

AMONG THE HELIOBI

COMMISSION STORY

BY CHALDEACHANGE



“I didn’t even know a place like this existed on the Xianzhou Luofu...”

“It definitely *ain’t* from around here. Someone or something made it appear.”

It certainly wasn’t strange to hear a back and forth between the Ten-Lords Commission Judge-in-training, Huohuo, and her sentient heliobus tail, Mr. Tail. The two had been inseparable since the young, green haired Foxian had been essentially ‘cursed’ by him, and the two shared something akin to a symbiotic relationship where the heliobus helped the girl with her problems in exchange for being able to stay close to her as her tail.

They’d had a lot of ups and downs, but these days they seemed to at least be getting on rather well. Even if the depth of their relationship was generally difficult to discern with how they tended to sometimes bicker. But in this particular instance? They *were* cooperating. They kind of *had* to, all things considered. After all, they were in all new territory... and they were by themselves.

But they weren’t *supposed* to be by themselves. This incident had begun because Huohuo had received an invitation from Little Gui to participate in a new expedition after several months of their group being inactive. Apparently, a section on the outskirts of the Xianzhou Luofu had been altered through heliobi activity, so it was the perfect chance for the *Ghost Hunting Squad* of Guinaifen, Sushang, and Huohuo to return!

...Without the Trailblazer this time, because they were unfortunately off world.



“I think it was obviously the heliobi that changed things...” Having Mr. Tail at her side was always comforting, but she *really* didn’t like being separated from her friends. It was just an unfortunate consequence of everyone’s carelessness at the time. The transformed landscape had become a thick forest full of spooky, lit lanterns that dimly lit their surroundings – along with an even thicker fog. Had the group been smart, they would have held hands or at least used rope to connect each other.

But they *hadn’t*, and now they had paid the price for it. It hadn’t really take long at all for the trio to end up heading down different paths, and Huohuo had attempted to retrace her steps the moment she had noticed. The *issue* with this was that she had just made herself even *more* lost, so Mr. Tail suggested they continue to go forward to try and move past the fog. That way there would be a better chance of finding Guinaifen and Sushang.

The Foxian looked up in the trees. She’d noticed them for a while now. Heliobi watching from up high. There had been a few at first, but it definitely *felt* like more and more of them had been gathering. **“Am I extra tasty or something? There’s definitely *more* of them, aren’t there?”** She glanced back at her tail, which was groaning like an old man at the question.

“They’re definitely actin’ *weird*. They’ve taken an interest in ya, but I can’t make sense of what they—” Speaking of *weird*, Mr. Tail didn’t finish his sentence. Just as the Foxian he was bound to seemed to stop out of the forest and into a different area entirely. There was a gigantic cherry blossom tree sprawling above her, elaborate gardens lined what had become an actual path set out upon the ground.

But the girl was more bewildered by Mr. Tail’s sudden silence than anything. It wasn’t like him to leave something unsaid (to the point that she believed he just liked to hear himself talk). **“What was that, Mr. Tail...?”** She looked over her shoulder again to see if she could make eye contact, but what she *did* find left her shocked. **“M-MR. TAIL!? Where did you go!?”** Her tail was *missing*, which wasn’t actually impossible. He could detach himself and fly about in his own form

whenever he fancied, but he hadn't said a word to her about it. **"If this is a joke, then it isn't funny..."**

Huohuo was concerned that she had been abandoned, but she was also certain that the heliobus *wouldn't* do that. Maybe he'd figured out where Guinaifen and Sushang were and had flown off the check? Improbable as it was, she had still *hoped* that this was the case and continued forward to the base of the huge cherry blossom tree. The closer she came, the thinner the fog was. Was that the case because the fog was passing? No, even the girl could tell. The tree was emitting a very strong spiritual power that was repelling the fog. Even the heliobi in the sky seemed to be wary about approaching it.

"It's so big, and if it keeps the heliobi away... Maybe I can wait here until the others find me?" It certainly made sense to hang around a landmark of that size. *Eventually* someone would find her there, even if it wasn't her friends. If they were gone *too* long, then Hanya of the Ten-Lords Commission would surely send a search party anyways. **"Oh! But if this energy is driving the heliobi away, then maybe that's where Mr. Tail has gone..."** If so, and he'd been driven away without her noticing... Well, he probably wouldn't be happy with her.

