

Wanna Be Somebody Else?

By: A.X. Bueno

It's a quarter to three and I stare at the beaker sitting on my mostly barren nightstand and wonder "do I really want to do this?" The beaker simply sits there fizzing and I also wonder "would the results be worth it?" The liquid in the beaker is basically a transformation serum of not fully known effects. The person who sold it to me told me it would turn me into a creature that could be admired by all. However not only am I not sure what that means but said person was also kind of shady looking considering he was 7 feet tall while wearing a mask and visor that concealed most of his face and when I looked at his hands I noticed he had claws.

The guy who sold me the serum may have been shady and probably not fully human (possibly some kind of hybrid or one of those rare beastmen) but the market he was selling it at is a pretty trustworthy place that I've been going to for a while. Before I bought the serum I asked if it would affect my memories or intelligence at all and the vendor simply said "you shall lose not one piece of yourself all this serum will do is help you become more. After all a creature to be admired wouldn't be unintelligent." The answer to that question was all the information the man gave me well that and the price of the serum. Everything else I know about this serum comes from the tiny label that I needed a magnifying glass to see parts of. The serum is supposed to be taken on an empty stomach after midnight but before dawn and ingested in its entirety.

I wanted to take it over an hour ago at one something in the morning but I'm so nervous and incapable of sleeping that all I can do is stare at the beaker and occasionally read the label while pacing. I'm confident it'll change but I'm not fully sure what it'll do or if I truly want this change. I go into the bathroom to look in the mirror and take one last look at what I am now before I hopefully become someone or something better. I look into the mirror and see my same tired brown eyes staring back at me, my patches of facial fuzz that will never grow into a full beard, my slight overbite, the way my eye twitches when my jaw moves, just every minor thing that bothers me about myself in my face. Just how painfully average I look, then I look at my large gut, my clumsy feet and my skin so dry that the cuts cover parts of my hands and I decide that I'm ready for this.

I exit the bathroom and look at the clock again. It's now a quarter past three and I've spent an additional thirty minutes doing nothing but questioning myself and looking in the mirror at the man I want to leave behind. I grab the serum from my nightstand and put it to my lips. I hold the serum there as I can't help but reflect more. After all this is a big decision that I can choose not to do. I mean I have a decent life right now. I have friends, I feel average looking but people have complimented me on my looks before, I think about everything I've accomplished as myself.

Then I remember all my mistakes and all the times people have laughed at them, the things people say when they think I'm not listening and just every problem that I have just by

being me. I drink the serum that was already sitting on my lips and finish it off with a satisfied “ahh.” It tasted of grapes and mint, an interesting combination to be sure and I stand in front of a full body mirror that I have next to my bed so I can witness the transformation. After a few painful minutes of waiting I start to sit on my bed after wondering if the vendor was some sort of prankster and this was all just a mean spirited joke. Then I feel something, some kind of tingling in my fingertips as my fingernails start to turn into black claws and a layer of what I guess is a layer of fat is starting to work its way under my skin from my fingers to my arms.

Then comes a pressure as my arms and legs start to shrink slightly and my palms become black and bumpy along with the rest of my skin though the bumps stay only on my palms. I struggle to reach the mirror as I can feel the rest of my body becoming more stocky and muscular underneath the layer of fat. And then comes the fur, mostly white but I notice a few spots of this ice blue color along my... fur. I finally realize now, I’m becoming a polar bear! As I realize, the transformation reaches my neck which starts to elongate and I can feel my bones start to change as well.

Surprisingly this whole transformation hasn’t hurt despite the changes to the very structure of my body. I think that mint flavor might have been some kind of mild anesthesia making me only feel pressure and a slight tingling sensation all over. I can feel my midsection start to grow and now I’m gaining a few feet in height to go along with my increased blubber and muscle mass. My hands have now become thick black paws, I’ve grown to about 10 feet, gained several hundred pounds of muscle and blubber, felt my bones change to fit the polar bear skeletal structure I’m guessing, I’ve grown white and blue fur and my neck has elongated. All that’s left to change now is my head.

The first thing to change is my mouth as it starts to extend along with my nose to become my muzzle. After that I start to grow fangs and I have to stand on all fours just to get a look in the mirror. I notice surprisingly that my tongue doesn’t turn black like a normal polar bear but instead a dark red, interesting. Next come my ears which change shape and become smaller moving up the side of my head along with the fur finally covering all of me. Also unlike a normal polar bear I seem to only have one coat of fur instead of two. Then my tail finally grows, short and stubby.

With all that done my transformation is finally complete. It takes a few minutes to adjust to my bigger body and heightened senses of hearing and smell. In this new body I feel powerful, majestic, and more aware of everything. I take another minute to think and make sure I still remember everything I am. For the most part I do but then I realize that I can’t remember my name no matter how hard I try. That bastard lied, it doesn’t matter though since I can’t wait to shock people with my new polar bear body and I can always come up with a new name anyway.

I’ve always liked the name Theo. But before I can think anymore about what I’m going to do next I start to feel exhaustion setting in. I guess the transformation really took its toll on my body. I take one final look at the clock and see it’s six o’ clock in the morning. That

transformation took hours but it all felt like a few minutes. And with that realization I collapse on my bed, it creaking slightly from my increased weight. Whenever I get up I'll have to see about getting some stronger furniture.