

# BLADE OF CONFIDENCE

## COMMISSION STORY

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Was it a bad idea to be wandering in the forest on the outskirts of Garreg Mach Monastery?

*Technically* no. Being in the center of Fodlan and a key location on the continent where children from all of the neighboring nations came to study and pick up military experience, there were few places safer in all the land than the grounds closest to Archbishop Rhea's feet. There were commonly patrols that fanned out in a full three hundred and sixty degree radius around the campus, the forest included, so there was never any chance of bandits nor demonic beasts nesting themselves within.

Which was fortunate for a certain student of that campus who had taken to those forested surroundings as an acceptable reprieve from holing herself up within her room. Bernadetta von Varley was a girl from the Adrestian Empire that had been sent to Garreg Mach not only to study but as a representative by her father. A father that she loathed deep down, and one that she was convinced had simply been trying to get rid of her.

Her *unique* life experiences had ultimately manifested within her a personality that was seen as *undesirable*, especially for a noble with the minor Crest of Saint Indech. Even though she had recently celebrated her eighteenth birthday, and despite having an understanding and supportive professor, the girl had not made much progress to push away from those unwanted social traits.

**"Maybe it would be better if I just up and disappeared...?"** Of course that *wouldn't* be better. That was never the answer regardless of

*how* bad you might have felt about things. But it was difficult to change her ways and, honestly? Bernadetta didn't really *want* to. She was skittish and reclusive. Typically, she holed herself up in her personal quarters and didn't even attend her classes. It was only when she was required to that she left. Or if she needed to slip away for some fresh air.

Her stroll through the forest was for the latter reason in that early evening. She had wholly planned on returning to the dorms before it got dark when she had first set out a few hours prior, and she was in fact



retracing her steps back to the campus now that the sun was beginning to set. The girl had just needed some time to think because things were eating at her. Namely the lack of progress she had made in building her confidence. **“Should I talk to someone about it? But that would involve...”**

It would involve *talking to someone*. Which was a problem for her.

And yet the girl found herself pausing her return as something *out of place* caught her eye. **“A sword? Was... that there when I walked past before?”** At least Bernadetta *assumed* it was a sword. The sword was sheathed and propped up against a tree, but it seemed almost too long to wield, not to mention the blade within *must* have been thin. It wasn't the kind of blade that you normally saw in Fodlan. **“Did someone leave it here?”**

Bernie was usually so skittish. And so it was odd that she approached this blade with absolutely *no* hesitation. Almost like she *knew* that it was safe to do so instinctively. Or almost like *something was beckoning her to it*. And it seemed like it wasn't a moment too soon, for a loud growl called out from behind her. **“Wh-What!?”** It certainly wasn't a *normal* growl. It was too monstrous! **“A-A demonic beast!?”**

Not just one but *three*, all slightly larger than a wolf. **“W-Wait, this is bad!”** Putting aside where they had come from, Bernadetta was suddenly deftly aware of the fact that she hadn't brought her bow on this little walk of hers. Even if she *had*, she wasn't sure just how hopefully it would have been against enemies of *this* caliber. **“But I could try and...!”** She was only really left with one option. She was close to that sword, so she clumsily grabbed it and *swung*, the blade slipping out of the sheath and cutting unevenly through a wolf that had lunged at her.

The other two beasts backed away a bit, leering at a bewildered Bernie. The student was baffled at her own ability to swing it – along with how *easily* the sword had cut through such a powerful opponent. **“Did...”**

**Did I do that?**” She felt a little more *confident* now that she had defeated one, but she didn’t know about taking two more even *with* a strong blade. So she swung it clumsily against to try and scare them away. **“G-Get back!”** And she swung again, again, and again. Each time she swung the weapon it felt a little easier. Was she becoming more proficient with it?

