

BAA SAYS THE INFECTED

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“Hm. I guess this might be of use to me. I could use a tool for working on my magecraft.” While out exploring a Singularity with his Master at Chaldea, the homunculus known as Sieg had found something interesting. ‘Remarkable’ wasn’t quite the word for it, not when it was only a black, wooden staff with crossed spikes on the top, but it had certainly been of interest to him. From what he could tell? It was a staff specifically crafted for controlling magic, and magic control was an area in which he lacked talent.

That had been true during the Holy Grail War he had been born in, and it was true even now as a Servant of Chaldea. The difference between the Sieg of old and the Sieg of present was that he had even *more* things that he wished to protect, and Chaldea’s operations saw to it that all of human history was preserved. There was no nobler cause than that, and certainly not one more inspiring. That was why he was looking to expand his horizons. He wanted to be *much* more useful to his Master than he was now.

So of course expanding his skills was a good place to start. That was why he had brought the staff back with him from the Singularity, and why he had begun to train with the staff in secret. It was Sieg’s intention to seek help from a more powerful caster once he’d learned the ropes, but he didn’t exactly want the pressure of having a powerful Caster Servant yelling at him when he was only getting *used* to the casting peripheral.

“So if I swing it like... *this!*” It was so late at night that no one was using the training room in the gym, and so that was where the homunculus had opted to train in secret. The simulator wasn’t necessary for basic skills, and besides! If he used it, the fact that he did would just

be recorded. That meant that someone might ask him about it, and he didn't want to have to explain why a Caster was learning how to better wield magic. So far, though? He felt like he'd at least made some progress.



Something about the staff itself was helping a lot. Channeling the mana from his body through the shaft felt much easier than when he had tried with other weapons of the same type, and he'd even managed to fire off a number of magical bursts from where the 'horns' of the staff crossed at the peak. **“It's almost like it was made for me. Or maybe it's just a staff created for beginners? Either way, this will definitely help with my training.”** Maybe he wouldn't have to wait as long to seek a more experienced Caster for help as he thought he would have to? Things seemed promising in that regard!

But Sieg was so caught up in the boons of wielding the staff that he was ignorant to the negatives. To be fair, this was because the negatives had been designed in such a way that it would be more or less impossible for him to notice them, but that did not change just how devastating they would become. For now? It was subtle, but the boy's sense of hearing had deteriorated ever so minorly. It was to such a small extent that he would have had to hear with both setting back to back to notice, but even then?

That was something of a strange side effect, wasn't it?

Nonetheless, the homunculus continued to train with the magical conduit in question. Eventually something *did* take him by surprise, mind you. **“Woah!?”** One of the energy blasts he had fired at the training dummy at the other side of the room hadn't carried the element he had intended on firing. Rather, he hadn't intended on that magic having any elemental lean *at all*.

But that didn't change that a ball of flame had fired from the staff's point, nor that this seemed to be *all* he could fire from it. **“That's... strange.”** He was attempting to imbue the Magecraft with other elements. Other elements that were just replaced with flame. **“Can this staff only channel fire?”** That couldn't really be the case, could it? After all, in the beginning he had managed to just shoot normal, magical

blasts. It didn't make sense that it would suddenly start attuning his mana to a different element entirely.

But he was also missing something fundamental. Because he was forced to remain ignorant to his changing status, he had not noticed that wielding the staff had begun to have even more severe effects upon his body. They were distorting not only his image, but his entire *identity*. To the point that what he was firing couldn't even really be considered *magecraft*. That isn't to say that it wasn't something similar, but it wasn't really magic. The arts of a caster weren't exactly so narrowly defined.

“...*Hm.*” Strange as the eruption of flames was, Sieg strangely didn't question it too much. Instead? He fired another blast of flame, this time attempting to see if he could replicate the phenomenon in any capacity. He *could*, and with consistency it seemed. What that meant in the long term, however, he didn't really know. Perhaps it was fine so long as it did not bother him?

Honestly, that was up for debate.

Sieg didn't really seem to realize this, but with every blast of flame from the tip of his staff came a subtle change to his physical container. It wasn't initially something that manifested in a visible sense, for his internal design as a Servant was compromised before anything else. This meant that his Saint Graph slowly faded, leaving the question of his identity and what would become of him in the future uncertain. When a Saint Graph was damaged typically, that meant that the Servant it was attached to would take damage and eventually disappear. That didn't appear to be what was happening when it came to the boy.

Rather, his physical form remained coherent, without a single spot of damage upon it. That said, it became weaker – substantially so when compared to the body of a human, until he was eventually as weak as a proper human of his age and build. Which was surprising since he wasn't even human typically even if you *did* take away her Servant status. He was a homunculus.

Not any longer, mind you. “**These attacks seem pretty powerful, though.**” He was still distracted by the blasts he was firing, with the dummy on the other side beginning to show signs of melting under the heat. The young man had essentially become a regular mortal... for the most part.

Because there were very much a number of signs that he hadn't *quite* been reduced to the form of a mere human – initially highlighted by some of the traits atop his head. Or, well, the *emergence* of them. Hard

nubs had begun to protrude from the peak of his skull, one on either side of his head, and they were gradually growing bigger and bigger. Before long they broke the skin of his skull, curling into a pair of what were *undeniably* curved, white horns. Like those of a goat... or a *sheep*. Their emergence most certainly *should* have been a notable event, because of the pressure and weight that accompanied them. But Sieg didn't even seem to bat an eyelash.

