

The lion, Ashari, had wandered here slowly, uncertainly. Taking deep breaths and stilling his nerves just to walk the path to the old abandoned workshop. His thoughts tormented him with chilling theories on what dangers might be lurking in each corner. He'd already forgotten where exactly he'd heard about the building and its spectral inhabitant, not that the story was all that widespread, most people who respected laws and signage steered clear of the warnings for trespassers.

The tale told that those who were of a mind to interfere or simply vandalise in such places might encounter something terrifying that would scare them off from returning. Those who didn't take the message might even end up humiliated in some way, demeaning enough that they'd not admit it and certainly learning not to return. After all, the spectre had a history of seeking solitude if the version he'd heard was correct.

The only reason that Ashari dared to intrude was that the ghost, a creature known as a raglin, had allegedly visited his sister and was even responsible for crafting some of the items in her room.

The abandoned building sent a shiver down his spine just as he looked at it, with charred burned wood and scored brick works on display. He felt as though many eyes were watching from the shadowed empty holes where windows and doors might have been in better days. Summing up his courage, he stepped in.

Ashari puffed as he ran round the corner, surrounded by walls that bore no resemblance to the building he'd been in before. His memory of the place was hardly something to swear by, yet it felt that he should have crossed the threshold long ago. Instead all around him was fabric; fabric walls, floors and ceilings. Doorways led to rooms swathed in the stuff too and frequently there had been guardians roaming the halls or sometimes even waiting in the rooms! Thus far the lion had found each one avoidable or escapable before it was too late. Even so, as he shook the most recent one from his tail, a small part of him wished that life had a save and load button to see just what might happen if he failed... No, enough of that, he had to leave!

He'd entered the place around what must have been two hours before, he'd met the ghost and the terms she had imposed on him were simple. If he could make it out of the building and then return of his own free will the next day she'd give him an audience. If not....

He gulped, putting it out of his mind. "Oooh, am I getting close? I can feel you there, somewhere, little kitty." The raglin, Stitches, called out. Her voice was only a whisper yet loud enough to come from all sides at once. He saw the glowing purple-pink of Stitches' scarf slip through one of the walls as she passed through it.

There was one thing to be grateful for, the attire he now wore caught him from letting his shocked gasp alert his pursuer. It had happened in a moment of confusion on their first meeting. The ghost had seemingly mistaken him for his sister, she'd ambushed and taken liberties,

spiriting away his clothing and replacing it with a smooth, thick and soft bodysuit. The suit covered his entire body from toe, to tail tip, all the way up to his face where it stopped at eye-line. It rested comfortably yet too snug for him to move it down from where it covered his nose, especially given the fingers of his hands were in mittens, too thickly padded for him to have any dexterity.

The garment also lacked any method of getting in or out, stitched to fit him almost perfectly, she'd warned him against trying to remove it before setting him on his escape mission and so far he'd heeded the warning, bearing it without complaint.

He'd ended up forced to climb to a higher floor a few times, either meeting dead ends or having to slip up fabric ramps to evade notice. Hearing a rustling up ahead he fell still, pushing into the thick wall beside him, waiting, some kind of snake-like shape slithered down one hallway, the eerie pink glowing patches on it showing that it was yet another of Stitch's guardians.

Seconds crept by as Ashari waited for it to pass one way and then swiftly ran the other, stepping on thick floor. The ground was suddenly softer than ever before and he fell into it, no, through it! The floor had hidden a covered padded chute that sent him tumbling at speed back down toward the ground, plummeting several floors before it twisted up, his momentum sending him shooting out of it and through the air. He braced for a crash landing but hit something soft, rounded and unexpectedly high up, sliding off it, along more of the same half-firm shape before he hit the floor, his speed diminished somewhat.

Cream coloured cushioning stretched behind and around him, at least he thought it was a cushion until it moved. "Mmmh!" He squeaked, standing with a start. The smooth powerful head, the soft rounded ears and the smooth rounded body of a huge quadrupedal lioness stretched out from its slumber. The cream colouring had just been its belly, reaching the sides before turning into a tan shade.

"Oh, don't go away." It said in a familiar voice turning blue eyes on him, the realisation hit him that this thing was a giant plush of the character Nala. He wasn't waiting around for it though, instead running immediately for the far side of the room, the doors seemed way too small for the lioness to fit through!

His flight was cut short as he heard her laugh and launch off the ground, a pair of heavy paws, each the size of his torso hit him in the back pushing him down. One trod on the back of his head pinning it and shoving it into the thick cushioned floor.

