

WATCHERS



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Monthly

WILLOW
ROSENBERG
Tells All
From Magic Addict
To High Priestess

Strange Days Indeed
Slayer Kennedy
Discusses The Scariest
Moments on the Job

From Slayer to Watcher
Buffy Summers
Speaking Out on Life
and Death...Twice!

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Positively Spellbinding

By Bobby Brookman

The first thing I noticed about Willow Rosenberg, the Cleveland Coven's High Priestess, was how beautiful she looked when she walked through the doorway. Next, and to my surprise, I observed how bashful the young lady seemed as she sat down to chat with us.

I talked with several sources prior to our interview and learned of many things she'd achieved in her short 24 years on the planet. Standing up to, not one but, two leaders of an organization hell-bent on controlling the world, invoking the help of Jehovah's most powerful angels and, of course, her most famous spell, enacting all the potentials of the world into actual slayers.

In short, she didn't appear to be a woman who helped save civilization several times over. She seemed too modest, soft-spoken and not at all what you would characterize as a heroine, even if she did have the lovely face and flaming red hair.

She is one of the most powerful women in the world, according to friends and co-workers, but you wouldn't know it from outward demeanor. Success certainly hasn't gone to her head. If anything, she seems surprised by the fact anyone would want to know about her as we spoke.



Watchers Monthly: You seem nervous?

Willow Rosenberg: No, not really. This is just kind of new territory for me. Faith's done a few interviews but me? Not so much. Besides, we've spent years protecting our true identities, no matter how superhero-y that sounds. So interviewing publicly about it all? Not somethin' I'm used to. ~smiles~

WM: Let's talk about that a moment in the hypothetical. There are many people in the world that do view you and your associates as superheroes so, which superhero would you be if you had to compare to the comics or movies?

WR: Oh, boy...Well, slayers probably fit Wonder Woman since she could do lots of physical stuff. I'm not all that physical in my job. I mean I can fight for all of thirty seconds, but I'm not big with the fisticuffs... I'd probably say Batman for various reasons.

WM: Such as?

WR: Well, he's a thinker first. He's smart. He doesn't rely on brute strength as much as *how* to fight or using tools to fight – like gadgets and I'm a geek for gadgets. He's driven to do right because he's lost people he loves to evil. Plus, hello, gay. ~laughing~

WM: Batman's gay?

WR: Absolutely. The tights and not to mention living with a man half his age? Come on, he's a gay, rich playboy who fights evil.

WM: I'll give you that...Well, turning a bit more serious, whose loss did you take the hardest – who were they and what happened?

WR: I really don't want to get into the details because everyone I loved and lost seemed to go before their time, which made it tougher I think. The biggest though was my girlfriend, Tara.

WM: What happened exactly?

WR: In my heart, Tara was my first, last and always, but she was shot by someone trying to kill Buffy when she was still 'the one girl'. Tara and I had broken up because I was addicted to magic. I quit the magic and eventually she came back to me but she was killed not long after that, days in fact.

WM: That's so sad.

WR: Yeah, for lots of reasons. She really was a beautiful person inside and out. The world lost a good soul when Tara died.

WM: So you quit magic for her but then you started again after she died?

WR: That's one way to put it. Another would be to say I fell off the wagon big time and dove into the black magics. But [Rupert] Giles, and my other friends like Buffy and Xander, stepped in and took me to England to train in the magic arts with a coven in Devon.

WM: Sorry but I'm confused. You're an admitted magic addict yet you still practice magic?

WR: Magic addiction isn't the same as addictions you know – like drugs. The outcome can be very much the same but with proper education you can manage magic addiction and still practice. The magics that I used after Tara's death weren't white magics, they were black and came from a dark place. Those aspects of the magics are still inside me so I'm always aware that I need to manage them so they don't manage me.

WM: Do you regret using them? Are they hard to manage?

WR: I regret lots of things I did and said during that period. But I had a wonderful teacher, the high priestess in Devon, Althea Dimmons, who helped me achieve a balance. Knowing what I did and who I hurt keeps that balance in check.