But she had absolutely no experience with a sword! Much less enough to learn as quickly as she was. But she couldn’t deny how effortless it began to feel. Almost enough to take on the demonic beasts *herself*. But some *adjustments* needed to be made before she could become confident *enough* to do just that.

**“Should the wolves be this scared...?”** Bernadetta *supposed* they had just watched her kill one of their brethren in a single swing, but that had been a fluke, hadn’t it? Were they really that scared of her? Or were they scared of the *weapon*? It was difficult for her to say, but she was also lacking critical context. She couldn’t see what the *wolves* saw, namely because it would have required a mirror. So what *could* they see that she couldn’t?

The girl’s *eyes*. Their purples had begun to glow almost eerily, the purple’s vibrancy enhancing around a pair of irises that altered their shapes. Before long they almost resembled small diamonds instead of circles, and a stroke of white glowed *around* them as if to highlight their presence. These eyes were *ethereal*. They were *powerful*. They were eyes that *didn’t* belong to Bernadetta. But the full extent of this implication would not fully be realized immediately but instead gradually over the next couple of minutes.

There *were* additional signs early on – and not too far from her eyes, either. Streaks of blue were painted into her head of hair that was otherwise a soft purple. Almost like a fire spreading it danced from one infected strand to the next, passing the color on until her head of hair was *entirely* dyed in this blue. **“I guess it’s okay if they aren’t attacking me though...”** She swung the sword again to try and push the wolves back further. But in doing so? Dyed hair straightened and flew out in length behind her until strands reached her butt. When it all settled, her bangs settled over her left eye... even though her bangs were *never* that long.

*So why hadn’t it occurred to her?*

It was a question that gained more and more relevance as changes become more extreme and, as a result, more obvious. But the most basic answer was that the girl was exhibiting far too much caution towards the wolves to think about herself. She could recognize that if she lowered

her guard for as so much as a second they would likely strike. So even if her body *did* feel weird? Even if, say, those clothes began to feel tight or slide across her body? She couldn't take her eyes off of the beasts. "Umm..."

Unfortunately, after swinging the blade once more to keep the wolves at bay, she found that she was experiencing those very sensations. Why did it feel like the base of her uniform top was creeping up? She could feel the cool, evening air tickling her bare tummy! There was also the sound of cloth ripping around her shoulders, a sign that those shoulders were too *broad* for what she was wearing. Additionally? The spats beneath her skirt felt like they weren't sitting on her thighs properly. Like they were sliding *up*? And her knees had risen out of her boots.

Almost all suggesting that she was *taller*. She adjusted her posture with the blade to account for this, shifting her weight differently midst a 5'8" height. It was a significant jump from her previous stature, and as a result of it she'd broadened a little too. "**I-I couldn't possibly have...?**" But Bernadetta couldn't confirm it without giving the wolves an opening. In the first place? It was more than a matter of just getting *taller*.

She was certainly *older* now as well. If her enhanced facial features hadn't already suggested as much, they certainly did with a few additional tweaks that stole from her any signs of her previous identity. Already changed eyes both enlarged in size and narrowed in shape for one. They sported the most notable maturity according to their newer designs, but the swell of her lips into fuller, luscious shapes were a close second. Her face's *shape* had even changed. It narrowed around a leaner but longer nose. None of these traits lined up with Bernadetta von Varley's biological profile. In fact at this height, with this hair, and with that face? No one would likely even assume it was her in the first place.

**"I'm not going to let my guard down... Hm? That's strange. Did my voice always sound like this?"** Did it sound so *deep*? Common sense would have suggested *no*, it did not. But common sense wasn't *actually* in play any longer. The roots of what was changing her body had also been seeping into her mind. It built up her confidence, but it also jumbled and dulled her memories – twisting those that remained to give her changing body her full acceptance *regardless* of how dire things became.

