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never knows best

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After a hundred and fifty years in a plummeting real estate market, Descanso Gardens has quintupled its footprint in the Verdugo Hills. Now on the third iteration of the beloved Japanese Tea House, across the expanded lake sits the brand new Shōgun Castle adjacent to the century old Cherry Blossom Forest. It's November and the blossoms are not going to blossom for a few more months, so the Cherry Blossom Forest goes for a cut rate this time of the year. Not as cheap as it would be in August, but Maria was able to lock the price in when they scheduled Diego's quinceañera four years ago.

The castle wasn't part of this event but the Gardens threw it in at no charge because they can't lease the castle separate from the forest, so this was a big win for Maria and the family.

It ended up being a bigger win for Descanso Gardens when they were shown the guest list and who RSVP'd.

Because a handful of the attendees are high profile, security for today is astronomically tight. The park is still open for business so on top of the three dozen or so visible Secret Service agents is a whole company of ghost droids running around the place arm-n-arm with Delta operators, and where the park is open the airspace was closed off for ten kilometers in all directions. Orbiting overhead to enforce the no fly zone are four 'beauty and the beast' teams consisting of a white USAF Bulldog fighter and one of the new SA-Cerberus fighters shadowing them as their wingman.

Esthetically, no one likes the Cerberus and pilots have called it the Beluga out of spite, but now that it has proven itself as a monster in the CAS roll it's popularly referred to as the Evil Beluga around these parts, or Waluga for short.

coming in July...