

Bloodied

Blood splashed across her face, stinging her eyes. She blinked her eyes rapidly trying to get the stinging out. She dropped the knife, sticky with blood. The body in front of her still spraying blood with each beat of his heart. This job was messy, it was meant to be, to make a point.

Willow moved to the puddle of blood, and layed down in it, covering her wings with blood. She then moved over to a wall and pressed her wings across the wall, leaving a bloody red wing print on the immaculate white wall. She shuddered as the blood dripped down her back, shaking her wings she moved to the window that was already open. Unable to fly with her wings this wet, she climbed a rope that she had already put on the open window.

She climbed up and moved to the window, letting the wind dry the blood on her wings. Then she heard the alarm blaring. Her intrusion had been found, probably Docwagon coming to help the target she just put a knife in. Knowing his brain was scrambled, she knew there would be little they could do for the meat bag.

There was a bang on the door, sounding like a sledge. She heard the door slam open and she jumped. The air flowing over her body made her feel at peace. Diving down toward the ground, she smiled with joy, her wings drying quickly. Right before plummeting to the ground, she opened her wings, pulling up away from the ground. She flew off to the safety of their van, then the safety of the safe house and a good night sleep.

Willow got back to the van and realized she was the only one in it. The rigger was in his rig, and he let her know that he was ready to move. They were missing two of her Redwings. Both Ive and Rose were missing.

“We will give them five minutes,” a digitized voice sounded over a small speaker in the back of the van.

“Okay,” was all Willow could say. They sat there watching for her friends. If they failed then only one of their targets was killed. That wouldn't do and she knew it. Her target was a manager for Ares Regional office, Rose was supposed to hit the CFO for the region and Ive was to hit the lead Magical designer. All three have been against sapient creatures having the same rights of metahumans. That fact made them ideal targets. High officials who stood in their way. They would have to be taken out, but not tonight.

“Times up.” the digitized voice of Sprocket said, “We gotta go.”

Willow flew back into the back of the van, the door closing behind her and the van started moving. A sadness came across the fairy, she started to sing this hauntingly sad melody. A death dirge. She was done mourning by the time the van arrived at the safe house.

The door opened and she was greeted by a bright light inside the garage attached to the house. A group was waiting for her to arrive, some of which were already done mourning the loss as well.

Willow was greeted by a tall, slender elf with raven hair and a very pale complexion. A silver datajack gleaming on her left temple. Her beauty radiated as her face lit up with a smile. "Willow, welcome back. First I want to congratulate you for a job well done. Secondly, we lost two good soldiers tonight. I've completed her mission, but was caught leaving the building by a drone that took her out quickly."

"Rose, on the other hand, failed to complete her mission. Her target, now warned that he is on our hit list, has gone into hiding." Leslie stated flatly. "I will miss Rose and I've, but we have a job to do. We still need to finish the target. They need to be afraid of what you sapient creatures are capable of." she glanced over to the door as a large sasquatch walked in, and she smiled. Leslie turned back to Willow, "Will you be ready for another target tomorrow? I could possibly move some pixies around to get others here sooner if you need time. Otherwise it is just you for the next few days."

Willow replies in her singsong voice, "I will be ready. I just need some rest now."

"Okay, then go get some sleep. I will track down the target, with Henderson and the others," indicating the sasquatch, a shape shifter, and a naga that just entered the room.

"Yes mam. I will."

The next day, Willow got up and fluttered over to the birdbath that was in her room. She stripped down and started cleaning herself off when the Naga, Slythen, came into the room. He hissed in english, "Sssorry to disssturb you, Lessslie isss asking for you Willowsss."

Willow covered herself, making sure the Naga couldn't see her naked form in the bath. "Ok, Slythen, tell her I will be there soon."

The giant snake turned and headed out of the room.

Willow got dressed and fluttered into the main room. She entered into the room that was resembling the floor of the UCAS Stock Exchange, people yelling and moving to and from frantically looking for the answers Leslie keeps barking.

Leslie's brown eyes focused on Willow, a smile spreading across her face. "Willow, we have him. I also have a team coming in to help you get to this man. He is a dwarf that truly hates all non Metahumans, but this one is dangerous. We found out he was a former Shadowrunner

turned corporate man. He knows how to survive and how to disappear, so getting this right now is the only chance we will have to eliminate this enemy of all sapient creatures.”

Willow’s face showed a grim smirk. Lips thin in thought. She nodded once and turned back to the room to prepare. Before moving through the door, she said, “I’ll prepare and be ready in two hours.” then the door closed without her touching it.

She fluttered over to a circle she had marked on the floor, lowered to a sitting position, and started singing. She could feel the energy start to build, a warmth overtaking her. She continued to sing, energy flowing around her, strengthening her mana reserves.

After an hour her song changed. Now she was calling forth spirits, trying to get favors from a couple that would help her in her new mission. The help is needed as she knew she would be solo for this job. Spirits willing, she would have the strength and edge to not only complete the mission, but to survive and continue this good fight.

