

The child screamed in fear as the cat yowled as they were tossed through a dark tunnel, their bodies glittering with the same gold dust she whistled through the whistle as it was around her neck.

The journey soon ended as she and the cat exited the dark tunnel and collapsed, landing on the hard ground bottom first, and she grunted as the cat landed on its feet next to her.

“Ow,” the child winced as the cat shook itself. “That’s going to leave a mark.”

She gingerly stood up as she wiped the grass off her bottom and looked where she had arrived... only to see a massive area that looked like an apocalypse.

There were dead trees and grass that were a dried color, and the sky was dark with black clouds in the sky, leaving nothing but an empty place.

“What happened to this place?” the child gently muttered as she reached down and picked the cat up. “Did I stumble upon a zombie apocalypse?”

She noticed what looked like railroad tracks and decided to look for anyone alive as she followed the railroad tracks to any designation while holding the cat close to her.

The child continued following the tracks as she looked around, passing by empty villages that made things a little scary by how it was a *ghost town*.

There were barely any humans around, and the items the humans had were left out, and the food was rotten to the point of barely even being there.

A bad feeling sat in the child’s stomach as she looked around anxiously, wondering what had happened to everyone, even noticing vehicles were left out in different parts.

“Did everyone just vanish out of thin air?” the child mumbled.

She continued following the train tracks before stumbling upon a large train station with a glass roof over the head, and when she stepped onto the station, she was surprised to see *statues*!

They resemble people and are in different positions, but they have some signs of how many years went by and how dust was on them.



Surprisingly, no moss was growing on them as they were still in their positions, their expressions either looking confused, scared or at their previous expression.

“Oh my god,” the child gulped as she saw the people’s conditions and hugged the cat in her arms. “Are these the town’s *residents?*”

A sudden low growl caused the child to be stiff after hearing that noise as the cat in her arms fluffed while emitting a low growl as it pinned its ears against its skull.

She thought a dog was still around... but paused when she noticed that most animals she saw were statues too.

...Then what was it?

Something shadowy moved in the background as the child gasped, turning around to see a pair of red facet eyes staring back at her.

Then, a toothy grin appeared on the creature as the child’s confusion turned to fear after seeing the face as the cat in her arms started hissing.

That is no animal.

A *monster* soon appeared from the shadows and was grinning manically, revealing its teeth and almost had a goblin appearance but was entirely black.

The goblin-like creature shrieked and headed straight toward the child, causing her to scream and run in the other direction, panicking when *more* appeared and started chasing her.

She tried leaving the platform, but the goblin-like creatures made faces and swiped their clawed hands at her whenever she tried.

Every time they swiped their clawed hands at her, the cat in her arms would spit at them and swipe at their fingers protectively.

The child stopped after seeing she was surrounded by the goblin-like creatures but then perked when she watched someone hide in an office with the door closed behind their back, making a beeline towards the office as the goblin-like creatures chased behind her.

The child grabbed the doorknob and quickly opened the door, entering inside as she dropped the cat as it landed on its feet.

She quickly returned to the door and grabbed it to close it, but the goblin-like creatures crowded it, trying to enter as they grabbed the door's side.

She used all her strength to close it, slamming it onto the faces or arms they were trying to get through.

Thankfully, she closed the door as the goblin-like creatures shrieked in pain from the door slamming on their limbs before discovering a key next to her and picking it up, turning around, and locking the door with it as the knob twitched frantically.

She stepped away from the door as the doorknob continued to frantically click as the goblin-like creatures were trying to get inside before stopping as the goblin-like creatures moved away, giving up from trying to enter the office.

After the goblin-like creatures disappeared, the child panted as the cat slowly calmed down and muttered, "What the heck was that?!"

She looked through the window as goblin-like creatures were walking around, fighting against each other or vandalizing.

One slammed against the window she was looking through, causing her to scream and scramble backward as the cat yowled in surprise, watching it laugh manically before disappearing.

She shakily stood up after the goblin-like creature disappeared and turned around before yelping when she saw someone standing in the same office as her.

Thankfully, the stranger was human, but she could not tell what they looked like because of the darkness of the office.

“Oh, thank god,” the child sighed as the cat was near her legs. “I’m so sorry for barging in like that. I was trying to get away from those things. What were they, though?”

There was no response, and the child worried about whoever was standing in the same office with her.

“Um,” she walked over to the stranger gingerly. “Sir? Are you-!”

She gasped when her hand went *through* the stranger’s arm when she tried tapping on his arm, causing her to gasp and move it back.

Now that she was up close to a *ghost*, she felt bewildered and surprised she had made *contact* with this spiritual being floating a few feet from the ground.

The ghost moved back after the child realized she was speaking to a spirit and mentioned something at a desk as if something was sitting in the chair, turning slightly to the side.

After the ghost mentioned to the desk with a hand, the apparition disappeared as the child looked worried.

Did... she stumbled upon a *corpse*?