"Don't you know it's inappropriate to turn your back on royalty?" She said, her thick toes pushing down until they split around Ashari's head, picking him up with them. Despite her hide being fabric and her body being stuffing she possessed enough firmness and strength to lift him out of the ground and drop him on his back.

She reared off the ground slightly, just enough to snap both of her paws onto his shoulders, keeping him still as her haunches and belly rejoined the floor setting the base of her chest to press over his legs so that she peered into his eye.

The embroidered pupils took on Stitches' tell-tale pink glow for a second as the plush grinned, a lined, hollow and fully articulated mouth greeted him, rather than the fixed face that some of the other plush guards had. "Anything to say for yourself?" She said, smirking confidently down at him.

He felt a heat in his cheeks, tossed around and smushed underfoot by something so pleasant yet so proud was something out of his fantasies, he almost forgot where he was and the situation, he was so enamoured in the view he saw. "Hmh dnnhn mhhnn.." he started, trying to speak an apology through the thick cloth.

She cocked her head to one side, smirking. "Oh, that's what they all say." Before laughing at her own joke.

Ashari was sent flying by a batting paw, up into the air, caught and pinned, then batted again as the truly giant plush knocked him around, playing with her catch. He was thrown up once more, nearly hitting the ceiling before arcing down. Below him the faux Nala rolled onto her back, catching him with her hind paws and then pressing down with the forelimbs, bending her spine to ensure she could keep the hold.

Sandwiched on all sides, the lion squirmed between the pads, stuffed extra softly to make his progress difficult, he popped his head and shoulders free, grunting again as the lioness kicked her rear paws out, dropping him onto her chest. With no forward momentum, only downwards, he didn't slide off, instead sinking half submerged in it. One of the forepaws came down upon him, closing over a leg between the fingers and lifting him up into the air. "Mmm, time to stop playing, I guess." Her voice rumbled warmly.

The disoriented Ashari swung in the air for a while as he saw into the plush's mouth. A darker red lining coating it and the mobile, pillowy pink tongue. The plush released him, dropping him down onto the muscle and flapping her jaw shut behind him!

The fabric maw was colder than expected, as if simulating wetness without actually using any liquid and even with the layers around him he could feel the change. The tongue scooped across Ashari's back, squashing him into the roof of the mouth, head toward the throat. The pillowy thing bunched up to prevent him slipping in deeper while around him gravity twisted, indicating the lioness had rolled back onto her front. She flicked the tip of her tongue to drop him underneath only to pin him down with it. Despite her words she wasn't really done, it seemed.

Ashari tried to push with his hands, squirming out, he'd not been told he was out of the runnings yet, though his chances seemed diminished. The tongue pushed with its full force but still it was only so much padded plush, with effort he managed to start crawling out, yet it

danced up and pushed, tucking him back in softly, several times. She started to move her lips, setting the silky lining of the cheeks to squeeze and press in, sucking on him and twisting him round.

In his struggling grunts of protest Ashari was pushed into a gap between tongue and teeth, managing to scramble over the still soft bumps. The sucking lips smooshed against him but not before he stuck an arm out, breaching the line of the mouth and out into the open. His elbow hooked in for long enough to get a second arm equally connected and then pull his head into the open. His feeling of success sputtered immediately as he saw the single stretched digit of Nala's fore paw coming towards him, casually pushing him back inside with a plump finger.

The chamber around him rumbled with a purring chuckle as slowly the centre of gravity shifted yet again, tilting upward. The tongue pushed on him, squashing him forward against the front of the mouth.

Thinking quickly Ashari hugged onto the longer teeth in the crook of both arms. His eyes had grown accustomed enough to the dark in this time that he saw the tongue shift back, forming a slide to the dark hole of the throat. His grip was uneven and wouldn't last. Despite the length of her fangs they bent softly under his weight, the effect growing more pronounced as Nala's nose tilted as high as it could go.

Gripping to the best of his abilities, the lion knew he was slipping and the lioness was just waiting. "Nnnh, hmmmh!" He pleaded, even though it was a plush toy and presumably safe, an instinctive desire to avoid such a fate coupled with the conscious desire not to fail Stitches' challenge made him cling as best as he could yet, yet once he started to lose his grip there was no way to adjust without falling.

His slipping sped up until he dropped, hitting the tongue, slipping down past it. The lioness cracked her lips open the tiniest amount to give him some light as she swallowed him down to the hips in one gulp then completely with the second. Past the top of the throat was tightness that pressed in, yet the fabric was still slippery enough that it didn't cling. He fell only about another foot before his progress was impeded again by the insatiably playful lioness.

