

The fennec, Altreyas, stood out like a sore thumb in the forest. The white furred front and black markings were one thing, but the powdered blues and purples on their extremities did not blend.

Normally it didn't matter, the forests were hardly dangerous and the other figures who ventured out were usually just hiking on their own.

As they walked through the woods they saw something strange. A few gooey globs were scattered around, like a thick liquid had been splashed before congealing into small cloudy white balls. Only one of them was of a noteworthy size, about on par with the fennec's head. They walked closer, picking up a stick and prodding the ball, it stretched, growing taut and then the stick slid off the firm resistance. That coating was malleable yet tough, very strange. What was more strange was the glimpses he caught through the cloudy fog, it looked like a backpack.

Feeling less nervous about touching it, given the stick came away clean, the fennec pushed in with their hands, tried to grab and squeeze it with their claws. The white blob pillowed around the points but refused to be pierced, squeaking softly as the paw pads moved over the surface.

Altreyas noticed that the smaller globs seemed to have lost some of those traits, the ones that were fully opaque had started to deflate and spread, with a stick test the fennec confirmed they were turning to liquid.

Feeling increasingly curious, they looked around, there was no imminent sign of what had caused it that the fennec could pick up on, but still, a dropped backpack was some cause for surprise. Especially since the casing seemed recent given it hadn't dissolved yet. The fennec walked on, wondering if the bag had been dropped long before and recently coated, or if the two events were mixed.

More signs waited a good stretch ahead. Splashes that were less clouded, bigger globs. Altreyas had almost thought the trail was lost for a moment, and that came with disappointment and unsated curiosity. Seeing new leads indicating they were on track once again spurred the fennec to quest forward once more.

A short distance away, narrowed eyes saw the clashing colours. The body of the monstrous serpent, Ourodas, twisted and slithered back the way it had come, to cut off this newcomer that seemed to be walking towards its lair.

Several minutes later Altreyas had found an area of note. Several disturbances on the ground looked like a scuffle had happened, fallen leaves battered away around scored dirt. If there was ever a time for more globs this seemed like the spot yet the area was clean and clear.

Altreyas scratched their head, inspecting the ground, trying to see where the winner had gone. There was no blood, no fur or feathers. So Altreyas was far less worried than they should have been. That comfort betraying them, leaving them unready for the rushing sound that came from the trees above, coupled with a solid shadow.

They looked up in time to see a purple shaded underbelly fall. It landed directly on them, knocking the fennec off their feet and burying their hourglass figure, just their arms and legs out to the side.

Those limbs flailed, punching, kinking and scrabbling at the deep and light green scales on its upper side. The serpentine belly rolled around, pinning the fennec still as the sudden scene-crashing snake lashed its tail around one of Altreyas' legs, coiling all the way from the foot to over the knee. The meandering body pitched to the side, giving Altreyas sight and light, only to be hauled off the ground by the seized limb.

"Yikes!" Altreyas yelled, as they were raised high enough until their head was level with that of the snake. "N-nice snake." They said nervously, voice forced to stay calm despite the beat in their chest.

The serpent replied by raising Altreyas higher still, jaws cracking open wide, eliciting a yelp from the fennec. "No! Don't eat me!"

The snake lowered him at a cruel speed, getting closer to those lips before suddenly releasing the coils on their leg. Altreyas dropped, not toward the snake's head but the floor, landing on a tight 's'-shape of its underbelly, only for more of its tail to slam down on top, sandwiching the fennec between the softer underbelly scales. "What fool follows a serpent if they don't want to be eaten?" A voice called, taking Altreyas a second to realise it was the serpent itself.

"Hhmmh, mmh mmhfm!" the fennec replied in the sandwich. Belly scales rolled together until they had pushed Altreyas into the cracks, the body then rolled on itself coiling around the fennec's arms and torso, wrapping tightly around and squeezing from shoulders to waist as it once more let Altreyas' head peek into the air.

Ourodas locked eyes with Altreyas, the fennec found themselves drawn in, unable to break the sight as the snake softly commanded. "Tell me why you followed me."

"The slime..." Altreyas replied, their head felt suddenly empty yet their mouth spoke for them, "it was fascinating, and I thought... someone might... need help."

"Why do you think that?"

"A backpack..." Altreyas said.

The snake scoffed, remembering the fallen object. “And so you thought you’d come and steal my victory? For shame. Well, since you were so taken with my ‘slime’ as you call it, why don’t I introduce you to more.”

