

Familiar's Rage

FPD Case File: Trey Middleton

Loren Weaver

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Stymied

I growled at the General. I respected the man my friend Tor had so affectionately dubbed "the boss-man" but right now, I was just pissed. Tor was out there, in the hands of some very bad bloodsuckers. And I was here, not rescuing her. I had nothing left but an ache where she should be and a horrible rage at those who'd taken her from me. Without Tor, my life was empty, meaningless, and painful. She was the center of my world. Almost literally since I'd become her familiar. Tor was family in a way that even my real brother a century and a half ago hadn't been.

"No, Havoc, not yet," the General told me again. Only Tor's plea that I obey this man kept me in this too-white crypt while she was out there. Only her insistence that I follow his commands if she weren't here imprisoned me in this place. The dawn had trapped that stupid bloodsucker Gabriel, who was supposed to have been watching out for Tor. My inner ball of red-hot rage included him. My inner wolf wanted to tear him to shreds for allowing this to happen when he was supposed to have been protecting her. He had been her guard, and now she'd been kidnapped. Tor was our Alpha, and you never ever let something bad happen to your Alpha. If I'd been with her instead of him, this wouldn't have happened.

Tor doesn't think of herself as my Alpha, but she's all I have. I'm a wolf, I need to either be the Alpha or have one. I can't be the Alpha for Tor, and she makes a wonderful leader. To the other wolves, she's the Ayame and a leader we follow because we love her. But for me, she's more than that. Tor is good and kind in a way that the modern world can't appreciate anymore. When I

was born, things were simpler. You provided for and protected those you loved. People now don't do that. But Tor did. And she'd gained my respect. More than that, she'd gained the respect of my wolf.

"We won't wait forever, General," I warned. My wolf howled agreement in my head. Then I stood and stormed out of the office. I couldn't sit there and watch him anymore. I'd go crazy. So I headed to the gym.

Philip, Jeffery, and Jason were all in the gym waiting for the verdict. They'd been at HQ when we got back, in high temper. Somehow, they'd known Tor was in trouble without being told. She was a true Ayame for them to have sensed that so strongly, but I already knew that. They'd known she was hurting, and all three of them had ridden to her rescue. Since they couldn't locate her by magic the way I could, they'd come to the only place they knew they could find someone who might know where she was. The General hadn't known. But as soon as Hayden drug me through the door, all three of them pounced and demanded to know what had happened to her. None of them had been happy with the revelation.

When I burst into the gym, they were waiting for me. They paced, each one almost ready to burst. If the General didn't let us move soon, he'd have four wild lycanthropes in his headquarters. Not a good plan.

"Well?" demanded Jeffery. All three were within arm's length of me before I'd even gotten to the mats. His normally smiling face was a mask of anger.

"We can't go after her yet," I growled, the anger clear in my voice. "We have to wait for night and see if the suckers demand ransom."

"What if they hurt her?" asked Jason. The fear in his voice was much plainer than in the others. For Philip and Jeffery, like me, anger was first. But also like me, anger covered the fear we all felt. Tor meant something different to each of us, but she was fundamental to our very makeup now. We had her blood running in our veins, and her magic in our souls.

"Of course they will," I growled again. I could feel the wolf's snarl in my human words and could not stop it. "But Tor wants us to obey the General, so we're stuck until night. We told him we

were going after that, orders aside. The bloodsucker will go with us, when he can go outside again."

All of them snarled, in their various animal voices. Wolves growls and a lions roar. So, we waited. Not very patiently.

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I stood, once again, waiting in the General's office. He'd just gotten off the phone with Virgil, head sucker at the club where Tor was snatched. Of course, the bloodsucker claimed to know nothing. He assured the General that "Of course I don't doubt you, sir, but your agent is not here. If she were, I would know."

I knew where Tor was. I could feel her, and she hadn't moved far from where they'd snatched her. Not far enough for her to be in a different building. The fancy leech was lying, and I intended to call him on it. I hate lying bloodsuckers. I hate bloodsuckers, period.

"I can't sanction a raid of the building," the General said. To my surprise, he actually sounded upset about that. I'd thought this was mostly a job to him, but now I realized that he liked Tor in his own way. He was almost affectionate in the way he spoke of her. That surprised me.

"I'm a werewolf," I answered. "And her familiar. We don't need you to sanction anything. We're going after her."

"I can't get you any back up," he said. But it wasn't a denial anymore, but rather a warning. "I can't send the witches in with you without proof that she's really in there."

