

ALONG CAME A SPIDER

OCTOBER REQUEST STORY

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“Okay, okay! Come on little guy, just a little more!” Sitting within her dorm room in Garreg Mach, Mercedes von Martritz had taken point in a very peculiar activity. A small spider had dropped involuntarily upon her desk, and too kind to kill even a tiny nuisance such as itself she’d instead sought to guide it to the windowsill and back out into the great outdoors. Her tool set? A sheet of paper and a drinking glass, each allowing her to nudge and shoo it until it finally found its way free. **“Good job! Now make sure you don’t accidentally wander in here again, okay?”**

Her guest having gone, she then returned to the task she’d set out on before the interruption. To hone one’s magical abilities took more than mere battle experience - studying was important as well. Which was why she had so many books piled up high! That said she didn’t make very much more progress before a knock on the door to her dormitory room pulled her away once more. “Hello?” She’d been expecting to find another student on the other side of the door, such as her best friend Annette.

But instead of a person there was a basket dangling from a thread before the door, an unsigned ‘*Thank You*’ card nestled inside along with an assortment of muffins. **“Oh? Isn’t this nice...?”** She had no reason to be suspicious, seeing as she had received gifts from other students before. Most of them just wanted to win her favor to ask her on dates, but she likewise only really had interest in a certain professor. Not that she would ever admit it, even to Annette.

Grabbing the basket she tugged it off of the string and pulled it into her room, not noticing a familiar spider crawling up the string’s length and crawling into a crack in the building’s wall.

Mercedes' studying went on as intended. Tens of minutes passed until she inevitably reached a full hour of learning, and it was at that time that she decided it might be best to take a snack break since it was mid-afternoon. She'd received a very rare brand of tea from her housemate Sylvain, and she thought it would pair wonderfully with the muffins that had been so generously gifted to her.

After a quick preparatory session she brought tea to her desk alongside a plate with a single muffin. The afternoon air drifting through the window provided adequate comfort as she sampled the beverage, noting its pronounced herbal flavor before eventually reaching to take a bite of the baked good. There were definitely blueberries baked into it, but at the same time it had a very peculiar texture? Fine grain perhaps?

Surely it was better at the time that she didn't *actually* know what the secret ingredient was.

Batter washed down with yet another sip of tea, it wasn't until the muffin dropped into the annals of her stomach that she began to feel somewhat uncomfortable. I'll? Mercedes immediately broke out into a cold sweat like you'd get when you were coming down with the flu or a cold. **"That's strange... Is there something in the tea? Ahu..."** The beginnings of an unintended laugh brought open fingers to the maiden's lips. Had something been humorous? To begin with, that wasn't the sound her laughter *usually* made. The back of her hand next moved to her forehead, feeling to see if she had a fever or something similar, but...

"Ouch!" She'd put her hand against her head pretty abruptly so she'd been expecting the force to smack against it a little bit, but the pain wasn't expected at *all*. It was like she'd hit something incredibly tender, like a swollen lump. The pain was accompanied by a twitch beneath both of her eyes that she just couldn't seem to shake. Maybe she really was sick?

The logical course of action was naturally next to feel for any wounds she might have on her forehead. Maybe she'd bumped her head and forgotten until now? Fingers gently traced the surface, noting not only one tender bump but three all together. Two above her eyebrows and one in her head's center. But peculiarly they didn't feel to be circular, rather ovular? **"Hmm..."**

Still thinking them mere swollen lumps that would bruise, the squeaking of her wooden chair legs against the wooden floor signaled the fact that Mercedes rose onto her feet. She had a personal mirror stashed in the drawer at her bedside, and this would help her better treat the 'injury' she reasoned. But what she saw couldn't be described as a mere injury.

There were clearly three ovular bumps on her forehead but the peculiar aspect about them was that thin lines seemed to be etching across their surfaces before it finally reached from corner to corner.

And then they *opened*. At first Mercedes wasn't sure if that was even what had happened. The information signals being sent to her brain suddenly multiplied, ultimately leading her to black out while standing for approximately two seconds while it tweaked itself to accommodate this new influx of data. Still holding the mirror pointed to her face, the noble couldn't help but shriek as the truth of those lumps was revealed.

Not two, but five eyes blinked back at her in the reflection. The three on top were pitch black, wholly inhuman by design, giving her face the appearance of what she could only assume to be an insect as she noticed her regular pair begin to gloss over with the very same black. Irises and pupils were both lost to the darkness, and her ability to see was both compromised and amplified simultaneously. Each individual eye seemed to be weaker than her original pair, and yet because there were so many of them she couldn't help but have her horizons broadened. The additional three were almost like cameras (*not that she knew what those were*), giving her a wider view and allowing her to absorb her surroundings more efficiently.

"Ahuhu... What's happening to me!?" That laugh escaped her lips one more as she brought fingers to her cheek, multiple eyes trained on her reflection. Should she get help? Wouldn't people just run away from her while she was looking like this? But what if it got worse?

And what was with that laugh?

A bloating feeling arose across her entire head as her sense of hearing popped numerous times. It felt like her skull was being pulled apart, and since she could still see her reflection it was easy to see that this looked to be the case as well. Mercedes had a perfectly *normal* head for a human girl. It was round and angled where it needed to be. Yet from her cheeks to her ears, she could see the shape of that face reforming, pulling sideways into a wide oval at which point it inevitably ceased. Because the caster's ears were generally hidden by her hair anyways, she likewise couldn't see that the cartilage had diminished and left mere, pin-sized holes on the sides of her head from which she could hear.