WM: So now that you've learned about the balance in the universe you can practice again?

WR: Yes, but not everyone can. In fact, few people come back from magic addiction – the magic usually consumes them – literally. See, when I started magics I was dabbling with no real education on what it all meant, how large magic really was. I thought it was about doing spells to help fight evil but then it grew out of control. Once I learned of its religious connotations, its true purpose, I immersed myself in everything about Wicca. And for that I think it's made me stronger – as a magic practitioner and a person.

WM: So you're a witch in the truest sense of the word?

WR: I am. I believe many powers have a hold over the universe and everyday people can tap into that power. Some people are just better and quicker at it than others. But everyone has this power. It's in all of us.

WM: So I could be a witch if I wanted to?

WR: Yes and no. That power should only be used if you understand Wicca first and what it means to be a witch. It's not like Charmed ~laughing~ Some spells are simple to do but without the training to go along with it then it can turn dangerous, deadly even. Really, I'm the exception to the rule because I'm lucky to still be alive and sane.

WM: You mention being lucky – what do you value most in life?

WR: So many things. In spite of everything, the gods and goddess have blessed me. I've got family I love, a Coven that respects me; a wonderful girlfriend who adores me. Life is pretty good but it hasn't always been easy. When I was growing up I was pretty much the outcast like my best friend Xander Harris but at least we had each other, and still do actually.

WM: So you weren't Miss Popularity I take it?

WR: ~laughing~ Far from it. I can laugh about it now but it was really hard getting picked on all the time.



WM: Let's talk about your girlfriend.

WR: ~laughing~ Oh, brother.

WM: Why? Is there something terrible about her?

WR: Oh, no! Like I said, it's just I'm not used to all these questions. But go ahead. What would you like to know?

WM: How did you meet?

WR: Through work I guess you'd say. Rowena's a watcher and she came to Cleveland while we were rebuilding the Council.

WM: Was it love at first sight?

WR: ~laughing~ No. In fact, we didn't trust her at first and I already had a girlfriend at the time, Kennedy. Ken and I are still good friends but I didn't have my sights set on Rowena and she never even dated a woman before.

WM: So you converted her then? ~laughing~

WR: ~laughing~ It sure seems that way on paper, huh? Nah, Ro and I became friends but to make a long story short, too late I know, we confessed we were falling in love with each other and hooked up. She loves me regardless of any kind of label and that's okay with me. She doesn't need to march in a gay pride parade - she keeps me grounded but lifts me up. That's what I need and I think I do the same for her.

WM: So happily ever after you'd say?

WR: ~grinning~ Well...~laughing~ I don't believe in happily ever after - not in life or romance - there are always peaks and valleys. You never reach a place where you say everything is wonderful and it will stay this way. And it's true we did have some rough times when she was head of the Watchers Division and I was head of the Coven. It caused quite a few fireworks, but not the good kind.

WM: Wait a minute. You mean you're seeing Rowena Allister - the woman who was in charge before Buffy Summers took over?

WR: Sure am. She stepped down and Buffy took over so we wouldn't have that conflict of work. Now the only real conflict is who steals the covers but I can deal with that.

WM: So Rowena left as the head of the Watchers Council so you guys could be together.

WR: Essentially. I told you she's pretty great.



WM: That's so romantic.

WR: Like I said, she's...wonderful. She comes off as insensitive to people who don't know her well but I think it's because she so driven, ya know? Sometimes people see Buffy that way too. They got a job to do and that's the focus because it's not about the job as much as what the job means.

WM: And what does it mean?

WR: Helping people. Saving people. I know Rowena would take a bullet for anyone and in fact she has. Whether it's the slayers she works with by trying to help them profile a demon or just someone on the street that needs a hand. That's what I love most about her. Okay, the brown eyes and the gorgeous figure are pretty good too I have to admit. ~blushing~

WM: You mentioned being picked on earlier and here you've got a hot girlfriend on your arm.