"If you had it?" the vampire asked. He was only just barely inside the room, standing tall and proud beside the door. As if this weren't his fault. I almost snarled to hear him talking. As if his opinion mattered.

"Then I could send in the whole team," the General said. "Can you get that proof?"

"She drank my blood to seal the blood bond," the vampire said. His face never changed. "I can sense her."

"So can we!" I exploded. My wolf wanted to howl. "We could walk a straight line right to her, if you'd let us."

"It doesn't matter what I want," the General explained patiently. "My hands are tied."

"What proof do you need?" the vampire asked. "The Lady had suspicions of one of the vampires in the club, then she was

taken. Is there not provisions in the human laws for such a situation? Probable cause?"

"No," the General answered. "There isn't. Not without some kind of proof or even suspicion. All Victoria had was circumstantial evidence."

"The Lady acted yestereve with only her suspicions as a guide."

"Victoria is impulsive," the General said. And I heard affection in his voice. "She does ... things ... I can't order."

"I do not need an order from you to deal with the issue," the vampire said. "My Master commanded me to protect her at all costs."

"If he's going, so are we," I said quickly. My wolf crouched in my head. "We're going anyway, but we'll take all the help we can get. Tor's safety comes first. We want her back."

The General sighed, the rubbed a hand over his face. For a long moment, there was no sound in the room. Just the slow beating of my heart and the faster flutter of the humans'. I listened to Hayden's slow breathing and Gage's faster panting. Cole wasn't here, he was in an almost trance looking for traces of Tor.

The door behind me banged open with a loud crash and I whirled. Speak of the devil and he appears. Cole stood in the doorway, panting and out of breath.

"We have to go, now!" he gasped. He looked exhausted. "Tori needs us now!"

"What's happening?" I demanded.

"They know who she is," he panted. "They can't make her like the pain, but they don't care. We have to go now!"

"Let's go!" I demanded. "What are we waiting for?"

"Havoc!" snapped the General. I whirled, about to yell him to stuff whatever protocol he was going to use to trap me here when Tor needed me. "Take one of the smaller guns and two of her backup knives. They'll probably have disarmed her."

"Aye, sir," I answered as I moved back to the door.

"The rest of you, arm up and go with him," the General ordered as I left the room with the others on my heels. Their chorus of agreements followed us into the hall. We were all running towards the armory. "Spike, come here."

Within ten minutes, we were back in the SUV with Cole behind the wheel. Tor called it the Bat-Mobile, and the thought

sent a sharp dagger of pain through my chest. Tor was always making lame jokes like that. It's how she dealt with stress. I wished she was here to make them now.

We made the drive in silence, each of us tense with fear. In his own way, we each owed part of who we were as individuals to Tor. She was the glue that held us together, some more literally than others. She was the heart of our team. I'd never thought of that before. Arrow was supposed to be the boss, but it was Tor who held us together. Tor was our leader, and no rank would change that.

"What's the plan?" Gage asked as we pulled onto the last street before the club.

"Go in, get Tor out," I said.

"That's not a very informative plan," he answered. "Tori would have a better plan. And a joke."

I liked him more for that one little statement. He knew her better than I'd have thought, even after such a short time. This kid might make it. But that was Tor's choice. She had to be here to make it.

"I will be able to lead us to her exact position," the vampire offered.

"So will I," I retorted.

"As senior member of this team in Tori's absence," Hayden cut in. "I will tell you the plan. Jason, Phillip, and Jeffery will spread out in the main area of the club. They will fit in there and will be more likely to sense Tori's approach should they try to move her. I want a clear exit, boys, but no heroics. Got it?"

They grumbled, but none of them protested. Hayden was right, he was Alpha with Tor gone. At least, of the team. But the others would listen, because that's what Tor would want them to do. And it was a good plan, having a clear way out.

"Dead-Eye, you have Gabriel and Maniac, Havoc's with me," he continued. "Havoc, you and I will go fast and hard straight to her. Nothing stops us. Gabriel, Maniac, and Dead-Eye will come behind and ensure that any danger we go through is eliminated."

"Good," I growled. "She's hurting now."

We got out of the SUV and headed for the club. Geronimo.

About The Author

Loren Weaver is an engineer for an oil company as her day job. Although she currently lives in Wyoming, she's a Georgia girl at heart. She loves crazy sports and has her black belt in Tae Kwon Do, master SCUBA diver certificate, and motorcycle license. Although engineering pays the rent, she writes because she loves to hear and to tell a good story.

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