But that *wasn't* what had happened. Rather, Huohuo was in much more danger now that she was standing a few feet from the tree trunk.

If it *was* the tree that had driven away Mr. Tail as Huohuo was assuming, should she depart and look for him? The thought *did* cross her mind, but there were risks involved with that idea. The heliobi would definitely loom around her again, or even *attack* her if she didn't immediately find her partner. But there was also the risk that she would just end up even more lost than she already was. **"What do I do? What do I do?"** Her indecision ultimately made the decision for her, rooting the girl in place.

Yet, the longer she lingered... the stranger things became beyond her notice. The tree's power was actually affecting *her*, but in a different way from the heliobi (else she surely wouldn't have approached it in the first place). This was made no clearer than in the girl's *eyes* at first. Her white, paw print shaped pupils darkened to black, and the four dots in each eye ultimately merged into a single dot in the center of each eye. From there? The green around the edges of these irises brightened to a pink not unlike the petals of the cherry blossom tree before her, and that color painted the rest of her irises before long.

"There's something strange *comforting* about this tree though. Its energy feels *off nice*." The Foxian girl blinked after

speaking. Were those the words she had *meant* to say? Surely they weren't, right? Something about the tree was *wrong*. Even if she couldn't express it verbally, she could tell as much deep down. But she couldn't muster the will to attempt to leave. The tree's spiritual energy already had its claws *in* her.

Huohuo's hair exemplified this well enough, though much like her eyes she appeared to remain ignorant to the idea that anything was even wrong in the first place. Nonetheless, like someone had been painting her green locks with a dyeing brush, the tips shifted in hue towards a bright pink that was a touch lighter than her eyes. This coloring worked its way down into her roots, but ultimately? Her hairstyle didn't really change all that much aside from becoming fluffier somehow.

“H-Huh!?” On the other hand, there was the matter of the Foxian's fox *ears*. The fur on them turned as pink as her hair, but she suddenly found herself shocked by an absence of sound. It was like the whole world around her had just suddenly gone entirely quiet, but it only remained that way for a few seconds. The girl reached up to touch her ears in a panic, but strangely? She didn't reach for where her ears *should* have been on *top* of her head. She gingerly touched at the *sides* of her head, where ears were found on most other races. And she actually touched her ears, because those ears... had *moved*. Slowly but surely, they had slid down the sides of her skull, shrinking and balding until they were short and round.

With her hearing returned to her just a second later, Huohuo blinked. **“That was... *certainly odd*.”** Her own words prompted her to tilt her head. Since when did her voice sound so gentle and mature? Where had all of her usual hesitation gone? She hardly ever sounded so certain when she spoke, but she really didn't feel even a little bit anxious compared to how she usually sounded. Although the fact that she sounded more *mature*...

Well, that wasn't a mistake by any means. It probably would have sounded a touch out of place on her youthful face... if it had remained youthful, at least. That wasn't really the case, but much like everything else, she hadn't noticed at all beyond a vague, subconscious feeling. **“*Hm...*”** Nonetheless, her voice had deepened and was communicated through lips that swelled fuller in shape even *as* she spoke. Her nostrils flared and her eyes grew in size, but they narrowed due to her racial profile vaguely shifting towards something that would be considered *Japanese* by Earth standards.

She was quite the beauty from the neck up now, but her more mature face clashed direly with the rest of her small, childish body. How 'childish' it was, mind you, was something immediately challenged in a

way that Huohuo found to be quite uncomfortable. “*Urk...*” The girl felt strangely *heavy* all of a sudden in all of the wrong places. Her torso tilted forward uncomfortably, her back straining under the weight that was the source of it all.

The front of Huohuo’s robes strained, for that weight was pooling within her *bosom*. Her small breasts were growing larger and larger, easily pushing past their original A-cup sizing in just a handful of seconds. Though, speaking of ‘handfuls’, what these breasts were growing to become far surpassed just a mere handful. The torso of her attire was hoisted higher and higher as fatty tissue pooled within her cups until they had swollen out into a pair of impressive *E-cups* that looked all the more impressive upon such a short frame.

And it wasn’t even *just* her breasts that had received this treatment. “*Oh dear, what’s going on here?*” For such *dramatic* changes, you would have assumed the one suffering them might have noticed them down to the last detail. But this girl – no, *woman* – couldn’t properly fathom the extent of what she was deeming ‘odd’. It just felt like something was amiss, but she couldn’t quite place her finger on it no matter how hard she tried.

