

STANDING IN

COMMISSION STORY

BY CHALDEACHANGE



“I still don’t know about this, Byleth. An opera about our lives? I know I gave Dorothea the okay, but...”

It certainly wasn’t like Edelgard to be this candid with her thoughts and feelings, but there was a good enough reason behind it on this occasion. Namely that she’d had several glasses of wine by this juncture. It had been about a year since the war had come to a close, and to commend that day everyone in the Black Eagles had returned to Garreg Mach for a weekend.

Being the first night, everyone from ex-students to faculty had made use of the cafeteria, eating and drinking to their hearts content. The night had worn on though, and pretty much everyone except for Byleth and Edelgard had returned to their rooms. Dorothea and Manuela had just left the two of them with some news that had gotten the vaguely intoxicated emperor a little riled up.

Dorothea had pitched it before, an opera performance based around Adrestia’s plight to unseat the archbishop, Rhea. But this was the first time she had come to her with solid plans, much less a taste of what was to come. While she wasn’t exactly displeased with it, it was more like she was very, *very* embarrassed by it. **“Should I just tell them not to? But Dorothea and Manuela have been working so hard...”** She was so out of it that her cheek was resting on the wooden table as she spoke. A side of herself that she only showed to Byleth, whom she was romantically involved.

Seeing her girlfriend like this though, Byleth smiled as she rose from her own seat. **“You’ve been drinking, Edelgard, so I wouldn’t make**

any decisions like that for the time being. Let's think about it when you're sober, alright?" She gave a wave and headed towards



the kitchen, intent on seeking a glass of water for Edelgard. She did pause a moment before slipping into the kitchen though. **"You should consider what it's like to be in their shoes too, you know?"**

At this, Edelgard pushed herself back up into an upright sitting position with a groan. She knew Byleth was right. Both Dorothea and Manuela had put their lives on the line for the sake of the war *she* had started. Byleth was probably trying to tell her that, and that to pursue such a project wasn't quite something she could fully comprehend without putting herself in their place. **"Well, it's not like I could do that liter- AH!?"**

The emperor almost fell forward as the table she had been resting upon was now no more. In fact, while she recognized her surroundings to a point, she most certainly *wasn't* in the cafeteria any longer. Instead she was in the quarters that were typically reserved for faculty. But how had she gotten there? Had she been so intoxicated that she had briefly blacked out? No, she was still only a little tipsy at best.

Based on the floorplan and what she could make out from the dark view of her window after sloppily getting back up and onto her feet, this was probably the room that had been assigned to Manuela? But the ex-professor in question was nowhere to be seen even though she had left before Byleth and herself. **"Why would I even come here in the first place?"** Surely if she had *just* passed out, Byleth would have taken them back to their room?

Not thinking much of it, Edelgard scratched at an itch she had felt upon her scalp. Since this trip wasn't official business, she naturally wasn't wearing her horned crown. Her head was as bare as could be, which meant that she had easy access to her own hair. If only she'd had a mirror handy, she might have seen that there was a cause for her itch. An itch that seemed to linger just a tad bit longer than she might have expected an itch of that nature.

The itch itself, you see, came about from the feeling of her hair strands being yanked back *into* her scalp where the excess was mysteriously disposed of. This pulled hair that typically hung loose halfway down the woman's back up as high as the top of her neck, and even then its properties changed. It earned a natural curl that wrapped in towards her chin, naturally slicked back at the top so that her forehead was exposed.

But there was also the matter of her hair's *color*, something that was rightfully apparent. Edelgard's hair had long since turned white thanks to the experimentation she suffered at thanks to Those Who Slither in the Dark, and she'd long lost hope in that color *ever* returning. Yet it did, and with a brown not too unlike what she had been born with in the first place. Perhaps it *was* off a shade or two, but it was nothing too dramatic difference-wise.

Her hair wasn't even the only place that this color had emerged. Eyes that had sparkles with mauve since she was but a little girl were ultimately overwhelmed with it as well, taking on this much muddier color that was several shades darker than her hair. Which, on its own, was debatably not *that* dramatic of a change. What was, at least as far as the woman's eyes were concerned, was what transpired all around them.

The emergence of a beauty mark beneath her left eye was one such thing. The impressions of what were likely Crow's Feet in the corners of her eyes were another – and that spoke to something thinned hair did as well. The possibility that Edelgard was *aging*. “**Mm... Maybe I did have too much to drink. I feel a little weak.**” The groan that prefaced that comment practically sounded like a cat's purr.

