and the lid slid over him.

Lion-O stared directly ahead at the rapidly-approaching arcology of Cat's Lair as the ThunderTank streaked across the flat grasslands which stretched before it, refusing to look down at the breasts which were the most telling evidence of her new gender.

It's impossible, she thought. The memory of finding the organ she'd been rather proud of missing stubbornly replayed itself as though to confirm her new womanhood.

I'm a man! she silently screamed when a draft about the legs drew her attention to her bare feet. The boots were far too large, now, and Lion-O hadn't bothered to put them back on after leaping out of them. Her tunic - once snug and tight over rock hard muscle - was now baggy and hanging down in folds of blue fabric, and she did her best to ignore the way the crotch pressed against...

"Damnit..."

"Say something, Lion-O?"

"Nothing," she replied tersely as the ThunderTank crossed the bridge over the chasm to come to a halt in the courtyard. Careful not to expose herself, Lion-O gingerly exited the ThunderTank just as Cheetara exited the Lair and bounded down the steps.

Here we go, Lion-O thought with sudden dread. Having to face the other ThunderCats in her condition was something she somehow hadn't considered, and the prospect was less than thrilling.

"Is something wrong?" Cheetara asked, staring at Lion-O with an eyebrow raised. "Another survivor?" The joy in her voice only made Lion-O wince. "Why is she wearing Lion-O's clothes? And where is he, anyway?"

"You're looking at him," she replied. Cheetara's gaze turned sharp. "Hey, you're not the only one who isn't amused."

"It's true," Panthro said as he joined the pair. "I saw it myself. Mumm-Ra used some weird magic water and you can see the result."

"I don't believe it!" Cheetara exclaimed, wide eyes glued to Lion-O's curvaceous form.

"It's my body, and *I* don't believe it!" she snapped. "Cheetara, call Pumyra. I need to see if this can be reversed."

"In the meantime," Panthro said as they walked toward the main entrance to the Lair, "You should really get some better clothes on."

"That can wait..."

"Lion-O," Cheetara began, much to her annoyance. "That tunic's much too large for you, now. Unless you want to show off what you've got, you really should change."

"Change?!" she barked. "Oh, I think I've had enough change for one day! I'll be in the infirmary."

Cheetara exchanged a worried look with Panthro as Lion-O stomped into the Lair, his tunic flopping as though it were a limp sail.

"He's not taking this well," Panthro said, unknowing that he was in complete agreement with Mumm-Ra's assessment.

"It's not easy being a woman," Cheetara replied. "Is the change only physical?"

"I don't know. I'm an engineer, not a sorcerer. Or a healer." The cool air inside the Lair met their skin as they entered the fortress. "I don't know if it can even be reversed. Mumm-Ra seemed really surprised at what that water did."

"He didn't know what it would do, then? That *is* disturbing."

"Who is that woman wearing..."

"It's Lion-O," Cheetara said, cutting off a bewildered Tygra as he entered the main foyer.

"Call Pumyra," Panthro said. "This is gonna take some explaining."

"I never would have believed it possible," Pumyra said as she studied the bloodwork results. She glanced up from the small data pad at Lion-O and shook her head in disbelief. The Lord of the ThunderCats had replaced his usual tunic with a short violet halter and a pair of brief shorts which Cheetara had loaned him... her... Whatever, she thought. "You could at least cross your legs, Lion-O."

"All right, all right," she groused, grudgingly crossing one shapely leg over the other and clearly uncomfortable about it. "Why do you do that, anyway?"

"You can't be that naieve," Cheetara said, two fingers pinching the bridge of her nose.

"It's to prevent... exposing yourself," Tygra explained, glad to have found a euphemism better than showing the goods.

"I'm wearing something! I..."

"If anyone cares to hear the results," Pumyra began, "I'd be glad to tell you."

"Please," Tygra replied.

"Lion-O's hormone levels - particularly estrogen - pheremones, even skeletal structure is all female. Medically speaking, Lion-O is a healthy young Lioness." Lion-O blew a frustrated breath between her teeth. "From the scans I took, he also possesses a woman's reproductive system as well."

"You mean Lion-O could get *pregnant*?!" Panthro sputtered.

"NO WAY!" the new Lioness shrieked.

