

**Tales from the Stormthrower**  
**Lilly, stranded in the stone dessert.**

## I

It was the first daylight she had seen for a very long time. The long wingless men were slowly taking out the flowers. So when they walked out with the next bunch, she took a chance. Flew to the edge of her prison, then seeing no danger, spat as fast as she could to a close by tree. Weaving a concealing web between the leaves sucking up the energy of the sun. Leaving her with a lookout on this alien world.

The big cave she had come out of stood on flat rock, as wide as the hill back home. Could not believe anyone could live without flowers, without anything. Maybe this was what the tales called a dessert. She tried to remember the tale, but could only remember the warning about total desolation.

Looking at the sun, it was time to move. It was now shining straight down, luckily not burning too hot. But the local birds too thought it was not suited for flying. Letting go of her shelter she darted over the shining rocks, away from the huge cave she had seen the wingless go into. The row of trees, however simply sheltered more flat shiny rock, and other huge caves, leaving her only a shady route into oblivion.

Bad choices. Being too curious, had imprisoned her in the weird metallic cave. It hadn't done her great favors here either. The big caves she had left behind her. Opting for the stone hills, she had noticed in the distance. But all she got was more flat rock, littered with metallic boulders, which the wingless somehow got moving.

She was hiding next to a green spot between a sorry looking patch of tree climbers, bunching up over the ground for lack of trees. The green spot harbored nice smelling flowers, fiercely protected by bees. The colors were strange, but the smell familiar, and she thought they would be accessible when the sun was asleep. So she had picked up what little food was available out of the lonely flowers still alive, and had weaved a shelter looking at the sun, hoping it would move faster. She had no clue how the big birds would react on winged people in this place. The slow fat ones looked harmless. The big white birds with the webbed feet, however made her hide more every time one came in sight. The little brown birds hiding too did not help either. One even crept underneath the same climbers as her, but soon disappeared when she tried to talk to it. Tjilped dazed and raced away.

When the sun finally layed its head on the meadows far, far away. Finally she could eat her fill. Emptied out all flowers. Knew she had to go on, not willing to confront the bees the next morning. Searched some small enough pebbles, to shoo away the big fish in the pond and looked over to wash away the sticky pollen. Looked shocked at her own reflection. Her dress almost brown. Quickly washed only her face, hair and hands, and started on a new garment. Choosing the delicate inner flower petals. Not wanting to wait to sow with the sunlight.

The green oasis seemed ever so small, as she needed to risk sowing a two colored dress. Hoping the yellow skirt would at least try to curl into her red top, when the sunlight would touch it. Still with no queen to watch over her, she could use the top as mini dress.

Naughty thoughts were washed away with the red glow telling the sun was yawning. Trying to wake up, and she needed to move. Again darting from tree to tree she flew more or less the same direction as she had before.

A swarm of flies on a familiar smell made her change direction. A pile of dead flowers could mean something in this barren place. Circled around it, but only after discarding it, and flying over the big stone hill, did she see the caged flowers.

Had seen the wingless in the metal boulders, so concluded a similar boundary between her and the abundance in flowers. Weaved herself an hideout in a close by hedge. Thinking it worth to wait some time, and finally got rewarded.

A wingless female came and opened a cave in the stone hill. She hesitated too long and soon, but the female disappeared only for a little while, as soon a bigger entrance opened into the flower cave, and she started to move the flowers, placing them outside in the fresh air. This time she was ready. Jumping when the guardian's back was turned.

Dead all dead or at least dying. A cast number of little ponds, filled to burst with cut off flowers. She found one hidden, and raided it for its nectar, then quickly counted. Thought about the bees, and believed she could rest here for a few days. The wingless guardian however hailed someone in friendly manner, and she could not help taking a peek. A small movable metal cave was closing in. Opening up and more pools filled with dying flowers were put next and in between the already available ones.

It took the metal cave, still half full with flowers moving away, until it hit her. This many flowers added was way more than the really dead ones on the pile at the other side of the stone hill. Quickly she scanned through the flowers, and made a daring move into the flower cave, finding a small palm tree, just big enough to fit into the cave. But she was too slow as the female guardian stared talking about how odd it was to have butterflies in the store, this early on the day. She camouflaged herself, and vowed she would pay attention the next class she would attend.

Luckily another wingless came into the flower cave, and the guardian started to trade her wealth for paper. Probably that thing called money said to be so coveted by the wingless.

The sun traveled on, and every time the guardian stepped out to trade, she took a chance and darted over to the bunched up flowers, and got herself a little handful to eat. Decided then and there to hang out in the flower cave during the night, taking a nap on top of the palm tree before the sun became weary. Waking up with all the flowers stacked inside the cave and the entrance closed.

Feeling hungry she raced towards the closed flowers, reaching them accompanied by two high pitched screams. Busted! She looked out from in between the yellow sunflowers

looking at the guardian and her companion. Both sat on their chair shaking their head, telling each other it was impossible.