The child hesitated for a minute before slowly walking up to the object, seeing it looked *stone* than dead.

She looked around the large object and sighed in relief, seeing it was another statue instead of a corpse.

“I prefer a statue over a dead body,” the child nodded.

The statue had an envelope on its desk near its left hand and its right arm raised to protect its face from something already hitting this city.

Curious, the child picked up the envelope from the desk and noticed a pocket watch underneath the letter.

She picked up the pocket watch in her hand and looked at the cover, seeing a large blue flower with multiple pedals that starts in a dark blue in the center and fades into a lighter blue at the tips.

The child flips the pocket watch onto its back for a name or who owned the watch, but there is no name.

Confused, the child puts the pocket watch down near her and looks at the envelope, noticing it has the cursive words ‘*To anyone*’ on the front.

The child searched for a letter opener, picked up a knife with a dull blade, used it to open the envelope, and took out the letter from inside.

The letter reads;

*To whoever is reading this letter, my name is Sir Topham Hatt.*

*I may be transformed into stone, but I had to arrive here early to write this P.O.S. letter to whoever comes here.*

*Our world is in danger because someone has stolen our magic from the island and is using it for evil, turning the world into a dark and gloomy place.*

*I am giving you the Zodiac Pocket Watch from an old friend of mine to help you with your travels to find four temples in each element that creates the earth itself.*

*Use the diamond to activate one of the Zodiacs of the pocket watch, and use it wisely.*

*Avoid detection from the Darkmites and find solutions to bring Sodor back to life before everything is too late.*

*I wish you luck in rescuing Sodor from being forgotten.*

After reading the entire letter, the child looked confused before taking out the diamond gemstone from the envelope as she placed the letter down, muttering, “How can I put this in the Zodiac Pocket Watch?”

As she said that, the pocket watch twitched, and the child flinched, looking confused after watching it start to twitch.

She picks up the pocket watch as the symbol glows brighter before *magically* lifting it from her hand and flipping around.

The back of the pocket watch opened and revealed empty gem slots, and the round diamond in the child's hand was removed and shrank down to fit the empty gem slot.

The diamond entered the first gem slot on the top before the back closed and the pocket watch opened, revealing the clock's face to her.

There were three sets of symbols in a full circle around the clock's face and two extra symbols on the front, one a symbol of a cat and the other a 'U' with a squiggle through it.

The pocket watch's symbol flashed as the clock's arms moved before pointing at twelve with the symbol of a rat, a falcon with open wings, and a 'Y' shaped symbol.

The child's body suddenly transformed as she held the pocket watch, feeling everything on her skin tingling.



Her legs transformed into hind legs, her face became a snout, her ears went on top of her head, and her hands transformed into paws.

Her clothes morphed into her body and disappeared out of sight, and the child then shrunk down to the size of a mouse, and the transformation was complete.

The child opened her eyes in confusion after the tingling sensation finished... but felt her body covered in... fur?

She reached up to her face with her hands, but instead of feeling five fingers and a palm, she felt whiskers and ears?

Confused, the child looked at her hands, only to look surprised when she saw *paws* instead!

The child looked around her body with a panicked expression, realizing she had transformed into a *rat*!

The child's entire body was covered in cream-colored fur, and she had round ears with no tail and tiny claws and wearing a collar around her neck with a pendant on it.

'Okay,' the child thought. 'I had transformed into a rat... so what should I do?'

Then she looked up at the cat as it was sniffing her, as she instantly started panicking, realizing that cats *chased mice*.

"Uh, nice kitty?" the child gulped.

The cat perked after the child gulped before *smirking*, "It's alright. I don't chase humans who transform into mice."

The child's jaw dropped after the cat spoke to her as she exclaimed, "You can talk?!"

"Uh, not really," the cat responded as he flicked his tail around his body. "The Zodiac Pocket Watch allows you to listen to what animals say. Most of the Zodiacs assigned to the watch are mostly animal-based."

"Really?" the child perked.

"Yep," the cat nodded. "But I can't talk to other humans who don't have the Zodiac Pocket Watch like you do."

After the cat explained, the child blinked and asked, "How do you know much about this?"

"I've seen it happen before my eyes when I was just a kitten with someone else holding it before you," the cat explained. "Ever since I started to learn that pocket watch has a whole 'nother level of mythical."

"Yeah," the child nodded, looking down at her paws. "...How do I turn back?"

"Easy," the cat spoke, laying on its front as the child stiffened. "All you have to do is remove your necklace to transform back."

"Remove this?" the child asked, mentioning the collar around her neck.

“Yep,” the cat nodded. “You’ll return to normal once you take that off around your neck.”

The child hesitated briefly but grabbed the pendant and yanked, taking the pendant off before transforming back to herself as she was sitting on the ground.

She was startled after transforming into her human and looked at her hands, seeing she was holding the Zodiac Pocket Watch in her hands.