At the end of the two hours, she was sweating and feeling a little drained. She knew the energy would return soon as she had already taken care of that, but for now she was tired. She did get three powerful spirits to come and help her with the mission. They promised to stick around for a day, and help in any way she needed. Willow thanked each of the spirits, giving them some of her reagents, and asked them to stay unseen for a while.

A few hours later she was sitting in the back of a van a block from the rubble that the target seemed to be hiding in. There was no one else in the van as the rigger drove it remotely. She could hear the buzz of drones flying away from the van, higher into the air and toward the building she would be sneaking into. After a few minutes, a voice cracked over a speaker in the back, “Willow, there is no movement around the target location. No matrix connection that we can see. I know you can’t project, but keep your eyes in the astral as we can’t check that for you from here.”

“Thank you,” was all she said as she fluttered out of the van toward the pile of broken bricks that seems to be the safehouse of her target.

She called the spirits to her, they all appeared in astral space around her. She looked at the spirit of air that was whooshing around like a small tornado. “Air, please watch for astral signatures, spirits, barriers and such. Tell me if anything is about.” the spirit sped away toward her target.

That left two spirits, one was the spirit of man, it looked like a large shadow of a human. This one she didn’t give an order, yet. The second one with her was a spirit of fire. This one looked like a pillar of flame, dragging across the ground. She asked this one to conceal her from astral detection.

She flew down low to the ground and started forward. From across the street, she could see little dots of light coming out from under some of the bricks. That told her there may be a way in without anyone knowing it. Moving forward she kept her eyes open, looking for anything that stood out.

She flew up the curb and stopped. There was a motion sensor just past the sidewalk in the rubble. If she hadn't been so low she would never have seen it. She moved around out of view of the sensor and continued toward the rubble.

The spirit of air slammed a thought into her head, 'Barrier' was all it said. She switched to astral vision and saw the barrier surrounding the area. Reading this barrier she knew that if it was breached the person that casted it would know that it was. This made things more difficult, but not impossible.

Willow thought, 'Air lend me some strength to help me get through this without being detected.'

'As you wish' she heard in her head, then she felt the influx of mana into her pool. She started singing, very quietly, as she cast the spell that she hoped would get her and her spirits through the barrier undetected. She released the spell at the barrier and saw the opening. She pressed through it, closely followed by the spirits before it wabbed and collapsed back into a 'solid' mana barrier, the warning not sent.

She moved over to some bricks, moving a couple she saw a lightsource. A hole in a plasticrete wall buried under the rubble. The hole, she realized, was an air vent that helped circulate fresh air into the underground safe house. The opening was just big enough for her to squeeze through.

The fit was tighter than she thought it would be. She wiggled and slithered down the pipe, slowly moving down into the target's location. After about an hour, she dropped down, free of the pipe, into a small room with shelves of supplies. It was a dark closet. There was some light coming in from a vent through the door right next to the pipe.

Willow flew over to the vent and looked out into an empty, high tech room. Vid screens, a cyberdeck, and a satellite uplink were all visible. It looks like the uplink was offline as all the lights on the front were red.

She was about to move to the door when one of her spirits screamed into her head, 'Spirit! Dreck, this makes things much worse. She thinks to Fire, 'Take it out' which it replied, 'only one left.' She knew that, Man and air both had 3 favors, fire is down to the last one.

A few moments later, she hadn't even made it to the doorknob, her spirit thought, 'dispatched.' Her element of surprise was now gone. The magician of this place knows someone is here.

Willow opened the door a crack and slipped out into the bright lights. As soon as her body entered the room, the door behind her slammed shut. On either side of her were two big trolls. One of which was obviously a mage. She froze, waiting to see what they would do.

After about a minute of silence, the two trolls just staring at her, one with a pistol pointed at her and the other holding a spell, then there was an odd sound. It started slowly at first, coming from the other room, then increasing in speed. It was the sound of clapping. It was getting closer. Just as the sound entered the room, so did her target, clapping.

“I was wondering if those fragin Redwings would send another assassin today.” his voice was a growl of gravel. “Now before I let your body disappear, I have some questions for you. We will keep you alive until I am satisfied, then you will not be on this earth anymore.”

She looked around, realizing no one had checked her astray or they would have taken steps already to stop her. She smiled and said, “You don’t give me any reason to answer your questions.”

“Oh, but I do. We will start by ripping off your wings, and slowly take you piece by piece, healing you to keep you alive while continuing to hurt you over and over. Unless you cooperate and tell me what I need to know. You are just an insect after all.” he smiled a cold, heartless smile.

She stiffened when she heard the part about her wings being torn off. She knew he would do it if she let him. She would not let him. Silently, she tells her spirits some orders, ones that she just came up with.

The mage noticed the difference in her aura, “She’s magical!” the surprise in his voice telling he failed to notice this when she was assensed. His exclamation came a little too late.

The first spirit, the spirit of fire engulfed the mage, his screams drown out in the roar of a firey tornado surrounding him. Magic flying back and forward between the now suffering mage and the spirit.