The chills she was feeling only increased in intensity, anxiety born from looking what she considered to be a 'freak' only churning her stomach to accentuate the illness. Her mouth went dry as its insides began to broaden to accommodate the size of her new skull, rows of teeth sharpening to monstrous size, four sticking like fangs out from lips that had become substantially thinner.

"Sthpider..." She ultimately came to the conclusion that an arachnid was what her head ultimately resembled, but she couldn't process just why it was happening. Was this a nightmare? Was it something she'd eaten? The muffins? The muffins! Regardless, unaccustomed to her new mouth she couldn't help but speak with a lisp.

In a hurry, she ran back over from her bed to the basket of muffins she'd left on her desk, body swaying uncomfortably tanks to the new engorged size of her head. Black strands of hair began to replace her blondes, and unbeknownst to her since she'd removed her attention from the mirror, the skin atop her eyes began to dye itself light purple. That purple would slowly move through the length of her body, just as the black would consume her hair and find it shrinking inward.

Hands tossed muffins aside in search of the '*Thank You*' card that had been included, but she was eventually given pause by the sensation of... an extra hand holding a muffin. She'd almost not noticed, her mind slowly being rewired to see this form as '*normal*', but little could escape the five eyes that rested on her head. Poking out of her left sleeve was a second hand. The right as well.

They were thinner than her normal hands -- no? Her normal hands had the same thin design? Were her normal hands retroactively changing? Raising one pair into the air, she tugged her sleeve down to give her a proper answer. Her primary arms had actually split in two, bone spread between the two as purple skin crept across the newly formed split and likewise dying the normal, human flesh the very same color. Much like when her extra eyes threw off her ability to think a moment, the addition of extra limbs likewise produced the same effect. After all, having an extra two arms--

RIIIIIIIIIIIP!

Four extra arms now, claws upon a third set erupting from just below the other two and tearing an additional hole in her Garreg Mach uniform in the process. These very same claws pointed at the tips of her other twenty fingers, each digit stubbier and less flexible than they had been in their human forms. Fine hairs jutted out of the tips, each making it easy for them to cling to things if needed.

"Ahuhuhu... No! No!" She eventually found the thank you card with one of the four hands stuffed within her dress' usual sleeves, but with these new fibers on her fingers she couldn't exactly rip it free. When she finally managed, she noticed something very strange printed on the inside. A seal? *In the shape of a spider.*

Mercedes finally decided it was time to find help and went to bolt for the door, only to be foiled by her own footwear as she tripped and fell forward with her arms just barely catching her -- although the sudden movement of the second pair of arms merely shredded her sleeves altogether. She struggled to lift her head to look behind her, and she could see one of her feet had fallen out of her shoes. It looked much like her hands. Purple, digits dwarven and clawed, there was absolutely no way they'd fit in normal human footwear.

As she laid there, largely defeated, the sound of something squeaking caught the attention of the tiny ear holes nestled beneath raven-black hair that was of a much shorter cut than the noble usually wore it in. All five of her eyes pointed forward,

fixated on the source. It was... a spider. The very same spider she'd rescued earlier that day in fact. It wasn't speaking human tongue and yet she could understand it.

"Thanks for saving me! Since you like to protect spiders, we've decided to make you our new queen!"

There was a lot to process in that declaration, but what *Muffcedes* ultimately fixated on was "**We?**". No sooner than she'd asked did she become hyperaware of what felt like one million eyes trained on her from all around the dorm room. There were so many she felt small -- no, she was actually *shrinking*? Clothes felt heavy as her size diminished, arms pulling into the dress as her big head remained surfaced atop its neck. The little spider before her became larger and larger, but fortunately the shrinking stopped at a height that left her at roughly the size of a human child.

Which was better than becoming *actual* spider-sized. *Muffcedet* wriggled around in the pile of clothing a moment, her naked form ultimately popping out through the neck hole with all six arms completely freed. At this point it was clear the more adult nature of her body had subsided as her bones had weakened into a soft but firm exoskeleton. Breasts, while still defined, with small and without nipples; and while she still had a pussy there was no hair marking the spot, instead surrounded by a purple fuzz that had crawled across the entire surface of her person as she'd grown smaller.

Her head still hurt, especially now that she'd been made aware of all the spiders around her. They were chanting for her, wanting for her leadership. The more they cheered the more she wanted to believe those cheers to be warranted, four of her arms stabilizing her dizzied brain as she once more stood upright. Her name... her species... she was... human? No, humans didn't have eight appendages! A spider then. Mercedes? That was not a name befitting of their queen. *Muffet*... *Muffet*...

The name brought a fang-filled smile to the spider woman's face. "Ahuhuhu!" And this time the laughter was authentic. "**Of course, how could I forget dearies? I'm *Muffet*, aren't I?**" Why did she feel so strange? Why had she forgotten herself? Had a cockroach ended up in that batch of spider muffins she'd been picking at?

In response to this declaration the spider population cleared, a red dress being lowered for their new leader to wear. "**Now let's see how the humans of this school really feel about spiders! Start the ovens, we've got a lot of product to bake! Ahuhuhu!"**

"AHUHUUUUUUUUUU!"