Marionette: Tales of an Accidental Teenage Anti-Hero

by miraculouslysam

Summary

For Marinette March 2019

When teenager Marinette Dupain-Cheng stumbles upon the butterfly kwami, she takes on the moniker "Marionette" and becomes a vigilante dispensing her own unique form of justice. Even with a moniker so close to her actual name, no one suspects a thing.

Notes

I'm playing around with the lore of the butterfly miraculous here so it makes more sense in the context of the fic. This is a Marinette-positive fic, arguably a salt fic, so I suggest leaving now if you're not interested in that "Marinette Dupain-Cheng."

Before the girl even turned around, she knew she’d be looking the blonde straight in her sneer. She bit back a groan and plastered on a poker face.

“What do you want, Chloé?”

Every day was the same. Marinette would wake up, cursing that it still wasn’t just a nightmare. She
would spend the whole morning—or however much was left of it, anyway, since she seemed to be chronically late—building up her courage for the day. While getting dressed, she would remind herself how cool she was for designing her own clothing. While pulling her hair into her signature bun? Telling herself that it gave her just a little more power not to hide her face. While eating? Enforcing that she was strong, and nourishment helped her stay that way.

Then she would go to school. It wasn’t that she didn’t have friends. She found that she got along moderately well with nearly every person in her class. She just didn’t find herself particularly close with or fond of anyone. And she certainly did not think they felt the same about her.

But that was fine. Marinette never expected anything from anyone, not really. She expected Chloé to bully her, to try finding new ways to make her feel less than human every day. She expected Sabrina to go along with whatever Chloé’s scheme of the day was. But beyond that, she expected nothing from anyone else. She did not expect for any of her classmates to stand up for her, nor did she expect for any member of her school’s administration to give her tormentors any punishments. Not when the threat of Daddy Dearest loomed over their heads.

So, she dealt with it. She sat quietly each day and took whatever it was that Chloé chose to throw at her. If she saw Chloé bullying someone else, she would always talk to whoever it was afterward to make sure they were okay. Marinette hoped that spreading kindness into the world would bring it back to her, but it never seemed to. She figured cosmic retribution was too much to ask from the universe, but a bit of kindness didn’t seem like it should’ve been out of the realm of possibility. She didn’t expect anything, but it would have been a pleasant surprise.

Every day, she went home and recounted its events to her parents, then went up to her room and crossed off another day on her calendar, counting down the days until summer vacation. Her parents didn’t do much to help either, but at least they listened. Marinette understood they couldn’t do much beyond that, so she threw her frustrations into her creations, promising herself that all the bullying was doing was teaching her how to handle the cruelty she would face in the fashion industry. It all would be worth it in the long run, she swore.

As summer rolled around, Marinette found herself with elevated spirits. Summer meant a few months of sweet relief from Chloé, with nothing but time to explore Paris for inspiration and to create. Paris in the summer meant jazz flowing through the streets and new people to study. There was no shortage of creative inspiration.

One day, while visiting the open-air markets, Marinette found herself taking a detour through a quieter street and stumbling upon an abandoned building. It was beautiful, albeit rundown, and it wasn’t long before Marinette was entering to explore the inside.

As she walked through the building, she tripped over what she thought was a rock. Upon further examination, she realized it was a mahogany box, carved with an inscription of some sort. She felt a burst of curiosity course through her and left for home, box in hand.

At home, sitting at her desk with her sketchbook open and pencils laid out, she began drawing the box from various angles. Opening it, she shoved herself back as a flash of purple light and a small... bug? she didn’t recognize flew out. A scream escaped her mouth as the thing spoke to her. “Hello! My name is Nooroo. What’s yours?”

Marinette took three deep breaths, but they did no good to calm her. “My name is Marinette. This can’t be real. I’m just dreaming, right? Maybe when I tripped, I actually hit my head and I’m unconscious right now. I’m going to wake up and this is all going to be a figment of my
imagination.”

The purple thing— it called itself Nooroo, right?- levelled its eyes with hers. “I can promise you, Marinette, I am not a figment of your imagination. But I hope that means you’re a creative person; we’ll work far better together if you are. I’m a kwami. I can give you the power to turn people into your champions from their emotions. You just have to start by putting on the miraculous.” Nooroo pointed back at the box, and Marinette finally noticed the brooch sitting in it. It wouldn’t go with her usual clothing, if she chose to use it. She’d have to make some new clothes to help it blend in.

As she clipped it to her blazer, she asked how it would give her powers.

“Well, the powers I give you work differently than those of the other miraculouses. From the first time you transform, you’ll discover a couple of things. First, you will find butterflies are drawn to you. They are part of how you turn people into your champions. I suggest keeping a garden or visiting butterfly gardens to remain inconspicuous, but they will flock to you more the longer you use the miraculous. You can call them to you when using your powers as well. The other thing you will notice is you can sense other people’s charged emotions, positive or negative. The stronger the emotions are, the easier it is to… manipulate them. I cannot think of a better word to describe the phenomenon, unfortunately.”

Marinette took a moment to wrap her mind around what the being was saying. “So… you’re telling me that I’m gonna be a Disney princess in hiding, who also can make people do my bidding? Why would I want to do that, and how would that even be possible?”

“I don’t know what a Disney princess is, but I suppose that would be a fair assessment if it is what you have come up with to compare it to. As for your other questions, you would do so to help them; you will be a hero! You transform by saying ‘wings rise.’ Once you are transformed, you can will a butterfly to you and transfer power to it to deliver to the person you wish to become your champion. The butterfly will then fly to that person and enter an emotionally-charged possession. You then can speak to the person and help them determine if they are willing to become your champion. We can test the emotion-sensing aspect now if you would like.”

Marinette couldn’t help but feel intrigued. Before she knew it, a sure smile was slipping onto her face. “Let’s do it. Nooroo, wings rise.”

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