Willow dropped, stopping her wings, freefalling instantly. There was a click and a boom as a large caliber pistol roared to life, a plume of smoke enveloping where she just was hovering. Then the Spirit of Man, the large shadow, grabbed the pistol wielding man and flung him against the wall. The man jumped up, cyber spurs appearing out of the back of his hands, and he flung himself at the spirit. His speed from his cyberwear letting him keep up with the spirit, blow for blow.

The smile melted off of the dwarfs face as he started to draw a pistol. Before he could get it out of its holster, a lightning bolt flew out of Willow’s hands, striking him square in the chest. He fell down onto one knee.

Willow was about to strike another blow when she got hit from behind by a spirit, knocking her off of her feet. She screamed in pain, then in a stur she screamed for Air to take the spirit out. Her spirit got between her and the enemy spirit, and flung itself into it. Both spirits vying for superiority.

Willow turned back to the dwarf, who was no longer in the room. 'Dreck' she thought, 'where did he go?' She flew through the door he had first come into the room through. She saw him jump into a van and heard the van start, the roar drowning out the fight happening in the room she had just left. Dreck, she didn't have any spell that would work very well to stop a van.

She started flying quickly at the van, readying a spell she hoped would stop it. Lightning bolts flew out of her hands, striking the side of the van. The engine sputtered, but did not falter.

The van started forward, crashing through the doors, when Willow's Spirit of Fire appeared in the room. She pointed and said, "Stop that van!" The spirit announced that this was her last favor and charged the large vehicle.

The front of the van started glowing red hot, then exploded before it could get all the way through the door. As soon as the van stopped, the spirit left. She felt the spirit of man get dispelled. Somehow the fighter had taken it out of this realm. That will be a problem in a little bit.

The drivers side door pushed open and a volley of shots rang out, all going wide. Willow steadied herself, centering on her own power. She started singing, drawing in all the power she could. This spell might kill her, but her target would not leave this place alive.

The dwarf stepped out from behind his door, and took aim at the small pixie. He started pressing down on the trigger as she finished her spell, unleashing a massive wave of power ripping through astral space. The energy was so strong it could be seen in normal space. The wave struck the dwarf, throwing him against the vehicle, into the open door. His lower half coming to rest on the passenger seat and his upper half resting on the hood of the van. The two halves were no longer attached.

Willow felt a wave of power reverberate back at her as a powerful drain was coming to her. She knew she would not survive this. Her spirit of air appeared in front of her and took the majority of the drain, focusing its power through her to take the drain. When the wave passed, Willow was exhausted, but alive. All of her spirits were gone, and there was one more person out there.

She was picking herself up off of the floor when he entered, pistol in hand. She was not able to cast any kind of spell, and she was way too small to fight hand to hand. The large man, everyone was large to her, looked around the room and noticed the dwarf. He looked at the two pieces of the dwarf, then at Willow. He nodded at her in respect, holstered his weapon, and turned to walk out the smashed doors, his payday obviously gone.

Willow started moving, feeling dizzy from the power she had been wielding. She took a deep breath, shook her head and started walking forward, toward the body of the dwarf. She got to the pool of blood and the top half of the body, surprised to hear him gasping for breath. It was a gasping breath, then silence. He had waited to die until he saw her. Then she heard the siren.

She knew she had to mark the scene before they arrived. She leaned back, falling into the pool of blood that was on the seat of the van. Then she moved back to the side of the van that was not damaged by the explosion. She fluttered up and went against the wall, leaving a bloody wingprint. She heard the siren getting louder.

Crashcart was on its way to try and save him. She grabbed his pistol knowing she had to kill his brain before the medics could get here. She put the pistol up to his head, braced herself, and pulled her arm back. The explosive power of the pistol threw her back into the passenger door of the van. Slamming her against the window.

She slipped back under the seat, pulling herself up into the cushion. She felt nauseous, dizzy, then passed out. She awoke when the medics were moving the body out of the van. Staying silent she watched them put the two pieces into a body bag. The medics looked over the scene, and not seeing her, jumped into their truck leaving the scene for the local police. If they even bother.

Willow moved out of the cover, and headed over to where she had left the van. She flew back into the van, then everything went black again.

Willow awoke in a brightly lit room, Leslie was sitting next to the small bed sitting on a table. Her smile was huge, telling me I had surprised her by surviving a mission that should have been for a team.

Still feeling dizzy Willow was having problems sitting up. Leslie helped her and said, "Congratulations Willow. You have completed a rough mission, and in the process have made an ally."

She was shaking her head in confusion, made an ally? "What?" was all she could say.

"The human runner that was there was still nearby when you drifted into the van. He had climbed in behind you and sat quietly as the rigger brought you home. He wants to throw in with us as you impressed him as a," she air quoted "Smart fraggin creature!"

Leslie smiled again and said, "I will let you get some sleep, but I wanted to tell you that you are amazing. We would not be able to do what needs to be done without you. Thank you."

Willow didn't know what to say. She groggily nodded, closed her eyes and fell into a deep, well earned sleep.