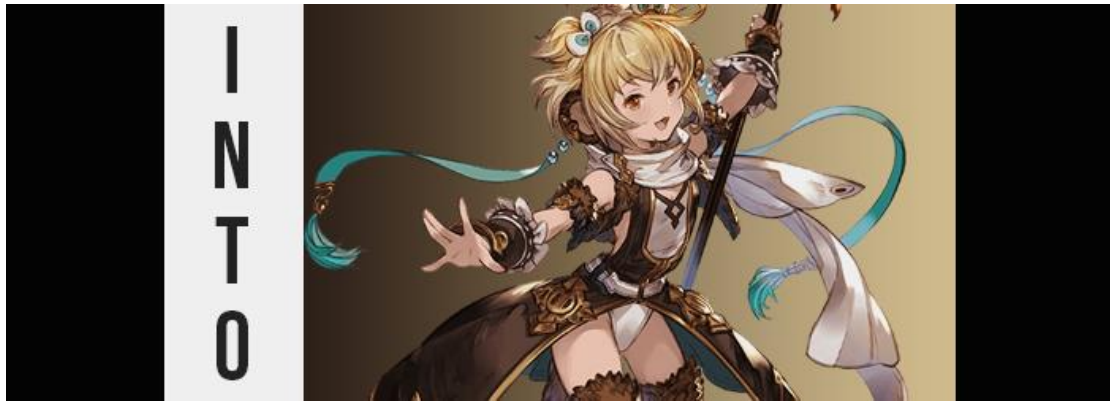


# ZODIAC ATTACK I.

## BONUS COMMISSION STORY

BY CHALDEACHANGE



Joseph wasn't at *all* sure about his current situation. The last he could recall he had gone to bed, but the next? The next, his surroundings were *completely* different. He was in a room dimly lit, wooden walls brought to life with flickering candles and the rugged carpet he was standing on essentially the only thing really in this space, which couldn't be any larger than a traditional classroom. **“Where...?”**

Almost as if responding to his voice, the far wall began to move. It swung open, revealing a number of computer screens while a mouse and keyboard popped out of the floor. He had naturally been about to ask an additional question considering the absurdity of what was transpiring before his very eyes, but how was he supposed to get a word in when things kept popping up out of nowhere?

In this case, the appearing presence hadn't even swung out from a wall nor raised from the floor. She had just appeared before the unusual computer setup, as if teleporting in from nowhere. A girl that couldn't be any older than ten, with red hair and glowing, golden eyes. Were that not both menacing and adorable enough, there was a pair of cat ears upon her head, and a set of two feline tails twirling behind her. She looked Japanese and was quite blatantly dressed in a kimono.

The young man felt like he'd seen her before. Or at the very least, he was familiar with an individual that fit the girl's description. Which didn't really make sense, did it? Because she didn't even seem—

**“Real? Of course not! My creator merely conceptualized a fictional existence whose abilities transcend the boundaries of reality and fiction. But I suppose that makes me real in a**

**way, doesn't it?"** Despite looking like a child, she absolutely didn't speak like one. There were a lot of large words and complicated concepts in that handwave of an explanation, and she hardly waited for the human man to respond before continuing. **"But he caught on after that Christmas incident and limited my abilities to affect him, so that's why I'm going to use *you* to get rid of him once and for all."**

The child suddenly disappeared, and before Joseph realized what was happening, she had reappeared behind him and pressed her hand against his back. What he couldn't see was a golden light shoot from her fingertips and into his body, but he could certainly *feel* it. It felt *wrong*. He was quick to twirl around, but once he had, she had disappeared. Next came a voice that sounded as if it were disembodied.

**WHEN IT'S DONE, I'VE ALREADY SET IT UP ON THAT  
COMPUTER. GO GET YOUR COW, ANDIRA. OH, AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

It certainly was the New Year, but this wasn't quite what he'd been expecting when he'd signed on for 2021. **"Wait! Who were... What did you do to me!?"** She'd certainly done something, there absolutely wasn't anything normal about what he had felt in the moment she had touched his back. The feeling had been akin to something pouring into him, which was extremely unsettling when paired with her vague words. **"What did she mean by '*go get your cow*'?"** Kind of a weird thing to say even if it *was* the year of the bull.

He was quick to find that his concerns absolutely had not been misplaced, for he was suddenly brought down to a single knee without anything close to a warning. In the moment he had been plagued by a sudden weakness; his entire body had felt physically heavy not because of exhaustion, but because something just felt *off*. Almost like his body was far, far too big. Had anything actually changed though? He still looked the same...

His gut feeling wasn't wrong though, his brain was just feeding from information that was inconsistent with reality. Or was it reality that was the inconsistency here? As if to challenge the semantics of it all, it was reality that began to bend on its own. From Joseph's point of view it manifested in the form of his point of view beginning to steadily decline. **"Huh!? Am I falling!?"** He threw his arms out to the side to catch his balance in the case that he was, this being the most logical conclusion. The young man certainly wasn't considering anything *illogical*, even though the past ten minutes had been entirely *that*.

Typically Joseph was around six feet tall, and so his fall had he slipped or tripped should not have taken how long it had been since he noticed the decline, making him pause from confusion. “**Er? Wait...**” It provoked him to take a better look at himself, and the unlikely reality of all was laid bare as a result.

“**Am I shrinking!?**” He’d kept his arms out to keep his balance, but now it seemed more like they were only spread out to keep his t-shirt from falling off, for as his height diminished, his clothing absolutely didn’t change along with it. Already ducking below five feet, and still shrinking, it was likewise evident enough that the shrinkage wasn’t exactly consistent. It wasn’t like the young man was remaining the same ‘size’, but was instead shrinking down while everything else remained the same. The way his arms and legs pulled in was born from the among of bone in his legs lessening, and the cause?