Her thick paws pressed against her throat from outside, one below and one on top of Ashari's torso.

The paws kneaded the pudgy bulge in her throat, savouring his passage. The walls were far too sheer for Ashari to gain any purchase, as such his arms and legs were stuck in place or scooped about to the predator's whims. She'd occasionally swap between paws, each time letting him slip a few inches into the throat that was slowly warming from his body temperature.

By the time the plush lioness had enough play, Ashari had been mushed around to the point of being rotated head first, thus the relatively cool lining whistled past his ears when she abruptly stopped, having reached her chest. Down he went, past where ribs would be on a real animal and through the gullet. He slid into a hollowed belly compartment and heard a loud

contented sigh from Nala as she set her head back down in her paws and rested. “Mmmh, that was fun but I must catch up on the sleep you interrupted. Farewell, little thing.” She spoke, the vibrations less encompassing than her purring but still affecting him. The words themselves had a greater effect. ‘Farewell’ had an air of finality!

The plush ‘stomach’ was the squishiest thing yet, the floor and walls imprinting around his leg up to the knee making it an effort to move. His cloth-rounded hands tried to squash toward where he’d come from, questing for a way out, when he finally found the throat connection he realised it was far too slippery and steeply angled for there to be any chance!

His exploration was soon interrupted as the stomach clenched, knocking him off his feet once more. The thickness pressed all around him as the organ started to work, indenting both above and below him. “Nnnh, pllhhh!” He whimpered! He reached to the side, trying to knock at the walls even going so far as to punch before another clench dragged him away.

His struggles were ignored, he may as well have not moved for all the reaction he stirred. In fact, he started to hear a rumbling purr of snoring from his devourer. Soon the rolling waves of the stomach displaced him to the point he lost all sense of direction, the squashy walls seemingly getting softer and doughier, not just pressing over his limbs but tangling them too.

Even his fears couldn’t stay peaceful, given the supernatural elements here, he could well be being legitimately digested and converted into stuffing or some similar grim fate!

The doughiness built around his hands and feet at first but soon it was up to his shoulders and rear. Another fresh squish of the stomach and suddenly even his back felt heavier, only the neck and above loose. He wanted to try to pull at the cloth muzzle at last, damning the warning but the soft fabric sea around him was too thick to pull through.

“Ahh, so that’s where you got to.” A voice, the voice of Stitches! Ashari looked up to see her head poking immaterially through a wall, smiling at him. “Aww, so deep in too. Don’t worry, I’ll keep you company for your final moments.” She said, while seemingly pulling the rest of her body into the stomach chamber, unaffected by the walls when they clenched and visible when they relaxed again.

Ashari’s eyes widened in panic and he squealed, shaking his head. Final moments?! Surely she was kidding! The evil grin on Stitches’ face grew before she threw back her head laughing, rolling in the air. “Ahahaha, your final moments of freedom, that is.”

The clarification was a mixed blow in itself, at least it would mean life continued but the rest of it bore a level of ominous foreboding. The stomach below him surged toward his head and he pulled back, craning his neck away so it only kissed his chin. “Aww, let me help.” Stitches spoke in her most reassuring tone as she drifted closer but one velvety foot stepped on the crown of the lion’s head and then pushed. His eyes widened as the squishy, pillowy lining flooded over

his snout and then his eyes. The ghost didn't let him up, shoving down as the last of him was enveloped in the lining.

"Mmmh, nhmmmh!" He begged loudly, feeling the foot retract and the crater it left flooded in by the fabrics. It all became too dark to see no matter how his eyes tried to adjust and he felt himself being moved around.

"Now should I stitch up the throat? It's the only way in or out after all. I love the idea of you helplessly trapped in the stuffed belly of one of your idols. How about it? I could even shrink the stomach down around you so you're hugged on all sides with nowhere to go and nothing to do but squirm." She said laughing in a spine-chilling way.

From her perspective while she'd been teasing him, she'd also been drawing him out to the edge of Nala's body. The seam where the cream belly met the tan fur up the side of the plush split as though a pocket had always been there and the mass that contained Ashari slowly emerged. He noticed that the doughy cling persisted though heavier as though it wasn't supported. The realisation struck him as gravity pulled him down back to the padded floor. It wasn't that the stomach had gone fluid, it had been coating him in building fabric!

His hand was now coated by and stitched to a plush paw, easily three times the size of his hand and shaped to toony, chunkier proportions. He tried to pat himself to analyse the rest of his predicament.