That weakness wasn't *quite* because of the alcohol that she had consumed, but it also was worth noting that despite not having had anymore wine, the emperor's level of intoxication *had* grown slightly. She was wobbling a little even standing still, and the unfamiliar bed in the room was looking more and more enticing.

In reality the weakness was born from, well, *weakness*. Her body had been honed from a young age so that she could wield an axe and wear heavy armor, but all of the muscle she had built up for those purposes had been regressing beneath the folds of her crimson outfit. Arms, once built, became as thin as noodles, while all of the strength in her chest, stomach, and legs melted away. The muscles didn't exactly *disappear* though, and remained as fatty deposits that bolstered the sizing of everything around them.

Take Edelgard's legs, for example. The strength there was turned into fat, and that fat bled into the existing mass of her thighs. This left them thicker than ever, with the excess mending itself to an ass that blew out

the backs of her pants in a *very* uncomfortable way. “*Nn...*” Uncomfortable, but the woman herself was finding it increasingly difficult to care. Her reaction was similar when it came to the tightening of her top against her chest, for the excess fat saw her mounds engorge two whole cup sizes. If not bound by the cloth, they likely would have sagged rather reasonable with dues paid to her heightened age.

Speaking of that age, wear was showing across her body beyond just those Crow’s Feet. Her complexion in general was growing drier and more cracked, fingers longer and bonier as well. Everything about the woman’s skin just felt *looser*, and the slight bulge in her tummy thanks to softened muscles and slacked skin drove that point home. There was no doubt that she was a woman that had aged into her forties, but was still exceptionally beautiful despite this.

“**I’m not sure how much longer I can... stay up...**” Speaking with a sultrier voice, Edelgard was wobbling chaotically now – her level of intoxication even higher than it had been before. Thinned, more angular cheeks burned red, while droplets of drool accumulated in the corners of lips that had swollen quite nicely. While Edelgard was never one to dwell upon such things, a change in her priorities had her mind wandering to thoughts of young men and spending time with them. Romantic time. *Sensual time*.

It became even harder to maintain this delicate balance for the woman’s height was imperiled next. She did not collapse, but instead climbed higher so that the excess weight that made her curves appear a little *too* saggy was pulled tighter against her bones. The end result was a whopping fourteen centimeters of additional height, which pulled her top so high that her slight tummy bump was exposed.

“**HIC!?**” Forget tipsy, the woman was absolutely *wasted* by this point in time. She could hardly hold back hiccups as she grumbled and swayed, eventually flopping onto her bed after ripping off clothes that just didn’t feel *right*, though she couldn’t put a reason as to *why* in her current state. Stripped bare, *Manuela* merely groaned aloud at how she felt. She was in for one *hell* of a hangover the



next morning, none the wiser to the fact that she had once been Adrestia's great emperor.

But that did not amount to a problem historically. Edelgard had become Manuela, but the opposite was also true. Both women had switched places, destined to walk in each other's shoes as Byleth had suggested. But Byleth certainly wasn't to blame, and she wasn't exactly displaced from this entire predicament either.

None of that mattered to the elder Manuela though, oblivious as she was. Instead she was more than content with just passing out, her drunken mind wandering to thoughts of the stage. Well, the stage and maybe eventually finding a suitor.



"...? One of the students' rooms?"

Elsewhere, Byleth was a little perplexed. She had been fetching Edelgard her water as planned, but the moment she stepped through the doorway the room didn't exactly match up with what she had expected. Instead of the kitchen, this was undoubtedly one of the dorms that were typically set aside for students – now acting as temporary lodgings for all of their allies that had come to visit for the weekend.

But how had she ended up there? While looking behind her, the door was shut. And opening it? It brought her to the hallway even after stepping through it and back again. **"This doesn't make much sense..."** There wasn't really any sensical explanation for it. She hadn't felt any magic at work either, and so she could surmise that she hadn't been teleported or anything like that. **"Did I drink**

something and not realize?" It was a joke delivered for her own amusement in her deadpan, unaware that the purpose of her teleportation had already begun to rear itself.

Byleth's height had already begun to climb, but not with the same tenacity that Edelgard had suffered during her assimilation into Manuela-dom. The gap between Byleth's current height and that of the woman she was becoming was only six centimeters, and that was the full extent of it. It was still enough to lift her upper wear to reveal even more

of her belly, and pull at her tights so they fell a slight bit downwards, but it was not enough to bring about any dramatic harm to her costume. At least not *yet*.

“**Mm?**” Did her clothes feel a little tight? Was the ground a little farther away than she remembered? These were good questions, but no sooner than she thought of them did Byleth abandon them as lines of inquiry. Not on purpose, mind you, but because the force at work was making a point to keep her from acknowledging the truth. If she held any awareness of it, it would certainly cause *complications*.