Another blast of flame fired from his staff, and with its launching came another, notable head-based change. From the sides of his head, his ears soon began to grow. Slowly, slowly, the tips rounded and became upturned, and the cartilage of the interior smoothed out while they stretched out to the sides. They drooped a little, their interiors soon pointed downward, until from their skin? A soft, brown layer of hair began to spread across the exterior, while white and pink lined the interior. They looked like the ears of an animal – specifically a sheep.

So no, she *wasn't* a human.

What was even stranger, mind you, was that these ears looked like they *should* have given him sharper hearing, but that wasn't the case at all. The signs had been there in the beginning, too, but his hearing had continued to get worse. No longer could he hear the sizzle of flame as it collided with the dummy in the distance, and the popping as it fired came across as much dimmer than it had before, too.

Now Sieg's height was gradually diminishing, rendering the fit of his clothes to fit quite largely upon him. Limbs became shorter, but they also became less dense in the process. Whether it was his bones becoming thinner or the look of his muscles, which seemed to drain of their strength until each arm and leg was no bigger than a stick. The same had become true of hands and feet that had collapsed, digits and tootsies a fraction of a size smaller – and *daintier* – than they had been before. Quite *girlish*, when things were all said and done.

“...Huh?” He could hardly hear his own voice by this juncture, and if he *had* been able to then he just might have realized that it sounded soft and maiden-like, far more befitting of a height that had spiraled down to around 4'9”. The ex-Servant was tiny, and because of it his pants had slipped from his hips while his top hung far enough down to cover his loins.

Those loins weren't the focus quite at the moment, however. The young man's brown hair had begun to stir, growing incredibly long in the back while wriggling down to just past where his butt now sat. There was something very fluffy about its volume, contributing to the sheep-like look of it despite it being a non-traditional wool color. Still, its softness

was undeniable, and it hardly covered her forehead with how it swept gingerly across.

The red of the boy's eyes began to dull, still sporting a crimson hue but becoming one that was much less dominant in terms of contrast. That said, their colors were displayed a little less proficiently in the first place. The cause? Their sizes as a whole had lessened while becoming more circular in the process, lashed growing just a little longer alongside with the loss of overall eye size.

These were changes that were part of something bigger facially, mind you. It all softened with no shortage of gratuity, cheeks becoming round and lips swelling in slight, although in a way that had them turn up into a little pout. All in all he ended up looking much younger, perhaps around the age of twelve or thirteen – and with the features of a young *lady* at that.

Sieg fired yet another shot, his ears now completely deaf to the sound of it firing. But his eyesight had seemingly become more potent. The features of the melting target in the distance came across as clearer than ever to him.

Or... *her*?

What seemed like it would inevitably happen finally did so, and that which made him a young man then unwound into a young woman's counterpart. She *should* have noticed, and on some level she *did*, yet... She didn't really feel all that alarmed by it. It wasn't something that could be helped. None of it was.

What unfolded from then on were the finishing transmogrification meant to scoot Sieg into the role of young lady that had evidently been forced upon her. This saw several areas of her body begin to grow plump, but not before her waistline pinched in slightly, giving her torso a gentle curve.

That was quickly built upon, with her chest showing signs of growth beneath the oversized boy's shirt. Nipples grew puffy and the fat beneath them swelled, skin taking on a light sheen once it was stretched upon these jiggling masses. Not that they jiggled all *that* much. They simply were big enough to exhibit it enough, only A-cups at best. Considering her age though, this made sense.

Just as it made sense down below, with thighs growing just a little plumper and her rear taking on an aspiring perkiness. If anything their abundance pushed her hips just the slightest bit wider, with knees

pointed just a little inward as a result. This more or less sealed the fate of her maidenly figure, and only her dress stood out as inconvenient.

But perhaps as a final gift from her old self, those clothes that she had been wearing promptly turned into particles of gold. They were made from a Servant's Spirit Graph as well, and now that the graph was completely gone? Nothing bound them any longer. So they came undone, but quickly reshaped into a set of proper clothes. An outfit consisting of a singed, black dress, a white cape bound to a gas mask, and black thigh highs housed beneath boots.

The world around the sheep-featured girl was still and quiet. Still because it was so late that she had begun to rub absent-mindedly at her eyes out of fatigue alone, and quiet because she was effectively *deaf*. It would take an exceptionally loud noise for her to hear it through her fluffy, sheep ears, such as the sound of the flames crackling off her staff as she finished scorching the training dummy at the room's opposing end.

It was a little too late for it to make a difference, but *Eyjafjalla* understood what had happened. She was supposed to be a boy. A homunculus. But she was neither of these things any longer – she was a young Caprinae woman, a member of a race that didn't even exist in this world's history. And the cherry on top of it all was that she was infected with Oripathy, a disease that gave her the powers she possessed at the cost of her worsening health. It was the reason that she was effectively deaf.



And it would soon be a reason for her to avoid interacting with humans in Chaldea. Understanding Servants, as Sieg's memories still lingered within her soul, there was no risk of her infecting them. Perhaps she would have to find one and communicate to them what had happened. Who she had been, who she had become, and what she had to do now. Which was... Well, she was in Chaldea, wasn't she?

Eyja could only assume she should push forward and support them in their cause? Was there even a way for her to get back to Terra? Was 'get back' even the right term, since she had been created here? Her

memories were a mishmash of two individuals, but fortunately she could keep the two separated enough to understand that she now represented two completely different people.

Eyjafjalla just happened to be the dominant *'self'*.

Lowering her staff, she held it across her lap as she gazed off at the training dummy in the distance. Despite being made of steel, her Originium Arts had completely melted it, and she risked damaging the wall behind it if anything. At the very least, this was plenty revealing that she could be an asset to Chaldea even in this state. For now, though? She would have to find someone willing to communicate with a deaf girl, and preferably one that couldn't be infected with her disease.