Tales danced through her mind. These seemed to be able to see her as winged. Fairy was the word. She heard it moments later, as she had decided to test these wingless. They let her fly, paging through a small book with pictures of other winged races. She hovered a bit closer, eventually landing close to it, scaring away the hands, climbing on the book, to page back a few pages. She didn't look anything like her queen. Later, much later she would get the fine purple glow over her wings, with a white pattern all of her own. For now the green prevailed.

She pointed at the picture most resembling her queen. The weird white pattern obviously not from any winged. Yet she was still free, and the two wingless had just been staring at her. Finally they caught on, discussing the possibility she was pointing at her own tribe, her being just an infant.

They didn't know how to tell these two she was older than just an infant, but was still a long way from being a full grown winged. So just nodded. Getting a mother like reaction from the two females, finding it so sad the little one was so far from home without her tribe. She did not fall for it. She messed up going too far from the tribe.

The guardian kept pointing at some names. Somewhere she had heard them, maybe from the tales of the elder. She never cared for wingless names. Had enough trouble remembering all the flower names, she had to study. She sat down looking from one to the other, as the discussion went on. Realizing she was far from home. Far enough to never be able to reach it flying on her own wings.

Thought about darting from tree to tree, stealing nectar from the bees, then got to the alternative. Living under a stone hill like this flower cave, feeding on dying flowers. Never feeling the soft touch of a fresh dress, made from day old petals, ever again. Tugged on her dress, finding it still held, however silly the skirt line looked. Then got sucked into the discussion again hearing the wingless talk about a park. In the end the dream won over, and the guardian left her to roam the flower cave as she pleased. Which got boring real soon, and she retreated back into the palm tree.

Even before the sun had yawned, the guardian was back, and she found herself in a dark cloth, forgetting to camouflage herself. She heard the guardian talk to a man about rare butterflies, being endangered. Then apologized for being a bit of a geek at it. The man just mumbled some words of agreement, then the background noise of the stony hills changed. First disappeared, then was replaced by a monotone rumble.

Carefully she peeked out of the cloth, and only when she climbed next to the see through barrier, far from the guardian and the other female, she realized she was in one of the moving metal boulders. Looked at all the stone and metal rushing by, confusing her she decided to crawl back into the cloth, trusting the guardian.

Twice the rumbling noise stopped, and some unprotected honey and cold water was given to her like the caged animal she had become. She tugged on her dress again. Thought about the conversation in the flower cave. Then began dreaming happy scenes in what could be a park. Felt better, happy enough to reshape her dress. Carefully cut out the brown parts, replacing them with rolled up threads of her yellow skirt. Strengthening the holes, shaping the dress into a shirt she had seen her queen wear on special occasions. Off course she had worn a lavish long skirt with fringes with it, but this would have to do.

The boulder stopped moving a third time. Before she got the chance to peek where the honey was put, she was picked up and slowly birds and insects rivaled the rumbling sounds. In the end overpowering it altogether.

Suddenly she heard some whistles. She tried to focus on them, but they came very irregular. After hearing it four times she was certain, began to tug her shirt frantically. It still held. Then felt the pressure on the cloth lessen, and burrowed to the edge peaking at all sides. Thinking of the festival, her queen had given when she was really tiny. Chose and raced over the grassland to the huge hedge in the corner. Scurrying through it slicing baby leaves off it. Weaving it into garment every time she couldn't hold the stack anymore.

The skirt fitted elegantly around her waist. Ignoring the whistles from the trees she flew back to the end of the hedge, daring a sortie over the pebbles lining the floor next to it, until she found a chip sharp enough. Picked it up, and started hacking at the perfectly shaped mature leave she had spotted earlier. Had gotten the idea from the tattered piece of garment she was wearing. Thought it a good enough piece to show off her skills.

Weaving the rolled up string through the edge, when she finally got the big leave cut free. Her attention on the dress, weaving the golden sparkles of the sun through the string. Attaching more in a web like pattern on to form the back side.

She noticed the few pair of eyes popping up in the hedge close by. Still weaved on, popping into the hedge to change her red shirt for the sparkling green webbed dress she just made. Tailoring a belt only while wearing it to complete the ensemble. Tugged on it from several angles. Then flew towards the eyes she had spotted. Bowed gracefully and introduced herself.

Lots of giggles rose up from the hedge. The fair haired winged appearing, looked nothing like her, with her pitch black locks flowing over the webbed back of her dress. Another inched towards her and she smiled, would have done the same. Reached out to them, using her wings to lift herself from the hedge. Then was tugged by the two through the trees over the fields of yellow flowers onto the small sandy beach and started on her hair, coming it smooth with water, and weaving the golden sunlight through it to make it sparkle like her dress.

She rambled of all the apologies she could think of when the queen landed in front of her. She smiled and shushed her, stepping closer to feel her hair. Then admired her dress, hoping it was not the customary dress for one so young. She felt he check turn red. Started on

a new apology, but the queen went on. Complimenting her on the artwork hoping she would learn them her skills, as she would be staying with them for a while.

Lost for words she let the queen took her hand, and take her back to the grassy enclosure, landing on the open hands of the guardian. Repeating the gestures of thanks, the queen was making, then jumped up waving to the two silenced wingless as they slowly moved away from them.

The End