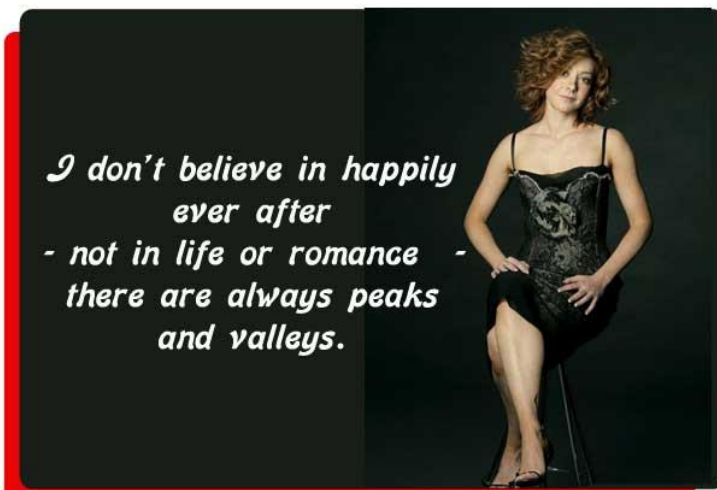
WR: ~laughing~ I sure do mister and she's smokin' hot too. ~laughing~

WM: So what would you say to all the kids out there who are going through what you went through in school?

WR: Have faith. High school doesn't last forever, even if it feels like it. More often when you're the one that's being picked on you'll be the one who ends up having the most success in life. So let kids make comments about you but realize this truth...if you improve yourself and educate yourself, then you'll come out on top. And when you go to the class reunion and you're the CEO of a successful company with a hottie of a wife or hubby on your arm just smile and nod your head. Fake interest and support when you hear the captain of the football team or lead cheerleader talk about still working at a fast food restaurant, trying to earn a living. Revenge is a dish best served cold and usually you don't have to do a thing because karma takes care of it for you.

WM: You believe in Karma?

WR: Oh yeah. The rule of three baby ~laughing~. What goes around, comes around. What you send out comes back to you three-fold, be it good or bad. So all those people out there that have teased you just know they will feel it someday and you don't have to be the one doing the inflicting. That's why I try to walk the line - not only is it the right thing to do but what I put into the world comes back to me and those I love. I've done things that aren't very stellar and I've paid with my blood and the blood of people I love. But now, gosh darn it, I always try to make the good choice wherever I can. **WM**



THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

by Kevin Tabbitt

I recently sat down with a slayer who wanted to be known only as Kennedy. When asked about the anonymity she simply responded, "I've seen the celebrity that follows Faith and to be honest, I don't want it. So Kennedy will do."

Who am I to argue with a woman who can bench press the weight of three men, including this one. Not wanting to make it an issue, I simply let it pass. Besides it wasn't a name I wanted, but facts.

Many people saw what played out over the televisions worldwide - scenes of horridness that shocked first time viewers. For many of the slayers, however, it seemed like standard procedure. With that in mind, I asked Kennedy the most frightening experience she's had on the job.

"Pick one," she replied. "Every time we go out there we never know what we'll face, if what's at the end of the alley is something stronger than us. But it's not always the scariest looking demons that can be the most lethal. On the other hand there are demons who...sorry Reteesk if you're reading this...can look downright frightening but can be as timid and peaceful as can be. You don't always know what you'll get."

My next question, of course, was how did slayers tell the good from the bad and the ugly.

"Watchers," she replied instantly. "My team doesn't travel with a watcher since I've been at this awhile, but for those just starting out Watchers play a big hand in letting us know what they think of the demon species we're facing."

I then ask if Kennedy could pick one time, or even a few, when she thought she might not survive.

"The first battle was scary. We were pretty much standing over a pit of countless ubervamps, hoping that Willow's spell to activate us would work. Once it did though it felt...right...Like I knew I was going to make it, and if not, I'd take as many of those SOB's down with me before I did."

When pressed for another more recent time she mentioned an incident that took place almost two years ago.

