

ART BARK

COMMISSION STORY

BY CHALDEACHANGE



It had been a late night for Katsushika Oei, but what else was new? An artist of her renown had quite the reputation in Chaldea. At times it felt like the organization had its own little economy what with the varied skills that the many Servants summoned there possessed. Individuals traded and purchased products from one another, and some even had partnerships with da Vinci's workshop.

Being the Servant representing the Japanese artist Hokusai along with her father, the *actual* Hokusai, the young woman was constantly dealing with new commissions. Whether it was traditional art, decorations, or even manga – she was a woman that covered *all* of the bases. Which was absolutely delightful to the art-loving members of Chaldea... as well as the ones that enjoyed things like anime and video games.

Because of this level of business however, she seldom had time for rest. Late nights were the norm, and some nights she would be lucky to even get one or two hours of sleep. Were she still a regular living, breathing human then perhaps she wouldn't have been able to handle such a burden. But she didn't really *need* rest as a Servant. It only helped restore her mana, and she didn't need mana to create art. It was only after days where her Master requested her assistance that she *really* needed to sleep.

Fortunately for her, that hadn't really been the case as of late. Apparently they'd summon a new Foreigner. Some kind of fox? Oei didn't really mind all that much if it meant she was afforded the opportunity to put her all into her work. “**Guess father is off getting breakfast.**” It was only six in the morning and the woman had already pulled herself out of her futon, hair and kimono alike disheveled by her

rest. She had immediately scooped over to where she worked at her kotatsu, too. Ready to start work for another day without even taking a break to get food or even a drink. Boy, being a Servant was convenient!



Without even looking the young woman reached over for one of her brushes on the floor beside her. It should have been where she had left it, even in this chaotic mess of a room. You see, Hokusai was an artist known for leaving his housing in a chaotic state and, instead of cleaning it, would just move somewhere else and leave it as is. This was very much a trait that his daughter Oei had developed as a result.

“...*Eh?* **What’s that I’m holdin’?**” Except the weight of what she had grabbed where her brush *should* have been was not a weight that matched up with your typical paintbrush. She naturally looked over to see the cause, and was shocked to find out what it was – dropping it immediately. “**A katana? How they heck did that get in here?**” It was a blade with a golden hilt and browned scabbard, and one that certainly *didn’t* belong in her room at that. If anything it *hadn’t* been in her room when she had gone to bed just a few hours before, so when? It was much too big for someone just to have casually brought in? And it looked much too important to be left behind in the first place.

And in terms of culprits, one did come to mind. There was another version of herself that had been summoned to Chaldea. A younger, Saber version of herself (*much to Oei’s dismay*) that had a bad habit of slipping in whenever she was given an opportunity. Maybe her father had let her in while he’d gone out to get breakfast? *That* certainly sounded like a very plausible explanation.

Unfortunately, however, it *wasn’t* the explanation.

No one had *brought* the blade in. And regardless of how hard she might search – and she’d certainly stood up to do just that – she wouldn’t be able to find her precious brush in the end. Because it had been replaced *by* the blade. Or, more simply, it had *become* the blade thanks to a mysterious force that had already rewritten the identities of two other Chaldea Servants. And by touching that blade? She had now become destined to become the third whether she liked it or not.

Would she notice that it was happening, however? Absolutely. Just... not at first. Oei hadn't really been given much of a reason *to* notice it – she had merely touched a sword that did not belong in her room from her perspective, and so for what reason did she have to suspect that something was wrong with her body? To begin with, the initial altercations were not things that were so easy to notice anyways.

“Mm... So where'd I put that brush then? Or where did it get moved to?” The issue with having something moved in this mess of a room was that now the young lady had no idea *where* to look. It could have been under something, perhaps? She wouldn't find it, but at the very least the search would certainly function as a meaningful distraction for a time.

Unbeknownst to Oei, as she searched a change had come to treat her early morning hairstyle. Because she hadn't bathed, her dark locks were a little grimy and messy from laying in her futon. At some point in the morning she would at least straighten them out, but it was much too soon after waking up in her opinion to do that just yet. Miraculously, however? As if invisible shampoo had been applied to it, all of the grime was washed out her hair by an unknown force.

Were that not enough, it found itself restyled – and without the subtle curling that Oei knew her hair to have. Its length remained relatively similar aside from that, but the color? Now *that* was something worth addressing. Already shining from its newfound cleanliness, that sheen undeniably benefited from a change in melanin that saw its dark purple color twisted into a golden blonde; a color certainly not typical of a young, pure-blooded Japanese woman. Of course this would be reflected in *all* of her hair, including her eyebrows, body hair, and the tiny bush she kept maintained above her loins.

The cleanliness of her body, as she rooted around in a pile of discarded food and art supplies beside her kotatsu, just appeared to improve in general. Washed away was the sweat of her labors (and any unwanted scents that may have accompanied them), which in turn left her skin looking healthier than ever. Perhaps, it seemed, even a little *too* healthy. Too soft, too *youthful*.

“Is it really not in here? Oh, wait! What's that stickin' out!?” A search that had felt hopeless thus far suddenly took a promising turn, as she found a red stick poking up and out of another pile nearby. Leaning forward as she was, it was difficult to *not* see it from behind her. The image of what seemed to be a lump moving back and forth beneath her kimono, just above where her butt seemed to be. Maybe 'moving' was too vague of a word, however. Was there a better one?

Oh, yes! *Wagging*.

Responding to the joy she felt in *maybe* finding her missing brush, something that had been gradually developing under the folds of her clothes had begun to respond to those feelings. A tail. One that had emerged from the base of her spine and was covered in a brown fur that grew, and grew, and grew even though the tail itself would only amount to a few inches long. It was strange that Hokusai herself hadn't noticed it wagging behind her, but its movement *was* limited by the constraints of her clothing. Not to mention the little detail that her mind was being reconfigured in the interim, making it a *little* more difficult to notice.