"Well, that I won't know until I perform a gyno exam."

"A what exam?!" she asked, eyes wide and nervous.

"Gynecological examination," Pumyra explained. "To check on the health and functionality of your..." No way to sugar-coat it, she thought. "... reproductive organs."

"You mean... uh..." Lion-O gesticualted about her exposed midsection.

"Exactly."

"That doesn't sound too bad," she said, clearly relieved. Pumyra kept her face neutral, and was glad Lion-O didn't see Cheetara roll her eyes.

"We'll leave you to it, then," Tygra said as the other three ThunderCats turned to leave.

"We're... doing this now?" Lion-O asked. The door to the infirmary slid closed, leaving them alone amid the beds and racks of medical scanners.

"Better to do this now. If you please, Lion-O, I need you to remove your shorts."

"I don't think I heard you right," she replied, shaking her head.

"You did." Pumyra kept her voice brisk and business-like. This would be awkward enough without both of them letting their emotions interfere. "Please remove your shorts and lie back on the table by the east wall. Ankles in the stirrups." Lion-O, for her part, eyed the reclined bed with the upraised stirrups with trepidation bordering on real fear. Pumyra could almost hear the click in her brain as things came together for the other woman.

"You," she squeaked, "can *not* expect me to..."

"How else am I going to check up on your new internal organs? I can't see through solid objects, you know."

"Can't you do it with a medical scanner?!"

"The scanner needs to be inserted for an accurate reading."

"Inserted," Lion-O repeated, saying the word as though she had never heard it before.

"I didn't stutter."

"No. I won't do it."

"If I have to, I'll pull rank as Court Physician," Pumyra said. She'd encountered recalcitrant patients before, yet not under such strange circumstances. "If there are problems with your ovaries, your fallopian tubes, uterus, or any other of your new bodily systems, we need to find and treat them now."

"I feel fine," Lion-O said simply. "So to speak, anyway."

"By the time symptoms set in, if there is anything wrong, then treating you will become radically more difficult." Pumyra stepped to the row of drawers beneath a smooth green countertop and selected the one she needed. The medical scanner was merely four inches in length and one in circumference, rounded at the tip and connected to a complex digital readout at its base. "I'd done a few gyno exams on Thundera after I completed my training, and the equipment Tygra designed is actually better than what healers had back then. The procedure's entirely painless, I promise."

"I can handle pain, but there's no *way* you're sticking that... you know... up there!"

"Look," Pumyra said, whirling on her king - or queen as the case may be - and locking eyes with her. "This'll go one of two ways. Either you cooperate, or I have Panthro hold you so I can administer a sedative. This has to be done, whether you like it or not. The health of the Lord of the ThunderCats is my responsibility, you know."

"I know," Lion-O said, clearly not relishing what was to come.

"You needn't worry," Pumyra said gently, "it won't hurt, and it'll only take a few minutes." Lion-O's gaze shifted between her and the table for several moments before a resigned sigh escaped her full lips.

"All right," she said in defeat. "Let's get this over with."

"Uhhhh.... aaaAAAHH!"

"I really wish Tygra would soundproof that door," Cheetara said from her position to its left in wait for Lion-O and Pumyra to emerge as Lion-O's surprised cry sounded from behind. Cheetara recalled her first such examination when she had come of age on Thundera. The experience took a lot of getting used to.

Or not, she thought a few moments later as no other sounds came from the other side of the door. Probably showing his manliness in not crying out, Cheetara thought. Jaga's beard, how were they going to deal with *this*!!

"All done," Pumyra's muted voice said.

"Moons of Thundera, was that an exam or a heavy date?!" Lion-O's louder dulcet tones cried out. Pumyra's reply went unheard as Cheetara doubled over in hysterics. Despite the gravity of the situation, she had to admit Lion-O's reaction to his first gynecological examination was priceless.

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END PART ONE

Notes:

Okay, how's THAT for weirdness? This little bugger's been banging about in my head for a while now, and I was thinking of making it a one-shot. I really don't know how it'll be received, so I'll put it out here to test the waters. Like it? Hate it? Don't really give a damn? Let me know! All constructive criticism will be greatly appreciated. I've got the rest of this mapped out, and I hope to write it out if you like it!