

RETROFIDDLING III.

COMMISSION STORY

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Was it customary for the Guild to request an interview before taking on a job?

Lyria *had* thought that it was a weird selection process at the time. When members of the Grandcypher's crew had taken work from them in the past there hadn't exactly been all of these extra steps in between and while she wasn't as prideful as Rackam in terms of her own mentality, the Girl in Blue still believed that the crew had demonstrated its talents enough in past endeavors for the Guild to know that whatever it was they had in mind for them that they would be talented enough to deal with it.

"Umm..." Both her captain and Rackam had gone on ahead of her, so by the time Lyria had been brought to the Guild's waiting room she wasn't only completely alone but entirely nervous. They had asked that Vyrn remain on the ship for *some* reason (none of them could have imagined the reason why a dragon wouldn't have suited their needs in this case) and so she didn't like the silence. In fact she didn't even understand *why* she needed to be interviewed separately from Gran.

But again: that was something they had specifically been asked to do.

The girl simply sighed while seated, hands bunched up on her dress upon her knees. **"I'll be devastated if Gran gets to go but I don't..."** Aside from merely sharing a bond of life itself, the two of them were extremely close in general. Wherever the captain went? Lyria went. It had been that way for a while, and when they were apart? She suffered from a great deal of separation anxiety.

Eventually she was brought into the room that was used for questioning and was assaulted by a number of queries that she couldn't really wrap her head around. It wasn't that the questions were *challenging*, but as the Guild had shared no information with them about the job itself it was difficult to try and predict *why* they were being asked them nor understand the answers that they wanted to hear.



“O-Oh! Yes! I’ve been on the water plenty of times, especially on Auguste!” When asked about her seafaring experience, well... It was an easily answered question if anything. Their yearly summer adventures on Auguste had become something of a staple for the Grandcypher crew and they often ended up on a seafaring vessel to boot! But wouldn't the Guild have heard about some of those adventures? Moreover didn't their skyfaring expertise cover a lot of that too?

Lyria blinked more than a few times at the next question. **“Do I care about my ancestors? Um... I suppose that’s a somewhat complicated question.”**

Complicated because she didn't completely grasp much of her own past. Did she *have* ancestors? Maybe she just had to turn the question around in her head a bit? So then the answer would be... **“B-But if I knew about them I’m sure I would!”** A sigh of relief escaped her lips when it seemed that her answer had been satisfactory and the final one was asked.

“Would I like to be less fragile?” *This* question was easy to answer. She hated feeling like she was in the way even if her summoning abilities could be extremely useful. But her body was so small that she couldn't exactly wield a weapon properly no matter how much she trained. **“...Yes! Absolutely!”** That said, this was another question that didn't really click with her in the sense that she had no idea why they were asking. It wasn't like they could just *make* her tougher.

The girl *did* make a few sheepish attempts to try and ask them why they were asking her what they had been but ultimately? The queries appeared to fall on deaf ears. The interviewer either deflected them or passed over them in the end. But Lyria forgot *all* about that experience anyways.

Because she had been told she had passed!

A wave of relief had crashed over her when she'd been told that. In Lyria's mind there was *no way* that Gran could possibly have ever failed *his* interview, so this meant that she would be able to go with him! She'd been told that they just had to show her something to better understand the mission first and then she could meet with Gran and Rackam, both having passed like she had. She was excited and hopeful and optimistic and...

Confused? “Um... **Is this a portal!? Where does it go?**” Of all the things she could have imagined being shown in the end, an almost empty room aside from a menacing looking portal in the center had *not* been one of them. Was this the cause of all the questions? In a way, yes. By taking the data they could from it, the Guild knew *exactly* what was needed to traverse the other side. They just needed compatible individuals to, well... *Become even more compatible.*

That was why rather than answer Lyria's question outright, she had instead been shoved rather harshly towards it after they were about fifteen feet away. The small girl didn't *fall*, but once she was only five or so feet away herself? She felt it. A pull. And a *tingling*. “**H-Huh!?**” While she *did* feel a pull though, it wasn't exactly *physical*? If you had asked the girl to describe it in the moment then she probably wouldn't have been able to. It was almost like something had made a *connection* with her.