And things *did* become quite dire. Much of the woman's shape had already been twisted into its destined form – or at least the form intended to be bestowed upon her by the katana in her hands. Even strength had been pooling within her person, seeing to it that muscles bulged and tighten. This was no clearer than around her exposed tummy

where an eight pack of abs was forged. But it was also plain that her hips had widened a few inches over the course of her previous changes to boot.

*Above* those new abs? The already dire fit of the Garreg Mach uniform that the woman could just *barely* wear with the sleeves severed was discovering new challenges courtesy of Bernadetta's bosom. The mounds within were *swelling* atop firmer pectorals, nipples engorging alongside the tits beneath them as they pushed the top out farther, and farther, and farther. But the fabric was much too tough to tear or bust, ultimately rendering the top essentially a *tube top* that only *barely* covered the *F-cup* tits that mounted them.

But Bernadetta still did not waver and instead swung the sword to scare the wolves again. So little of her old self remained, and that little was drying up in those final moments. Her bare thighs engorged themselves even *beyond* the new muscle they had obtained, softening the look of them as they gained a maturity more befitting of the rest of her appearance. Seemingly out of necessity since the back of her skirt lifted as mass saw her ass cheeks swell to boot. The spats she'd been wearing struggled to contain those cheeks and dug into a deepened ass crack along *with* her undergarments. Nothing about what the woman wore now was certainly *comfortable*.

She just continued to eye the beasts. “**Your move, but...**” She was still confused about what was going on. More so now than she had been at any point. Not even a wriggling of fibers across her body, a sensation born from her outfit changing in size and shape, really opened her eyes to the fact that she had transformed. That opportunity had already come.

What she was left in was a black crop top beneath a white and purple jacket with some kimono features – particularly in the sleeves. She was also wearing tight, black shorts and boots of varied length. Leather gloves covered her hands and an ornament had been fastened into her lengthened hair. Perhaps just as surprising was the emergence of a layered tattoo on her left thigh. A crimson flame overtop a blue one. It matched a purple flame pattern that could be seen elsewhere in the woman's outfit.

It definitely wasn't the type of outfit you'd expect to find worn on an individual living in Fodlan. In fact, if you searched the entire planet this type of fashion just *couldn't* be found.

Each step that the woman took from that point on *oozed* with confidence. The demonic beasts could sense it, or perhaps they were sensing her power, and so they backed away further as *Acheron* drew nearer. But she was only approaching to pick up the sheath for her blade – applying it after she bent over to pick it up. “**I can’t really remember how I got here, but...**” The glowing eye that *wasn’t* hidden by her bangs peered over at the monsters while sliding the weapon back into its guard.



Acheron was a woman who often forgot things. The forest felt *unfamiliar* to her and she did wonder how she had wandered into a place like it. Had she come to another planet and forgotten? In the thick of things it was hard to consider if it even mattered. There were foes in front of her. She knew the habits of beasts well, and while the two wolf-like monsters were clearly apprehensive about her presence? She could see their bloodlust plainly. If she gave them a window then they’d attack.

So she *wouldn’t* give them that window. “**Alright, fine. I can see that you’ll just be a nuisance if I leave you be.**” *Wherever* this was? Surely it could use a few less monsters hanging around anyways. And so she drew her blade with a vacant expression. She would hardly need to exert any energy dealing with a threat of *this* caliber. And she *didn’t*. Her blade was drawn but it didn’t *look* like it had been at all. There was simply a burst of moving air followed by the collapse of the two wolves, their heads severed cleanly.

The blade was re-sheathed without another word from Acheron herself. If that was the level of opponent that she was to expect from this place then she’d have to limit her strength. She felt *confident* that she would be able to handle any potential opponents in this realm, but of course *where* this planet was? That was a question she needed an answer to. It

felt lucky then that there seemed to be a dirt path just slightly off of where she had slain those monsters. Surely it would take her to civilization of some kind?

And what happened from that point on? Well, it would likely depend on the type of reception she received.

Hopefully it didn't go poorly, but she had a bad feeling somehow.