His torso had been rounded out, a chubby belly no less than three inches of thick padding from where his stomach lay, a rounded cushion up his chest and behind his neck, in an approximation of a mane. He could only tell it went that far behind the head from how his movement displaced it, as his stocky arms couldn't even reach the back of the head. The legs matched the arms and he even had a weighted sleeve on his tail. Capping it off was a plush mask that left nothing of him on show.

Ashari tried to roll around on the ground, his movements made all the more sluggish by the weight of the suit with cushioned padding below him even exaggerating his posterior. The paws of his hands gripped the mask trying to pull and stretch the fabric. It had lost that dough-like consistency, stretching only a little, yet as with the suit underneath it there was nothing he could feel that indicated a weak seam or opening.

"Starting to sink in, isn't it boy?" Stitches called to the plush lion. Rather than taking an existing look, Ashari was trapped within a toony quadrupedal mimicry of himself, bearing his colourings and most notable aspects, even though they were significantly rounded off. The stuffing was also thick enough down the back and neck that he was forced to crawl on hands and knees. "Oh, that won't do." Stitches quipped, seeing how the legs were on the long side for the sake of covering him. Ashari felt the outfit move on its own as she manipulated it, the plush legs folded, squashing over his own, the thick paw moving to his knee to keep the proportions better.

“I won’t taunt you with how close you were to the exit.” Stitches said with a cackle as her arms wrapped around Ashari’s neck, weaving a scarf-like collar out of the long scarf she wore and taking a ribbon leash in hand. “You should have known when the terms were that good that it would be difficult, though you got further than most. As with our terms, you’re mine, now. My own pet lion prisoner, forever. So let’s get you to your new room and leave the queen to sleep.” She said, hopping on his back between the shoulders. She kicked his sides with her feet, compelling him to walk.

“Mmmmh, nhhhhhmph!!!” Ashari whined, his plush body moving on its own and walking like a mount out of the room with Stitches. No matter how he begged the ghost showed no signs of hearing her new possession.

Epilogue.

A week later Ashari sighed in contentment as the masked hood was plucked off his shoulders. He raised the paws into the air, smiling bashfully at the sight. “Gosh, it looks so... snuggable. I’m amazed you aren’t keeping me in this forever!” He said with a grin.

“Is that an invitation?” Stitches said from beside him, the hood suddenly glowing as if it might reweave back over his head.

He laughed, diffusing the situation though not denying it either. The lion felt the mane part and the plush split down his back as the shell fell away. The undersuit had thinned, too, becoming more like a bodystocking, fingers now individually wrapped. “And you’re sure you don’t want anything more from me for all this? I mean, the craftsmanship is truly exquisite, I’ve not seen better in my life, either in photographs or movies!”

Stitches smirked softly, slightly warmed by his genuine excitement at her handiwork. “You played my game by the rules, I won’t tell you how many people play it and ‘stumble’ at the first guardian, or practically throw themselves into trouble. Your ‘game over’ was a reward for playing earnestly.”

“A-and what if I hadn’t?”

“Then rather than me helping you take it off, I’d have thrown you suited up into an alley to be discovered.” Stitches said flatly.

Ashari shivered at that, his mind conjuring two hyena’s faces who would somehow defy logic and end up being the ones to find him. Turning it into less of a rescue and more of an ‘adoption’. “I... well. Thank you so much. I will admit to thinking of throwing the game. It feels like most of those guardians were targeted at me but I thought it best to be sportsmanlike.”

Stitches pulled the empty lion suit over to herself, stroking the back as it stitched up. The hollows bulked out as it became a jumbo plush instead of a suit. "I might just have to play with you again, then."

He licked his lips, opening his mouth only to close it again.

"What?" She asked. "There's something on your mind."

"Well... can I ... can I hug you?" He asked, looking the ghost up and down.

Her face flickered outside of the usual smirk-to-manic grin range it usually kept for a second, before she composed it again, in an almost gentle smile. "Given you not just played by the rules but also acted in character, rather than breaking the illusion of the fantasy... on top of which you also know when to be polite and nice unlike your grumpy sibling, I'll permit you one cuddle." She said, drifting over.

The lion grinned, holding his arms up to welcome her into them, pulling the plush to his body in a gentle and genuine embrace. Warmth bubbled through him at how perfectly pleasant Stitches was to hold in both shape and softness. "Thanks, once again. I'll never forget you or this week." He said, closing his eyes in relaxation.