The back of her shorts were pushed out as the buns within stretched, jiggling with ample additions until the cheeks peeked out and over the top – visible only because her big tits had lifted her top. Her hips had no choice but to pull wider because of this, and a side effect of this process was the shorts tearing down the sides over her hips to accommodate this change. Things only worsened in this regard thanks to her thighs bloating too, practically doubling on her short legs.

It almost looked *uncanny*, the way she appeared so mature and curvy but retained a height of 5’1”. Curves of that girth would have made *far* more sense on a much taller woman... something that was soon confirmed *by* her body growing taller. Bones stretched and lengthened where you might expect for this to be possible, and as a result the thickness of her thighs was a little more evenly distributed while her top was lifted even higher from her shorts, and those shorts were raised so that her thighs were *entirely* bare.

Ultimately, she stood at around 5’6”.

But there were areas where this growth wasn’t as obvious. Take her *feet*, for example. Her tootsies had stretched within her shoes until those shoes could no longer accommodate them, and so her toes burst through the front along with stretched socks. The ex-Foxian’s hands experienced a similar growth, but fortunately she wasn’t wearing any gloves for them to burst through. Rather, it was her nails that became

more noticeable as they grew a touch longer and were painted a light pink.

It didn't seem like her body could possibly change further at this point. There wasn't even the slightest bit of similarity in her visage to the girl she had once been. **"I really *do* feel like something has changed, but if I can't figure it out... Perhaps I just need some rest?"** Only her clothes remained of her past self, and they were practically in tatters upon her bigger body. The cherry blossom tree's powers sought to rectify this, though.

The clothing that Huohuo *did* have on were claimed by a passing breeze, cloth turned into loose cherry blossom leaves that peeled off her body to render it utterly bare. The petals swirled around her body like a floral tornado for a few seconds, but with time came to plaster themselves against her body again and glow. When the light faded? She was left dressed in something else entirely.

She was left clad in a light blue and white kimono, tied with a purple sash beneath her large bosom. The sleeves of this kimono were puffy and had white lace weaved into them, though this lace could be seen down the front fold of the kimono too. Raised, black geta sandals were slid over short, white socks on her feet. And in her hair? There was a light blue hat with a hitaikakushi that sported a red ghost insignia. Fans appeared in either of her hands, too.

"Hm? Is the barrier disturbing you all? Allow me to tweak the potency then." In another world, the woman now known as *Yuyuko Saigyouji* probably would have been categorized simply as a 'ghost'. The spirit of the deceased that had found a new purpose; and a quite powerful one at that. But here? In this universe, ghosts *weren't* real, and as a result, she was classified as a very powerful *heliobi*. One that looked over the great cherry blossom tree and the barrier that it emitted.



Yuyuko saw the heliobi of the forest as something akin to her own children. They were wayward spirits that could be mischievous when needed, but she recognized that their behavior was just innate to what they were. She couldn't fault them for disturbing mortals, and if it meant persisting in this unusual place? Then she would encourage them to do what they had to do.

And if her barrier was getting in their way, then... All it took was the pink haired woman placing a palm upon the immensely thick tree trunk to adjust its potency, allowing the heliobi that had swarmed around the outskirts to pour in. They hovered around her gleefully, celebrating the 'creation' of the heliobus that was effectively their new 'queen'. Yuyuko didn't remember being Huohuo though, she just believed she had *always* been this way.

“You needn't swarm around *me*, you know. But I suppose if some of you could fetch me some snacks... Something sweet? Oh, and some tea or sake to go along with them would be nice? But only if you're free~!” Now that the barrier wasn't as restrictive, the ghost woman was instead more concerned about her *hunger*. Yuyuko had a hearty appetite, and in that moment she was acting on an empty stomach. She wasn't sure if any of the heliobi could brew tea, though. **“Hmm...”**

That was when one of the green heliobi floated down to whisper in her ear. **“I see... Intruders, you say? Well then! Bring them to me!”** It was Guinaifen and Sushang, but Yuyuko didn't recognize that. Rather, she saw this as a fortuitous opportunity. The regular heliobi might have been incapable of cooking or brewing tea, but with the power housed in this tree...

“Surely I can put the two of them to good use!”