“This was the powers of the Zodiac Pocket Watch?” the child asked.

“Yep.” the cat nodded as she glanced at him with a startled flinch. *“You can still hear me while in your human form, right?”*

“Yeah,” the child nodded. “A little weird hearing you talking.”

“You’ll get used to it,” the cat sighed. *“Now, for the problem of this world. The letter said to use the diamond to find solutions to bring Sodor to life, right?”*

“Right.” the child nodded.

*“Then let’s find a way to return this place to normal.”* the cat told her. *“Can’t leave a place alone without helping it.”*

The child paused after the cat told her before nodding, saying, “You’re right.”

“Good,” the cat nodded. *“Now, let’s start with getting around those,”* He paused after seeing a goblin-like creature called a ‘Darkmite’ staring through the window, making a hideous face before disappearing as he made a disgusted expression. *“Things without getting caught.”*

The child nodded before saying, “Maybe I could open the door to let you out and close it while I search for another way through the room.”

*“That could work.”* the cat nodded.

The child stood up and walked over to the locked door with the key in her hand, saying, “Be careful. Who knows what those things do to animals.”

The cat nodded before the child unlocked the door and quickly opened it, allowing the cat out before closing it and locking it.

She looked through the window as the cat disappeared, avoiding the Darkmites before running off.

“Okay,” the child nodded. “My turn.”

She took out the Zodiac Pocket Watch and looked at the face, seeing the arms were still on the sign of the rat with the ‘Y’ symbol.

The child paused from activating the Zodiac Pocket Watch, wondering how she would get the-

The child tapped the top of the pocket watch with a single *click*, transforming herself into the same rat again.

“Oh!” the child perked. “*That’s* how you activate it!”

She switched her mind to what she was doing and instantly searched around the room, seeing it looked like an office with some sort of assortments.

The child searched for a few minutes before coming across a hole in one of the corners and saw it was a little small, but it did not matter.

From what she read through the books, mice can squeeze through holes ranging from six to seven millimeters.

The child squeezed herself through the small hole into the tunnel, crawling through it as she searched for an exit.

The crawling lasted a few minutes until she popped out from the other side, glancing around as the Darkmites were distracted with graffitiing the walls and horsing each other.

The child quietly snuck by them as they were distracted and soon came across the same cat as he was waiting for her.

“Are you okay?” the child asked him.

“I’m alright,” the cat nodded. “Just disgusted by these things messing around the platform.”

The child nodded in agreement before glancing up at the cat, saying, “Now that we are out of the office, we need to look for clues on what we could do to help this world.”

“Right,” the cat nodded before lying beside the child. “Best if you climb on. Your small size would slow me down if I stopped for you.”

The child nodded and carefully climbed onto the cat’s head, asking, “Oh, I didn’t get your name.”

“Eh,” the cat shrugged as she relaxed on the cat’s neck. “I got called a lot of names back at home. I honestly never had a suitable name for me.”

The child looked thoughtful after the cat shrugged before suggesting, “What about Notches?”

“‘Notches?’” the cat asked with confusion.

“Your ears,” the child pointed out. “They’re filled with notches. If you say notches to *noches* in Spanish, it means ‘night,’ like your pattern.”

The cat paused a little as he muttered the name a few times before saying, “I like that name. I’ll be called ‘Notches’ then.”

“Great!” the child nodded.

“What’s your name?” the cat, Notches, asked.

The child paused after Notches asked and responded, “I, too, was not given a name, either.”

“Really?” Notches perked, stepping over some items on the ground. “You never have a name?”

“No,” the child sighed. “I was called names like you but never wanted any of them as they were cruel.”

Notches paused as he hummed in thought before saying, “Why don’t you name yourself a name you like?”

“Why?” the child asked.

“Well,” Notches smiled. “Sometimes, some cats of mine back home have their own names. Ranging from Nightshade to Willow, others chose their names based on their personality while some,” he paused. “Have their own opinions on their names.”

The child listened to Notches as he wandered through the empty place, thinking about what Notches told her as she rode on his back.

She then noticed something floating in the air and perked, turning to see what it was and tugging Notches’ fur, causing him to stop.

“What?” Notches asked.

This ghost was staring at the child with dull light blue eyes and short brown hair, pale skin with a single scar over the left eye that is somewhat hidden underneath the bangs, and wearing a dark blue uniform with black pants and polished shoes.

“Do you see something?” Notches asked, looking over at where the child was looking at.

He then noticed the ghost flying in the air and flinched, puffing a little after seeing the ghost as the child asked, “You see the same thing?”

“Yeah,” Notches nodded. “Who is he?”

“I don’t know.” the child shook her head.

The ghost stared at the two thoughtfully before transforming into a glowing orb and going down the sidewalk, causing the two to perk.

“Notches,” the child spoke. “Follow that ghost. I think he is showing us something.”

Notches nodded and followed the ghost, saying, “I hope he got something useful, or he will haunt us forever.”