

Special Assignment

An Oh! My Goddess Short Story

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Wednesday, August 13, 2008

Belldandy sat on the couch staring off into space while Keiichi, her boyfriend, held her in his arms. Her cheeks had trails of dried tears that she had long ago lost interest in cleaning off. She sighed in hopelessness and she squeezed her hands together, grasping at anything that would help make sense of her predicament. Her head rested against her boyfriend's chest for comfort as she waited for the phone to ring for her next assignment.

Skuld sat forlorn across from her sister, her hammer leaning against the wall gathering dust. Skuld had just returned from her task and refused to speak to anyone on how it went. Her robot, Banpei, bounced around, trying to get the attention of his master to cheer her up, but it was to no avail. Skuld ignored his antics and remained motionless.

Lying on the floor was the eldest of the three sisters, Urd, who was watching a blank TV screen. She had no interest to turn it on despite the fact that the remote control was firmly in her grasp. She was still in the habit of keeping her eyes glued to the tube as if it offered the comfort she herself craved.

The room's silence was shattered as the phone rang as it had done every twenty minutes or so. Urd spoke in a soft voice, laced with a tinge of pity. "It's your turn, Bell."

Belldandy nodded and then picked up the receiver. She answered in her happy voice as best as she could, considering the circumstances. "Hello?" She cheered up at the voice on the other end but was still saddened by the news.

"Yes, I see." She dropped her eyes toward the ground and gave a hint of a sad face, something that was totally out of character for such a naturally cheerful person. "Thank you, Kami-sama. I love you too." She hung up the phone and closed her eyes in despair.

Urd and Skuld knew what the assignment was since that was what all they had been getting the past few days. Recent events had overburdened another branch of Heaven and the three were temporarily assigned to help out until things settled down. Belldandy took a deep breath, and then stood up straight with Keiichi holding her shoulders for support. "I can't keep him waiting." She walked up to the hall mirror and waved her hand to activate her method of transport. She hesitated a moment before entering, but she knew she had a job to do. She stepped inside and vanished into the reflective void.

The three people remaining in the room stood vigil at the mirror waiting for their friend to return so they could comfort her, as they had comforted each other during this trying time.

The room was covered with dust and broken stone, and the air was filled with fine white powdered plaster from a recent explosion. Sounds of gunfire were heard outside in the street and people shouted as they tried to find safety in a city gone mad. A giant hole was blasted in the apartment from a rocket attack that had shattered what once had been a mother's bedroom.

On the floor, a middle-aged woman lay with her eight-year-old son cradling her still body. Large chunks of concrete covered the smashed furniture and some small pieces of wood still smoldered from the fire that had died out half an hour ago. The little boy was gently pushing his mother trying to wake her up and failing to get her to stir. A loud explosion was heard coming from over the horizon interrupting the boy's focus from his mother for a moment.

Behind the boy was a badly damaged wall with a broken mirror still affixed to it. All around

lay family photos that had either fallen to the ground or were burned to cinders. The mirror began to glow and the goddess of the present emerged and floated to the ground. She took in the sight around her and held back the urge to weep.

The little boy heard Belldandy's footstep and turned around to see who made the sound. He pushed himself into his dead mother's arms in a last ditch effort to have his parent protect him from danger.

Belldandy smiled as she bent her knees to lower herself to the ground to look at the small child. "Please don't be afraid."

The boy shivered and shook his mother again to wake her. "Mommy. Please get up."

The goddess easily sensed that his mother's soul was no longer in her body anymore and was beyond this plane of existence. She looked at the wounds and at the still smoking hole in the wall and knew exactly what had happened. It didn't matter which side in this conflict had fired the weapon. All that mattered was that a little boy was denied the comfort of his mother for the rest of his life. She then saw the injury on the boy and knew what his fate was as well. She clasped her hands together in prayer. "I'm sorry."

Outside a car drove by at high speed and hit a pothole in the street making a loud cracking sound. The street went quiet again with the occasional small arms fire popping from random directions in the distance. Belldandy spoke again to the frightened boy. "Everything will be all right. I'm here to help you."

"H-help me?" The boy stuttered and then started to cry. He shook his mother's arm again in frustration. "I want my mommy to wake up."

She accessed Yggdrasil to check on the whereabouts of his mother's soul and smiled when she received the answer. "Your mother's gone to a better place." She reassured the young man. "She's safe now."

"I wish I could be safe too." The little boy trembled in fear as the sound of a jet flew overhead reminding him of what was happening all around him.

The goddess had mixed feelings about the wish since it was partly why she had been summoned to this room. She had not been sent to bestow a wish as part of her current duty. It wasn't what the department she was working for did. However, this was a wish she was going to grant nevertheless. "That's why I'm here. I'm here to keep you safe." She took the little boy's hand and gently pulled him away from his mother. At first the boy resisted, but as the warmth of the goddess' hand permeated his skin, he lost his fear and went into the woman's embrace.

"Don't be afraid, little one. I'll take you somewhere where they won't hurt you anymore." The boy curled up in her arms and she whispered a small spell that would let the boy fall asleep.

Belldandy knew she shouldn't be doing this, but she had to know just how much did the world lose by denying this child his destiny. She queried the Yggdrasil database on what this child's future could have been like had the war outside not started. She saw a beautiful pavilion near the sea that this boy designed thirty years hence. He had grown into a great architect and created homes and buildings that were practical works of art. His pavilion by the sea would have been his crowning achievement and enjoyed by millions of people for over a hundred years.

She stroked the boy's hair and thought of the sheer waste that was around her. She thought of the boy's mother and checked on what her life would have been like. The world tree responded and shown her two cute little girls that would have been born three years from now. Those girls now would have to wait another time to enter this world, if ever, because of a twist in fate and the inability of certain people to live with others in peace.

Belldandy took a step backwards away from the two dead bodies on the floor, since she didn't pick up the boy, just his soul. She knew that someone soon would enter the building and take them away to be burned with the countless others who had died today. A decent funeral, with all of his loved ones in attendance was also denied to this tiny family. Instead, they would be added to the nameless pile in a nameless grave, forgotten.

The angels of Death were busy these past few weeks and having to be a temporary goddess of Death was something neither she nor her sisters enjoyed doing. It was a task given to them by Kami-sama and they did what they were told.

She looked again at the sleeping soul she held in her arms. "Don't worry little one." She whispered to the little boy who would grow to be a man, never. "You'll be with your mother soon."

She gazed at the sky through the hole in the ceiling. Shedding a tear as she watched a group of planes fly by, carrying payloads of destruction. "I hope you know what you're doing, Kami-sama."

She took a step into the mirror to take the boy to a place of peace.

Please review my story on fanfiction.net at <http://www.fanfiction.net/secure/review.php?storyid=1294472>. Let's hope that people will learn to live together in peace so the suffering can finally stop.