The snake snapped its eyes away, breaking the spell it had held over the fennec. “Wh-what? Let me go! Let me-rffmfh!” Their head was suddenly covered as Ourodas coiled over it with his neck, slowly his tail end receded while the front end spiralled instead, rolling to trap and transfer the fennec to the other end. He had more than enough length to wrap his prey several times over, even in his current form and more than enough strength that Altreyas wiggles barely registered. As such the switchover was simple. He let the coils squeeze horrendously over the fennec, pulsing and pumping, compacting so that there was no gap between the scaly walls before finally releasing the top of Altreyas’ head again.

The flesh behind the coils was soft and pillowy enough that it absorbed the little resistance Altreyas could offer, while still tight enough to hold the fennec’s ribs, choking them, changing the complexion of their cheeks.

Ourodas brought his tail around, raising it up over them, his head looked up, as he directed Altreyas attention while his tail tip quivered. A small droplet of clear white liquid came oozing out. Then the tail split and opened, becoming a second mouth, lined with gooey spittle. That mouth was much deeper and the cavity of it churned and wiggled, summoning up a glob of the slime.

“Gh-aaaah.” Altreyas croaked soundlessly.

“Might want to shut those lips. I know it doesn’t hurt to ingest but I’ve never seen anyone enjoy getting a mouthful.” Ourodas quipped. Altreyas obeyed, lips closing despite the difficulty they had in thinking from the lack of air.

A tide of the slimy goo fell from the tail, clear and thick, it plastered over Altreyas head entirely, barely shutting their eyes in time. Still, they found it didn’t keep their eyes shut and when they risked cracking an eyelid, they found it didn’t irritate either. The slime had weighed down the fennec’s long ears turning into a smooth, bubble-like helmet before the snake’s grip loosened just a touch at the neck.

The coils began to writhe and massage once more, as a second wave of good fell over the first.

“It would be far more efficient to just shove you in there.” Ourodas said referring to his rear mouth. “A morsel like you would easily fit. But you don’t deserve quick and easy.” He added with a laugh.

“Mmmh?!” Altreyas whined, they had to try and breathe now their chest was free but the slime-. Also didn’t impede their breath. It made it a struggle, but their lungs felt relief as somehow air got through. No, there wasn’t time to count blessings or relax! Already the slime

was past their shoulders, the snake kneading it into a firm and gapless coating, one turn of his body at a time.

Another glob fell over Altreyas head. This one looked surreal, like looking at liquid running down glass. The outer coating had already stiffened and solidified like those globs Altreyas had seen before. Indeed, as the snake revealed the slime to the air, it reacted, becoming a solid gel.

The captured fennec could only twist and squirm as the snake let out gout after gout, seemingly having plenty to spare. The coating seeped into Altreyas' clothes, seeming to puff less between the layers and their fur, but enough that they felt it brushing in, then soon after they were totally encased in slime.

"Fortunately for you, I have no need for a meal, my last one was quite rich in energy." The snake said when their work was done, tongue flicking to brush over the solidified casing at Altreyas' cheek. "What I could use is a nice fun toy."

Ourodas let his grip drop, bouncing Altreyas onto a bed of scales again. The bed began roiling to twist and throw them around, letting air get to every part of the thick, transparent cocoon to dry that outer shell. "Your mission..." He said as his head came around, locking eyes with Altreyas once again as he forced a suggestion into the fennec's mind. "...don't pass out too soon."

As soon as the snake was satisfied with the coating, his body shifted, throwing scales all over the cocoon as he roughly coiled, twisting this way and that. The soft walls grew as they were pressurised, malleable enough that Altreyas could twitch and be bent this way and that. "Mmmh! Mmmh!" They groaned, struggling to part their jaw without the scaled body pushing them shut. Slowly they were wrung out, the snake constantly pressuring somewhere. Whether the chest so that air was denied to their toy, or the legs and neck to push them around as they were buried out of sight, or the last gaps just to give a good squeeze.

No light got through, no external sound, only the squeaking of the scales on the cocoon as Ourodas began to have some fun, delighting in being able to clench his coils at full strength.

As the rounded ball of coils rubbed satisfyingly against each other and the wriggling, desperate body within, the snake turned his gaze back to his lair. He still had three hours before the cocooned prey back at home needed their coating refreshed. Then probably only a little more before he wanted to drink their replenished energy. It had been quite a satisfying trip. His first day in this forest and already he had food and entertainment. He couldn't wait to see who else trekked within his reach.

Inside the coil-jail, Altreyas wanted to pass out, wanted to slip unconscious if just so they could get a break and wake up when the serpent was tired of it. Yet, that suggestion defied the

fennec, as much as they told themselves they wanted that relief, a subconscious part didn't. Instead, their trip had come to this abrupt end. The curious fennec hoped that anyone who came looking for clues was much better prepared than they had been, as this serpent seemed more than happy to keep his newest catch for a while.