Well, one needed to look no farther than his face.

His olive complexion was softening, skin taking on a far more youthful glow that was supplemented by a gentle pudginess. His lips and nose? Smaller. His eyes? Wider. On the whole? Everything was becoming more childlike, his brain included. “**Uwah!? Why’m I so teeny!?**” By the time Joseph had finished, he couldn’t be any taller than four foot four, nor could his age be any older than ten or eleven. His pants and boxers had fallen from his frame, but at least his gray shirt was so oversized now that it fit him like a dress. He was stunned. The world seemed so big, and he didn’t quite feel emotionally nor intellectually qualified to deal with the shock of it all considering his mind had regressed as well.

There were some benefits, though. Not that they could be seen while he was dressed. He’d been a little chubby before, but now? Joseph’s belly had become completely flat, void of any excess fat. Instead he was fairly muscular? Or at least, muscular for a boy of his age. There were definitely abs on his belly, it was just that they were child-sized abs.

“**I’m a kid! No way! Why!?**” The child could hardly believe it. He’d retained all his memories of adulthood, but his childish personality was certainly played up as he swung his arms around and kicked his feet. He couldn’t possibly imagine this being any worse, and yet... And yet something suddenly lifted up the back of his shirt, showing off his bare bum to the world. “**Uwah!?**”

Hands immediately reached back to push the shirt back down, but it was met with a strange resistance that could be felt not only by his hands, but by something else entirely. An appendage? That’s kind of what it had felt like, but that was imposs— “**A TAIL!?**” Never mind.

Sticking out from above his butt, he found as he's turned his head over his shoulder, was a long and prehensile tail covered with a dark brown fur. It was shocking, but to his more youthful mind it was also a little funny? He couldn't help but giggle as a tiny hand reached out to pet the fur, lengthened nails and thinner digits gone unnoticed. **"Haha! It's all fuzzy!"** A sudden voice crack didn't even deter him from watching this tail as it swished from side to side, all while something began to happen to his skin.

It was *lightening*, as if it had been injected with a non-lethal dosage of bleach. The phenomenon didn't come across as patchy or inconsistent, and instead his olive tone merely gradually lightened to a stark pale that was exceptionally rosy wherever blood gathered. He didn't take much notice of it though, for more significant things had been happening beyond his attention while his new tail held all of his attention.

The fact that his ears were growing larger? That was a big one, but he couldn't really be faulted for something that couldn't be properly seen in the first place. His lobes spanned outward and rounded, all while a brown fuzz that matched the color of his monkey tail spread across their exteriors. On the other hand their interiors were a far beige brown, but the fur there was incredibly smooth to the touch. All in all, paired with the tail it all made him look like quite the monkey child.

**"Whoa, wait! Why am I acting so much like a little kid!?"** After pawing at his tail a little longer, a realization dawned up him and he straightened his posture. He wasn't denying that he was a child, but everyone on the Grandcypher was telling him he was really mature for his age! **"Wait? Huh? Grandcypher? Like from Granblue...? A game? My life isn't a game!?"** Irregularities made themselves known, and once they did his eyes glazed over with a bright orange that wouldn't have been conceivable in the real world without using colored contacts. Maybe his lashes had grown just a little bit longer too, but it was hard to say for certain.

Playful strands of golden blonde had also begun to dance throughout his hair, each lightened piece growing to triple its usually length and falling to his shoulders. It didn't take long for the entire mane to become consumed, leaving the cool draft blowing through the room to

Otherwise those eyes appeared strangely empty, and that was because his mind had entered something of a 'reboot'. There were too many discrepancies that had come about from the spell that had been placed upon him, and while his mind had been gradually adjusting to a new reality, it was only natural unaltered data might cause problems. It was

better just to stun him temporarily so when everything was properly adjusted, it would all seem normal.

It was fortunate, because there was no doubt what came next would have been reality shattering even if it wasn't exactly substantial in design by this point. After all, being the size that Joseph was, whether or not he remained a boy wouldn't change all that much, would it? Short of a little added weight to his thighs and rear, bug-bite sized breasts, and a different set of genitals, she might as well have looked the same. Well, maybe her facial features were littler, softer, and cuter now too, but androgyny was clear with the oversized shirt still covering her form.

Without warning, the 'reboot' completed, and the monkey child blinked before she looked around with confusion. **"Um... Where am I? How'd I get here? What am I wearing!?"** All of her memories of the past ten minutes? Gone. All of her memories of her past life? Gone. If she were to think of her name, the name *Andira* would come naturally. There was no recollection of being a man, of being a human, of coming from the real world. Only of being a child and being a member of the Zodiac.

Well, there was one other memory, and it certainly didn't belong. A memory telling her how to escape. **"Oh! I just need to, uh... Here!"** She spotted the computer on the ground beneath the screens, and while she didn't know what it was, she knew she had to go over to it and press 'enter' to go home! There were a bunch of words on the screens, too, and while she could read them she couldn't exactly understand the context. **"Operation Get Back At My Creator? Operation Turn Him Into A Cow? Huh..."**

Not that it would matter shortly, right? Pushing her wonderings aside, she crouched down before the keyboard and pressed the button she'd been told to. The moment she did, not only did the world around her warp, but the clothes on her back as well. The shirt disappeared, and instead a familiar and warm set of traveler's clothes had taken shape in their place. Before she knew it, she was sitting on her bed in her Grandcypher cabin.

But on her floor?

Who was this strangely dressed human?

**TO BE CONTIN-MOO-D...**

