

ZENLESS ZONE ZERO: THE CURSED TAPES

CH3: TSUNDERELLA

BY CHALDEACHANGE



Much like Ellen Joe, Corin Wickes was *tired*.

...For *different* reasons, though. It was actually the morning *after* Ellen had returned to her room and fallen victim to a mysterious tape, but the two girls *had* been working side by side as Agents of the Victoria Housekeeping Company the night before. The two maids were of a similar age, and both struggled with balancing their student lives and secret responsibilities as maid and Agent hybrids. And they both worked the same shifts for the most part as a result.

After a long day of school *and* work, Corin had come home and collapsed in her bed as soon as she'd changed out of her uniform. She'd actually gotten a full night of sleep as a result, without any encounters with unusual video tapes that might have redefined the fabric of her very existence. “YAAAAWN... Hm?” But, well... some things couldn't last *forever*.

Clad only in a pair of white pajama shorts and a matching top that showed the teen's midriff, she had been in the process of stretching after waking up when she'd noticed something sitting on her dresser. All it took was a quick skip over to investigate, and she was surprised to find a small box that had been sent to her from Random Play. “**Was the Proxy thinking of me, perhaps?**” Belle sometimes recommended videos to her, so she wondered if the woman had sent her one.



Upon opening the box, she found a tape marked 'Toradora'. **"Hm? I've never heard of this one before. Is it a hidden gem or something?"** The girl had a little bit of time before she had to get ready for school, and so she brought it over to the VCR in her room and slipped it into the appropriate slot. Corin stared at her television screen expectantly, curious to see what it was that had been sent to her.

But all there was... was static.

"Oh no... I wonder if something is wrong with it?" It *looked* like it had been rewound. She was more responsible than Ellen was, so she'd at least checked that much before sliding it into her device. If it was the case that something really *was* wrong with it, she could *probably* make time to slide over to Random Play between class and work. It wasn't really on the way, but she could make the trip. ...If she could turn the static screen off, anyways. For a few moments her gaze was locked on the static screen, and the girl herself was unable to tear them away. **"That's... weird?"**

To say that the girl felt *off* probably would have been an understatement. The more she stared at the television, the more bizarre of a feeling she got – even if she couldn't quite place a finger on *what* was bothering her in the first place. She had fallen under the same curse of the tapes that Belle and Ellen had, but *fortunately* for her, her own transformation wasn't going to be as dramatic or as *traumatic* as the other two. This didn't mean that it wouldn't be substantial in its own way, though.

Signs of the curse's influence had already begun to appear on Corin's body, but as had been the case with the others? Her mind had already been seized by the curse, and so she couldn't really make heads or tails of them *as* they happened. The first of them wasn't especially noticeable in the first place. After all, Corin wore her hair down when she slept, and when it was unbound, it reached the center of her back.

This was all relevant because that was gradually becoming *not* the case. Her hair didn't become shorter, but it *did* grow *longer*. In the back her greenish silver locks ended up reaching down to the peak of her buttocks while the style became vaguely wavier, while on the sides of her head it fell down to her chest where it hadn't fallen down before. **"I—HAH!?"** Corin *finally* managed to snap herself out of her stupor, but

not before the green of *all* the hair on her body had altered to become a more common *brown*.

“What was I staring off into space for!? ...Eh?” Even despite the curse’s influence, the teenaged girl appeared to at least *subconsciously* notice that something was wrong with what she had just said. There were *two* things wrong, actually. The first was the *sound* of her voice. It sounded *very* high. *Very* squeaky. *Very* unique. But for how high and squeaky it was, those qualities had been channeled into an uncharacteristically *loud* outburst. The student was typically soft spoken and would *never* raise her voice.

Then again, she was *also* supposed to have small, violet eyes. But her irises had darkened to brown, and the shapes of her eyes came across as *dramatically* larger, even though by definition her eyelids now held more of an upturned almond shape. As had been Ellen’s fate, her coworker now looked to be of *Japanese* heritage. This spread throughout the rest of her face’s features in a way that made her look cuter and a little younger.

But despite how she *appeared*? The only thing about her sixteen year old age that was going to change was her birth date.

The Japanese high schooler groaned. **“What is wrong with me? Ugh, this is so annoying!”** It was almost as if someone had taken Corin’s ‘intensity’ dial and cranked it up from 1 to *maximum*. She wasn’t mincing her words where she would normally say nothing at all. At least she could tell that that something was *off*, even if she couldn’t properly place it. What she was sensing was the fit of her pajamas.

They were too loose around her chest and waist and the girl was tugging at them to try and keep them in a comfortable position. It was a side effect of her body *shrinking*. Not in height – she would remain with the same 4’8” stature she’d always had. But basically, in terms of *everything* else. Both her shoulders and her hips slimmed inward, giving her a very *slender* design that was only made all the leaner as the little fat that her breasts and butt *did* possess slimmed away. She was left with *A-cup* breasts and a silhouette that was barely feminine in shape.

“Ngh... This is why I hate getting up this early!” The girl was ready to lash out again. She was so tired. Would breakfast help? Probably, but she had to get *ready* first. Why was she even still wearing her pajamas? When had she even *purchased* pajamas that were so cutesy? This question seemingly triggered a change in her *bedroom*. Most notably the clothing stored in her drawers. It was all replaced with outfits that would fit her leaner form, while the pajamas she was wearing upon her body in that moment?

They were near-instantaneously replaced by what she needed to put on for school. A white, button-up uniform shirt under a red jacket and a pleated, blue skirt. There was a blue ribbon now tied around her collar, black thigh highs hugging her upper legs, and cute little loafers adorning her feet. “**Or... not? When’d I even put my uniform on?**” Either way, she supposed it didn’t matter. What *did* matter was the image displaying on her television set. Was that tape still going?

“**What kind of baka would leave a tape playing this entire time, baka!?**” *Taiga Aisaka* wasn’t sure *who* she was calling an idiot in that moment, but it just felt *right* to her somehow. It was more or less in line with her general personality, because she *was* perhaps one of the most potent tsunderes known to humankind. From what she could recall, someone she liked had sent her that videotape. Credits were rolling, but everything *before* the credits hadn’t worked? “**Stupid, stupid, stupid!**”



Despite being roughly the same age as she’d been *before* popping the tape in, and despite having been so small at that time... she was even *smaller* now. Taiga blushed at the thought of having to go to class that morning. She was easy to upset, and there was a boy at school who had seemingly been making it his life’s goal to try and upset her. Well... She knew that this wasn’t what was *actually* happening, but her tsundere persona made it difficult for her to accept the truth.

That he probably had a crush on her, and that she actually reciprocated this crush.

She turned off her TV and picked up her backpack with a woeful groan and started towards her door. “**Whatever! All I need to do is get that mongrel to stop barking and I can get through the day! I just need to keep him out of my head!**” Would that *really* work? Probably not, but she *had* to try! She wasn’t going to go down that path and open up to him!

It wasn’t like she was in a romance story!