The wagging eventually come to an end though, because the Foreigner was met with a tinge of disappointment. **“That isn't my brush... My brush? My brush...?”** Oei repeated those words several times. Why? They sounded *strange* to her, like it wasn't a word she would use to describe something that belonged to her. She was an artist, wasn't she? Was that really something that was up for debate?

Whether or not it was, that did not change the continued repurposing of her flesh and soul. Even now her purple eyes had come to inherit a crimson that had seeped in speckle by speckle until the original color was ultimately lost. And even then? Her eyes appeared unfamiliar for *other* reasons as well. They seemed to be bigger, wider, and possessed a more enthused *sparkle* to them. Again, adding to the perception of a woman that might not have *actually* been a woman, but a *girl*.

Her face's overall structure continued to speak to this as well. With her eyes changed, the rest of its design appeared to regress, smooth, and soften alike. The Servant's nose wrinkled for but a moment as nostrils closed while it shrunk, and her lips narrowed and closer ever so slightly. Not even her cheeks remained untouched, growing puffier in a way that made her face seem fuller, and her chin smaller. But overall? It made her look like a teenager again. A teenager that didn't look at *all* like Katsushika Oei.

It didn't really take much longer for her body to get that memo, but while her face had changed there was still one thing head-related of note. A change that was of a similar vein to what had happened with a growing of her tail. Except it did not appear from nothing, instead repurposing traits of the woman that already existed.

Oei's ears, in fact. They had slowly been creeping up the sides of her head, earning fluffy, brown fur not unlike that which covered her tail in the meantime. Pulled into long triangles, by the time they reached the top of her head they had drooped forward a little, twitching only when the air of the room tickled them. **“Hmm... What was I even looking**

for again?” Her voice much higher, at some point even Oei’s country accent had all but disappeared.

That voice had heightened as her frame suddenly began to plummet. **“Huh?”** No longer could she remember what she was looking for, and she noticed that she had begun to *shrink*, and yet? She couldn’t figure out where the problem was with that? Wasn’t she supposed to be small? In fact, she had plummeted all the way down to 4’8”, which was a good chunk of height to have lost and ultimately left her kimono on the verge of peeling off with how big it was compared to her body.

Mind you, it hadn’t *just* been a loss of height. Her breasts had been robbed of their C-cups, bringing them down to a perky A-cup that still seemed to look fairly pronounced against her tiny frame. Then there was the matter of her rear end and hips, which had collapsed similarly to give her the structure of a maiden that was most likely in her early teens. At the very least this meant that her body now matched the youthful nature that her face presented, and there was only *one* real issue remaining. Her outfit.

An issue that had a *very* simple solution, as things turned out. With a flash of the hilt of the sword on the floor, her entire kimono was replaced by a white garb reminiscent of a kimono or miko garb, with big, detached sleeves and a translucent, black bodysuit with open sides covering her legs and torso. It was an ornate outfit done up with crimson rope accessories, as well as a big white one attached to her back. As for the sword? No longer was it on the floor, but tied to one of those crimson ropes around her waist.

“Huh! Is this our room? But it’s such a mess!” The newly minted Divine General, *Vajra*, was evidently *quite* shocked the moment the rest of her memories as Katsushika Oei gave way. The dog-eared, and dog-tailed fourteen year old Erune could remember that this was the room she had been assigned to live in with her dearest friend, the war dog Garjana. But she couldn’t imagine living in such chaos! Had someone broken in and torn it asunder? What was with all of these art supplies? Clearly her stay had Chaldea had taken a very



confusing turn, perhaps even *dangerous* if this was an act of vandalism!

The dog girl pouted and began to pick things up all by her lonesome. She couldn't imagine why someone would do this to *her* of all people, and yet the fact that she saw it this way spoke quite loudly to just how bad the cleanliness of Hokusai's room was in the first place. On the other hand the room that *Vajra* remembered was meticulously clean. It had to be! She had a giant dog as a roommate! She didn't want to risk him getting into any of this garbage and then getting sick as a result! Not that she didn't trust Garjana not to eat something that he shouldn't.

“Uh... Vajra? What happened in here?” A quiet voice soon pulled her from her cleaning frenzy, and much to Vajra's surprise there were two other Divine Generals standing in her doorway along with Garjana – who only gave a dissatisfied groan at the scene before him. The speaker had been the smaller of the two women, the Harvin named Mahira. While the other, a Draph named Kumbhira, sauntered in and leaned forward judgmentally.

“Did you—?”

“*I didn't!*” Kumbhira was totally about to ask her if *she* had made the mess, and she absolutely hadn't! **“*I don't know what happened! I just woke up! I don't know when someone could've come in and done this! I'm sure Garjana can attest to the room not being like this when he left!*”**

While this *was* true, the giant dog was also suffering from a big lapse of memory not unlike Vajra's own. That was because, in fact, he had actually been Oei's father. The *real* Hokusai, transformed into his daughter's new dog companion. Without a clue what else to do, he just nodded. Vajra's words *sounded* correct from his perspective, at least. And with a little growly to himself he soon approached the nearest trash pile and began to nudge some away himself.

Both Kumbhira and Mahira looked at each other and shrugged. **“Okay! Well... We'll help you clean it up at least. Being the only people in Chaldea from our world, we need to stick together right?”** Hearing these words of camaraderie, the dog girl's tail began to wag. Wasn't it nice to have friends? Mahira was absolutely right! They needed to stand together in the face of adversity!

“*Yeah!*”

But they never *would* find the culprit. Namely because there *wasn't* one.