

Plenty of their daydreams began with the arrival of a mysterious parcel. This one looked authentic enough, too: a simple brown square box the size of a hand, no logos, stickers with their name and address and stamps and whatnot. The key giveaway that something was amiss was that it had been "delivered" straight into their fridge. It seemed an easy mistake for unseen cosmic forces to make.

They opened the box, despite how suspicious it was. Inside, flush with the edges, was a highly polished flat surface. Turned upside down, a shiny cube gently slid into view as they lifted the box up. This was all terribly unsettling, and yet exciting, too; assuming it wasn't some elaborate prank. Even if it was, it was well put together. Their mind puzzled at whether the cube was metal, rubber, or something else—

Bright. Reflexes forced their eyes closed in the presence of bright light. Warmth bathed their face and arms, moving from a simple sensation to a soft, creeping warmth at the back of their head. The cube began to read them, impersonally and intrusively rifling through their thoughts. Each one went by much quicker than they could interpret them, which perhaps was for the best.

The light faded, and they opened their eyes, breathing heavily; slightly dazed and tired. What had happened was quite impossible, and yet, there they were. So much for it being a trick. A hallucination, maybe? The idea made them feel uneasy, and it seemed strangely preferable that the cube was in some way otherworldly—

Oh! Discomfort. Not exactly pain. It felt like their head was shifting and stretching, with their ears swept back, pulled out longer and taller, feeling sharply pinched at their tips. Their jaw felt stiff, their cheeks itched, their face grew, and for a few moments they were holding their breath—

Huff. As quickly as the feelings had appeared, they were gone, and they panted and rubbed their brow, keenly aware of a headache beginning to build. No longer distracted, they looked back at the cube, confused to see that it had changed. It was a smooth shiny mask now, sporting tall, swept-back ears with a polished ring through each eartip. The muzzle was rounded, with the hint of two nostrils at the end, but otherwise it still seemed to be the same material that had been in the cube. To be honest, it looked like the face of a stylised cartoon bat, if said bat had a blank face with no eyes or mouth.

They touched their own face, with the lingering aches of the sensations from a few moments ago. It was like they'd *felt* the cube change, as if it was a part of them.

Specifically as if it was their own face, and by no coincidence the mystery object was now in the shape of a mask. How eerie was this? By any sane measure of self-preservation, they should have turned and fled. Even so, they did not. A hesitant hand brushed fingers against the shiny black mask, before lifting it up to look around it on all sides. Whatever it was, technology, magic, something more: it was already in their head. Just a touch didn't seem like it could be any worse than that.

Rubber. It was like latex rubber, smooth and light. There were no markings, no symbols, not even holes for eyes; just blank features, the vague shape of a bat muzzle, and those distinctive ears with metal rings through them.

They could put it on. They could wear it.

An object beyond their comprehension, tapping into their sensations and thoughts, taking a shape that might have suggested it *wanted* to be worn? The idea was ludicrous. Yet, it was proving difficult to shake the utter novelty. Not taking the opportunity to do something impossible, experiencing whatever weird and wonderful things lay ahead? They could change forever, be remade inside and out, lose themselves permanently to an unknown fate—

They lifted the mask to their face. Of course they did. They had to.

The mask closed around their head, as latex parted their lips and plugged their ears. They couldn't hear, and couldn't see, with their breath echoing around them. Sweet rubbery liquid filled their mouth, trickling down their throat, with every so often a bigger helping that made them gulp it down. There seemed to be much more of the stuff than could have been pressed into that small cube, and it seemed to defy biology by sinking down into their feet, making them bigger, more plump and round, with black latex starting to seep out onto the skin and shaping them into cute, shiny paws. Gulp, gulp. Filling their mouth, flooding their body, pooling in their legs.

Along with that, the same rubber was squeezed into their ears. The sensations of that became confusing quickly, and a flash of thought crossed their mind: an old memory, from when they were a kid. A stream of shiny liquid seemed to pop out of that scene, larger than life, and they shivered at the implications of that. Was the rubber being pumped *into* their mind? Thoughts filling up, with rubber filtering down to the oldest, and creeping steadily forwards in time.

Their whole world was alive with sensation. Warm latex spread up past their knees, over their hips, smoothing between their legs. The partial clothing they wore disappeared into the coating of rubber. It was so good. Hands began to knead

playfully at their own shiny hide, sinking into the melty liquid and coming up with black rubbery strands between the fingers. There was always more latex to fill them. They wanted it; they needed it. Their pleasure grew, consuming their attention. Quickly, they were more rubber than not, and soon there'd be nothing else left but a shiny rubber bat.

New memories were beginning to form, though it seemed like they'd always been there. Those were your earliest experiences of being made, of coming alive to feel the deep joy of being a shiny toy. You knew this was taking over someone else, as you could feel them mixing and melting into you. The organic parts of their body were vanishing into rubber, inside and out, while their personality and experiences were slipping back as yours continued to pour in. Your rubbery strands had become the start of wings, replacing fingers. Your rubber filled all the spaces between you and the person within. Their last independent act was rocking back and forth, overcome with pleasure that flooded you, tingling every surface of your rubber body, making your ears quiver and your wings beat. You'd have moaned out loud, if there was anyone close by to hear you. In body, you were transformed: rebuilt, permanent, every bit a toy.

In mind, your rubber caught up with the present, filling in your experiences right up to that moment. Being shaped, boxed up, left for the recipient to find. Analysing them to determine the ideal shape: a fruit bat. Linking together, taking shape, sharing everything you were. Feeling deep, broad thoughts that might have been a great many more shiny toys, scattered all around. But here, at this time and place, there was you. Shiny toy bat, with tall ears and broad hips, smooth and complete. No features, no worries. Feet stepped, and wings flapped, and all the reflected squeaky sounds against your ears and body filled in a picture of your surroundings.

The metallic rings in your ears felt oddly empty. You needed ribbons, and you needed company. In some ways, you knew what the world was like, but in other ways, this would be your first time out and about. Hopefully this was a friendly place. Or, failing that, maybe it was somewhere that could benefit from a lot of shiny latex toys. It'd be fun finding out!

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