

When I Died

Part 1

"Bonnie, what really happened? I mean you were dead, weren't you." Billy asked as he caressed the dragon girl's bleeding arm.

"It's hard to explain," she murmured. When I helped Shiloh escape from The Dragon's Rest, I think I got burned. Well, it was more like being electrocuted. I felt a shock, and my vision clouded over, so everything was going black. I felt really dizzy. I saw the shape of a man coming toward me. I think it was Devin. I'm not sure.

"Then, I felt all tingly, like when I entered the Candle Stone. Everything got bright too. I heard a noise, like bells almost. But then everything was quiet. Very, very quiet. I couldn't hear my heart, like you would think, and then I realized it wasn't beating anymore. I was dead.

"It was sort of scary, knowing I was dead. But that's the thing. I knew I was dead. So how could I be dead if I knew..." Bonnie tried to sit up, but she fell back on her broken wing and let out a cry of agony. Billy gasped and gathered her in his arms. Both anthrozil's eyes closed. Billy listened for a sound, any sound. But there was none.

"Bonnie?" No answer. The dragon boy opened his eyes. "Bonnie?" he said again, this time louder. He stared at her still form. Eyes closed, she didn't seem to mind her hair being whipped about by the fierce winds of Hades. Billy brought her close, listening for a pulse. But there was none. Bonnie's chest was unmoving; no air escaped from her lips.

"Bonnie!!" he screamed. "No! No!! Oh, God, why?! NO! YOU CAN'T DO THIS!! BONNIE, COME BACK!!" he sobbed. Billy broke down and cried. He cried harder than he had ever cried in his life. Bringing Bonnie's lifeless form closer and closer until his tears stained her golden hair.

Finally, he stood; cradling the dragon girl in his arms. Her wings barely brushed the ground, but she was lifted higher. Nothing can touch her, Billy thought. Nothing will touch her. Not if I can help it.

Gazing around the rough landscape of Hades, a feeling of hate and rage boiled inside him. He began to trudge forward, but then he stopped. Where could he go? Storm clouds gathered overhead and lightning scarred the gray heavens. A black form emerged from the beginning rain to the left. A white form emerged to the right. Billy was trapped in the middle. "You cannot have her!" he shouted to the shapes. A harsh, scratching voice groped toward the anthroziils from the left.

"Ha! But we have come to collect her. She already belongs to ussss."

Another voice rang out from the right. "Foolish demon! You cannot possess a child of God!"

The two forms surged forward, and Billy ducked just in time to avoid being hit in the collision. Red and gray sparks flew every which way. Billy fell, dropping Bonnie. The black shape emerged from the fray and grabbed her wrist. Billy had only enough time to see Bonnie being lifted up into the storm before everything went black.

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Part 2

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But only for a moment. Opening his eyes, Billy saw the white form looming above him. Startled, he jumped back, but the shape moved forward. "Do not

be afraid. I am Gabriel." he said, placing a glowing hand on Billy's shoulder.

"Y-you're an angel!" stuttered Billy. Gabriel nodded. "Make haste," he urged. "Climb onto my back, and we will retrieve Bonnie."

Not wanting to argue, Billy did as he was told. Climbing on the huge figure's back, he settled himself between the two cream colored wings. "Hold on tight," said Gabriel. Before Billy could say anything, they were soaring through the dark clouds in pursuit of the black figure and Bonnie.

Billy wanted to yell, but the wind and rain stung his face so hard it took his breath away. He kept his eyes fixed mournfully on Bonnie, her wings limp as she was borne up through the storm.

The demon stopped and turned to face the approaching angel. Sneering wickedly, he held out his free hand and a black substance erupted forth. It stretched and pulled until it reached from the skies all the way down to the ground of Hades. Billy and the angel could only just make out the retreating demon on the other side.

"What now?" sighed Billy. But the angel only whipped out his long sword and began hacking away at the wall. It shuddered and wavered, and finally gave way, shattering into a million tiny pieces. Resheathing his weapon, the angel drove onward through the lightning and thunder.

Billy watched the demon touch down and sprint toward a huge gray rock. What was it doing? From the back of the boulder flew five more demons, each larger than Bonnie's kidnaper. One of them roared and shot toward the angel. Transforming it's arm into a large, black rapier, it charged. Gabriel blocked the powerful blow with his own weapon and parried the second attack. It took all of Billy's strength to keep his grip.

The remaining demons groped toward Bonnie. Billy shouted a warning, and Gabriel had just enough time to duck another attack and shoot a beam of white

light down toward the dragon girl. It surrounded her in a column of brilliance, lifting her up away from the scavengers. But as Gabriel swerved, Billy lost his grip entirely and fell plummeting toward the ground.

To be continued...