Not only with her *body*, but with her *soul*.

Of course Lyria was destined to be the third victim and the third member of the expedition team that the Guild had been creating. This was simply how it worked, for they had made contact with a power on the other side of that portal that they refused to divulge information about. Compatibility was needed to summon *souls* from beyond the gate, to bind them to new bodies, to *mold* those bodies into containers suitable for those souls. Did that mean that Lyria would still be Lyria in the end? In a sense? Yes. In another? Perhaps not.

It was only natural that she would be alarmed, that she would struggle. But short of barely turning her body to face the door she had come through – seeing that the staff member who had led her in and pushed her was *missing* – was about the full extent of what she could muster in terms of strength. Her body felt sluggish and heavy. “**What did you do to me!? D-Did you do this to Gran and Rackam too!?**” Because if anything scared Lyria more than something bad happening to her, it was something bad happening to Gran.

“Don' t worry! You' ll be reunited with her soon!” A new voice prompted her to slowly turn back around to face the portal. Who had

said that!? For some reason Lyria didn't want to ask... or perhaps she already seemed to know deep down. Because no sooner than she had heard it? The girl's bright blue eyes were corrupted into an almost ominous crimson.

...Had the voice referred to Gran as a woman though?

Lyria didn't exactly have time to dwell on *that* though. Too much had begun to happen at once. "**Wh-What!?**" While she couldn't really move her body, she could still *feel* what was happening and move her head so that she could react. And the feeling of your body *stretching*? Well it was a feeling unlike anything she had *ever* felt before. It was a sensation that paired well with a change in her eye level; the Girl in Blue was *growing*.

Little by little she sprung up. It wasn't a dramatic affair in terms of her height, and considering she only ever wore her simple white dress there was little risk of malfunction when it came to her clothing short of the skirt rising up to show off more of her thighs. She went from just under the five foot mark to roughly five foot four over the course of the strange pulling sensation, which could only have been her bones and muscles being yanked and built upon to grant her this new height.

"**Oh my... Am I taller!? ...This is alarming.**" Not that there weren't aspects of this that weren't *just* as alarming. Her reaction was strange in that it almost sounded like she was bouncing back and forth between two different personalities: one calm and proper, and her usual persona that was naturally shocked by her sudden and unprompted growth. This jump in height was accompanied by a tweaking of her facial features that, for the time being, still resembled herself. But she looked *older*, like a woman in her early twenties.

Had she simply grown *upwards* then she probably would have looked oddly lanky, but fortunately there was some proportional consistency. Her hips and shoulders had grown a little wider, but there was also something else. Lyria had begun to look... *thicker*. One could say *more durable*. There was more meat on her bones, arms and legs thickening so that they weren't so scrawny – while also becoming more *muscular*. Her tummy was the same, bulging in every direction without being chubby or fat. It was more like her body weight was denser in a good way. Her dress was struggling to contain it all without tearing though.

Looking down at herself, she hummed a moment. "**I'm so... What would my ancestors think dressed like this?**" Was that really what she should have been worried in that moment? Her outfit? And why was she speaking of her ancestors when her memories of her past were... *Wait, why can I remember growing up?*

It was still a little difficult for Lyria to move, and the fact that she was both taller and heavier didn't at all help. Her balance was delicate and one wrong move would likely tear her dress and show off more than it should have... but a continued swell of some *key areas* sealed her fate in that regard, nonetheless. Take the woman's bosom for example. It had grown a little fuller because she was older physically now, but the golden winged emblem she wore over her chest had hidden that for the most part.