It was for that reason that she didn't so much as look down at herself once, even as conjured from nothingness, her already impressive bust size began to forge ahead with even more vigor than normal. There was no denying that the young professor had among one of the largest chests in the school, but even so it grew a whole size larger... which forced her cleavage window to grow within the armor chest piece – already sitting strangely thanks to her increased height.

Idly, the woman picked at her shorts. “**These clothes really don't suit me in the end.**” Was that true? Weren't these clothes of her own choosing? Didn't she put them on herself that morning? But if that was the case, then why were they so *tight*? It was like her ass and hips were two sizes too big for them!

...Which they *were*, but that was a new development. Melting muscle menacingly met the meat that had already existed in her rump, bloating cheeks to the point that her hips had been forced to spread not long after. Following this trend, so too did her thighs bloat – muscles that represented her overwhelming strength dancing away so that she was quicker and much more agile by nature at the cost of her power.

With her waistline pinched in now, her figure was closer to an hourglass figure than it had ever been before. “**Why do I feel so strange? I only had a single drink tonight.**” Byleth's voice was like honey now, and it certainly wasn't worth ignoring that she now believed to have had a drink tonight – when she had previously implied she'd had *nothing*. This spoke to a change in her memory, which was a greater piece of what was happening with her *mind*. In fact, by nature the woman had grown much more sociable.

A slight smile played upon lips that were rosier than they had ever been before, not to mention greater in mass. They seemed plump and kissable, their sizes even more pronounced with a chin that was somehow smaller than it had been before. A rounder nose and shrunken eyes added to the fairness of her visage... and yet that visage was *not* Byleth's.

In fact, she bore a much greater resemblance to one of her *ex-students* than herself – something that only became more evident throughout the next few passing moments. The woman’s eyes, for example, shone with a color that was not the baby blues that Byleth had possessed since birth, barring that little stint where her eyes and hair had turned bright green. That green had returned though, albeit with a slightly softer shading that seemed far more natural than that once-supernatural glow.

The woman’s straight and wild hairstyle began to grow gentler, curls that seemed to be intentionally weaved fashioned from her blue strands and creating the illusion that her mane had somehow gotten shorter. Perhaps it had lost an inch or two, but when it came to her hair’s quality the *volume* was much more notable. Curled as it was, it became much, much thicker, and the scent of flowers wafted from these beautiful locks; a sign that she was keen on taking good care of her hair.

After all, a woman’s hair is one of her greatest weapons!

All that was left, really, was its color. Her body’s shape, and even her personality were already suggestive enough of who she was becoming, and so the blue of Byleth’s mane remained the only physical indicator of her past life. But it was so quickly overwhelmed by a color that was much more *normal* by most standards, not that normal was all that normal in a world where people could have pink hair too. This color was a dark brown that was reminiscent of the color of tea. Which just so happened to be her favorite drink now!

“I’m not sure how receptive Edie was to my proposal, but I suppose I’ll have to wait and see tomorrow.” Now in her ‘right’ mind, *Dorothea Arnault* wasted little time in peeling the layers of unfamiliar wear from her body. It was nice of Byleth to let her wear her costume while demonstrating her performance, but perhaps they should have switched back before returning to their rooms? After all, Byleth was shorter than herself and had a little



less in the chest department, so it had felt a little suffocating.

Or, at least, that was how her memories had been corrected to justify her outfit.

It would make a good reference for a proper costume later though, at least if Edelgard agreed to their show? **“I don’t see why she wouldn’t, though. I swore I would not make a mockery of their relationship nor her deeds! She’s always so cute and sheepish when it comes to things like these...”** If only she had realized that she was essentially fawning over her business partner’s old self. Still, she believed that Byleth would help change her mind. If Dorothea knew anything, it was that her old professor was always on her side.

If only she knew the double meaning that this belief held.

One year passed, and it was very busy for both Dorothea *and* Manuela. Through a stroke of luck they had earned Edelgard’s approval, and so they’d had to deal with writing, singing, staffing, casting, costume designing – the whole nine yards of work when it came to setting up a new opera show. But all of their hard work had finally paid off, for everyone had returned to Garreg Mach for their premiere show before they took it back to Adrestia to run daily performances. And, needless to say, it had gone off with a hitch!

Sweat pouring from their brows, both women locked hands and took a final bow as the curtain fell. It was, perhaps, the most satisfied they had ever felt in their lives. A feeling that could never be replicated. And in that moment they wouldn’t have traded their lives for *anything*.

All according to plan! And yet, by who’s plan was this all set into motion?