"I'm not what you could call big on magic but magic seemed to choose me. I had to face off with a shape shifter - a demon that could morph into anything it wanted. For a brief time I was instilled with magics in order to fight this thing. I threw a motorcycle at it, dropped a piano on it and even used a rocket launcher on it. None of those things would kill it."

I have to admit I was amazed and had to ask how Kennedy managed to defeat it, which she obviously did since she was still sitting here.



Kennedy talks about life on patrol as a slayer.

"I had to fight it on it's own terms, I had to use magic to transform myself into the same creature it was at that moment to stop it...It was a bear, by the way."

A slayer turned bear? I wondered.

"Yep," she replied. "But as you see, it was only temporary. I can honestly say that I've seen things that would make the bravest of men turn heel and run."

I then asked her why she does it, live the slayer life, and her lips curl into a playful grin.

"Because like most slayers that go into those dark alley's we're not just doing a job but being who we are. We're slayers, we stand together and fight the forces of darkness. And the world should consider itself damn lucky that we do."

Damn lucky indeed Kennedy.

If you're planning a trip deep into the heart of Transylvania be sure to bring your garlic, your thirst for adventure and your Visa card because at the Count Drac Inn they don't take American Express



IT'S EVERYWHERE YOU WANT TO BE

SLAYER SPOTLIGHT

Though a relatively new addition to the Watcher's council, their resident Scandanavian Slayer hasn't wasted much time distinguishing herself among the ranks of Slayers. Heli, a surviving veteran of three apocalypses, is second only to a very select few Slayers for the number of apocalypses encountered during her time. After many months of pestering, she finally agreed to sit in an interview this month, and spoke with us about being one step out of the spotlight.

WM: Heli, some say that you've been way too far out of the limelight, there are literally millions out there who would love to know more about you. Why the resistance to an interview?

Heli: Well, I've been really busy...

WM: Too busy to sit down for five minutes?

Heli: Halloween is just around the corner, and we're hoping that this time we'll actually be ready for it.

WM: Have preparations for Halloween fallen through before?

Heli: Well, let's just say that considering that it's the one night of the year that there's no Vamp activity, but we sure seem to be unusually busy.

WM: So you'd rather be training than sitting down for an interview with Watcher's Monthly?

Heli: Don't take this the wrong way, but yes. I guess I just never really wanted to be the center of attention.

WM: Like to be a little out of the spotlight?

Heli: I guess I like being the one nobody really notices. You'd be surprised how much you see that way.

WM: Tell me.

Heli: Well, I guess I'm like a potted plant. I'm part of the scenery. People let their guard down around me 'cause they don't really notice that I'm there.

WM: Come on, the demand we had for this interview alone means that's clearly not true.

Heli: Maybe out there, but in here, I'm not Faith who died and was brought back by an archangel. I'm not Kennedy who is the last surviving member of a family of gypsies. I'm not Buffy who's survived umpteen billion apocalypses, died twice and lived to tell about it. I'm not Rowena, the top watcher; or Willow, the world's most powerful witch. I'm not even the most powerful slayer out there. I'm just Heli, and I like it that way.

WM: So you don't think there's anything that really sets you apart from anyone else?

Heli: I wouldn't go that far. But let's face it, when you're surrounded by modern-day Lazaruses, super-witches, super-watchers and super-slayers, it's kinda hard to stand out. But honestly, who wants to stand out?

WM: Have you always been this way?

Heli: Hard to say. I don't really remember my parents, so I can't say if I was a really gregarious child, but I think I was really quiet after they died. My grandmother used to say that I was, but I guess that's pretty common.

WM: Okay, let's take a look at favourites. Favourite book?

Heli: The Art of War.

WM: The Art of War?

Heli: Yeah. Sun Tsu. We started reading it in one of my courses last year. For a guy who's been dead for twenty-five hundred years, he still has a lot to say.

WM: Favorite Game?

Heli: Go.

WM: Go?

Heli: Yeah. Ancient Chinese strategy game. Makes Chess look like tiddlywinks by comparison.

WM: Any relation to your fascination



with long-dead Chinese generals?