That was no longer possible. The base of her skirt was lifted higher to show off her panties, not because of anything growing down that way (yet) but because the available cloth higher up was becoming less available. **“My... Oh...”** She stared directly down at the cause of the problem: her bosom was swelling with great vigor, enough vigor that the emblem came unhinged and fell to the floor while her dress' neckline ripped down the center.

A pinkish-pale sea of cleavage was exposed by this tear, mounds of sensual flesh building out into shapes that were both firm in shape but soft to the touch. Either tit was rendered just a touch smaller than her head, but that was still dramatically larger than most women in general. Longer, slenderer fingers cupped them with a mix of curiosity and familiarity – though that curiosity should have been reserved for the deeper, sultry ring to her voice.

There wasn't very much of a time gap between the expansion of the woman's breasts and the expansion of her lower half, for her hips swung a handful of inches wider which forced her knees to buckle and irreversibly changed her standing posture. It was a change in gait that was promptly justified by a stretching of her skin around her thighs in ass. Lyria was already broader in figure, but this flesh that built like bread rising in an oven became even plusher and enticing. Before long she had plump thighs and a thick, heart-shaped ass.

“My body... I would be telling a fib if I said I considered this disagreeable...” Wasn't this what Lyria had wanted? To be 'more durable'? But she had always wondered what it was like to be older and sexier too. Toss in a dash of her changing personality accepting this new body and there wasn't much room for disdain... short of her outfit. But even that soon changed, becoming an elegant white gown that better fit her torso with detached sleeves and brown gloves. Black thigh highed tights gripped her ample thighs so that flesh spilled over their bands, and white heels clad her feet.

When it came to Lyria's *hair*, an array of violet flowers had arranged themselves on the left side of her head. From where these flowers were fixated a change came for the color of her hair next, a raven black

sweeping not only through her mane but likewise in the new bush that grew within her new, concealed undergarments. Her hair remained extraordinarily long, but it was thicker and silkier too – adding to the woman’s growing beauty.

But it was a *foreign* beauty as her face had begun to demonstrate. Her facial features were of a rounder shape with fuller cheeks and plumper lips. What gave it the most pronounced racial profile difference was her eyes though. Already changed to crimson, they narrowed around the eyelids until they better resembled those of a woman of Chinese heritage... or of the Dragon Empery according to the world she had been changed to better navigate.

If anything, a lot of things now made sense to the woman that hadn’t during the transformation. Which in of itself was a blessing – that she *could* recognize that she had transformed and that she had been Lyria. But that was something recognized in *past tense*. **“Your queries certainly line up now... My ancestors... They are very important to me.”**



Yat Sen’s words were like her movements. Refined, gentle, and proper. While her figure was exemplified by her tight clothing, she conducted herself like a young woman who was just as elegant as she appeared. Yet she was also a Ship Girl just as competent as her peers. These new memories nor this new purpose of hers felt out of place. It was easy for her to simply accept them as a part of the woman she had become.

There wasn’t even any animosity about the situation. Lyria had been a fragile and unrefined maiden, but Yat Sen? She was durable, strong, and above all else: extremely beautiful and sexy. There was no shortage of confidence swelling up within her chest that had, well, *swelled up itself*. **“I understand your intentions. Fusou and Shouhou came here before me, did they not? Allow me to meet with them.”**

Those were Gran and Rackam’s new names. She just seemed to *know* this while their old names were vague. They would all be part of the same expedition that had made sacrifices of their old selves at the Guild’s behest. Not that any of them had found much of an issue with

this. Yat Sen was just the next in a line of Ship Girls created for this purpose. And she most certainly wouldn't be the last.

Upon her request she was ultimately led into an adjoined room where the other two women were waiting. It was something like a lobby. Both greeted her as if they had been expecting her in that form, though their memories had *just* been adjusted to recognize her. They knew she was Lyria even if they couldn't quite remember who Lyria was. They were all allies in the adventure to come.

And so that mattered more than anything.