Heli: (laughs) yeah, probably. Legend has it that some Chinese emperor made his generals learn to play to improve their strategies.

WM: Favorite music?

Heli: Classical, mostly. I find it soothing.

WM: Favorite TV show?

Heli: Believe it or not, I don't actually own a TV.

WM: Pets?

Heli: Actually, I have a very bad record where pets are concerned. The largest animal I've ever had to take care of was a hamster. He lasted two weeks; and he's actually one of my longest-lived pets. I pretty much decided then that pets probably weren't for me.

WM: Now that we know that Slaying isn't a life-long job anymore, you're 26 and not so far away from the end of your slaying career. Have you thought about what you're going to do then?

Heli: Actually, I'm pretty sure I have it planned down to the millisecond.

WM: So?

Heli: Well, I've heard some really great things about Disneyland...

WM: So you're just planning to fade into obscurity?

Heli: Oh I don't know. I'd like to think that when I leave all this behind, they'll be talking about me for a while.

WHEN NOT ON PATROL...
THEY ARE WINNING BIG



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CASINO BY SLAYERS.

From SLAYER to *Watcher* with Buffy Summers



By Joel Columbia

At first glance, Buffy Summers looks like any other beautiful petite, blond in her mid-twenties. However, she is not the sort of person one would expect to see sitting behind the big, important desk in one of the worlds most big, important offices. Especially when that desk belongs to the Chair of the Watchers Council.

The world has many questions for Miss Summers, but she does not seem to be in a great hurry to answer them. She has instead decided to concentrate on rebuilding the Council's worldwide infrastructure, some parts of which was left in a shambles by the recent Crisis.

While this approach may in fact make her exactly what the Council needs at this point in its history, it has also left her something of a mysterious figure in the world outside the Council, known almost entirely through the accounts of others.

They paint a portrait of a dogged warrior forced into a leadership role, someone whose willingness to look for unconventional solutions to problems may be her greatest strength.

Watchers Monthly was the first periodical to be granted face-time with Buffy Summers, albeit only ten minutes. When asked about this, she says, "Look, I want everybody to feel safe. And trust me when I say that everybody will be safer if I spend my time on things that actually matter rather than spending it explaining everything to you guys."

Rumors concerning the Chairwoman have been flying since the end of the Crisis. Allegations abound about everything from past romances to her past deaths. She took the time to address a few of these.



"Yeah, I died... twice. I'm... not real big on talking about it. Slaying is deeply dangerous stuff, and that was even more true when there were only two of us. So it happened. That's how we got Faith, you know. When a Slayer died, her replacement was called." And the romances? "I don't really feel the need to blab my personal life all over the place."

For years, Buffy Summers was the only Slayer in the world, and then one of only two.

"It was lonely," she says of those years. "I can't even tell you how much my friends meant to me. I mean, Willow [Rosenberg] and [Ale]Xander [Harris] still mean a lot to me, but it's easier now. I was a real mess a lot of the time, so somebody needed to keep me stable for the world saveage."

When questioned about her relationship with Faith in those years, the Chairwoman grows more evasive. "She wasn't around much, and when she was... sometimes we got along okay."

She seems relieved to have passed the burden of Slayerhood on to the hordes of young woman who now populate the

Council halls.

"I don't miss it," Summers says. "At least, not most of the time. What's probably hard for people to get is how it felt. It was like this weight I had to carry around. I couldn't quit or even take a break. Being the Slayer was what I had to do."

"Sometimes I wonder," she says, without further prompting, "whether I did the right thing, taking this job. It's not that I don't want to help, or that I want to go back to where I was, putting my life on the line every night... most of those nights alone. It's just... some part of me will always be the Slayer. Not A Slayer. The Slayer."

But then Summers sits back in her chair and asks, "What am I talking about?" Our time is almost up. "I should probably tell you," she says, "that we're expecting Hong Kong to be fully operational again within the month. Everything's getting back to normal."

So it's back to business for Chairwoman Buffy Summers. While everyone else is trying to find their bearings in a new environment, it's merely "back to normal" for her. **WM**

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