

Costume Shop
Second Identity Story 2: Raptor Costume
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He couldn't believe that it had already arrived. While almost shaking with anticipation, Shawn ripped open the package. It HAD to be the costume that he had ordered. He had wanted something like this for years, but had never found a store that could make what he wanted. The mass produced costumes that he found that most places had were worthless and soulless. However, if this thing was half as good as it should be, he might finally get a taste of what it felt like to be a raptor.

It was still hard for him to believe that he had just randomly found such a great costume shop being run by some old man in the middle of town. Whoever guy was, Shawn was sure that he could become rich if he just had a better location. Then again, the old man refused to make one of his better costumes for Shawn until he had been convinced that Shawn desperately desired to be a raptor. What was the name of that shop again? The 'Second Identity' or something? Why did he have to be fancy with the name anyway? The name didn't even have 'costume' in it.

The package opened to reveal carefully folded red rubbery material. Shawn carefully pulled it out and let it unfold to the floor. He gasped at the sheer realism and

detail of the suit that he was holding out in front of himself. It's skin was a sort of blood red with darker stripes patterned on it from head to tail. The gloves for the hands and feet were tipped with wicked claws and he didn't have to touch them to tell that they were quite sharp. It was a wonder that they hadn't ripped the costume while it was in the box. The entire thing, from the shape of the head to the gloves, was designed to hide the signs that there was a human in the costume. Naturally, he wouldn't be able to lean over all day like a raptor would, but it would still make the thing that much cooler whenever he had an excuse to wear it.

As Shawn got over his initial excitement over having the costume, he noticed that it had no support or padding whatsoever. The chest didn't seem properly shaped for him and even the tail was just a floppy empty skin. In fact, even the costume's arms looked too short and thin for his to fit in them. How was he supposed to wear this thing at all?

After inspecting the 'costume' for a bit longer, he found a long slit across the back of it. At least there was a way to get inside of it. Maybe there was supposed to be some sort of trick to it. After all, why would that shop owner have gone through the trouble of making this thing if it couldn't be worn? Shawn supposed that there was only one way to find out.

Desperately hoping that it would somehow fit, Shawn took the costume over to his room. After recalling that the shop owner had warned him that thick clothes would get in the way, he stripped down to his shorts. That crazy old man had also given him a warning about not fighting the costume and to make sure that he controlled himself, though that made as little sense now as it did at the time

Shawn sat down on his bed and slid his legs into the costume's back slit, expecting to find that they didn't fit properly. He found that the costume's strange material easily stretched to accept his legs, and his feet slid into the raptor ones quite easily. It didn't quite seem to fit right because of the raptor's toes, but it was comfortable. Maybe it would work after all.

He found himself starting to daydream about how great it would feel to be a raptor. This costume was giving him a chance to get closer to the form that he had wanted for so long, and had wished so hard for. Praying that the thing would somehow fit properly, he stood up and pulled the rest of the suit up to his waist.

Suddenly, the suit tightened around Shawn's legs, making him gasp with surprise. He tried to pull it back off of him, but found that it didn't budge the slightest. It was as if it had adhered to his skin. As he began wondering what had just happened, he felt the suit start to move! Originally, the costume had only one slit in the back, but now it had separated into tendrils and several of them wrapped around his body and arms before he could react. It made no sense; the costume had been solid before, and it still felt solid, but now the stuff was freely moving and flowing around him. Shawn screamed and tried to pull it off of him, but he found that he could barely even slow it down.

The 'costume' now seemed to be expanding moving on its own accord as well, as if some invisible thing was filling it up so that it was assuming its full raptor shape. He looked behind him and saw that the tail had 'filled up' and was actually moving as if it was part of a living creature. Suddenly, the suit bent his legs and lifted him up as it stood on its own reptilian toes, and then the parts of it that had wrapped around his back made him lean over. He should have fallen over from lack of balance, but it was holding him steady somehow. However, the thing that freaked him out even more was when the costume bent its neck back and hissed as it looked at him with a pair of reptilian eyes that hadn't been there before.

Shawn was almost in a complete panic now. He didn't understand what was going on and he just wanted to get the thing that was wrapping itself around him off! It was half way up his back and most of his arms. Even his hands were inside reptilian 'gloves'. His attempts to use the suit's claws to tear it off of him didn't work, the stuff around his arms somehow had the strength to stop him. However, after a few more moments of struggling Shawn suddenly remembered that he had been warned not to fight the costume. Had the old man known that this was going to happen? What was going to happen to him?

Strange sensations accompanied by popping sounds began going through the parts of Shawn's body that were inside the suit. Within moments he didn't feel so uncomfortable in the strange position he was in. He let out a gasp as he realized that his body was being transformed. He felt his spine slowly extend into a tail behind him and his hands and feet extend into their reptilian 'skins'.

After testing his legs he found that he could move them with no problem now, and that they were completely reptilian! He was becoming a raptor! Any thought of fighting the suit quickly faded away. After all, he had dreamed about this moment for so long that he didn't care about how it happened.

The changes continued as the costume pulled itself over him. Sickening crunching and popping noises filled the room as his arms finished shrinking down and becoming more raptor like. In addition, his neck elongated, and his chest narrowed down. The feeling of his guts moving around inside of him almost made him puke, but luckily something held him back from doing so. As his tail finished growing he laughed as he experimentally moved it back and forth. It felt just the way he imagined that it would be.

Eventually, the reptilian mask pulled itself over his head, and the skin sealed around his body. His head pushed forwards into the raptor's and his skull and jawbone shifted so that it was turned upwards in line with his spine. The suit's mouth pushed into his and momentarily choked him, but within moments it melded with his mouth and it felt like his own. In fact, he didn't feel like he was wearing a costume anymore! He had finally become a raptor!

Shawn made a loud screech in triumph. He tested his body, enjoying the feeling

of power and agility that he had now. He felt so free! He let himself get lost in the sensations of his new body, allowing himself to fall deeper into it. Feelings and instincts that he had never imagined before flooded his mind and he didn't resist them the slightest as they took over.

The raptor that used to be Shawn hissed as he felt the pangs of hunger in his stomach. It was time to hunt. Using faint human memories it found its way out of the house and into the forest outside of it. His home was surrounded by woods, so he had plenty of land to hunt in. It slipped into the forest and began its search.

After half an hour of searching for suitable prey the raptor came upon a road that cut through his forest. It hissed with displeasure, this human intrusion was probably the reason why there was so little prey in his woods thus far. However, he was pleasantly surprised to find a human jogging along the road towards his hiding spot.

As it prepared to plan the kill he suddenly got the feeling that something wasn't right about this. The raptor shook his head to clear its thoughts but the feeling grew stronger instead. What was he doing? He couldn't eat another person. Wait? Another person? That's right, he wasn't really a raptor...or was he? No, he had to eat the human to get food, this wasn't the time for this. No, he couldn't do that!

Shawn violently shook his head as he tried to regain his human identity. What was wrong with him? He was actually thinking of eating someone! Was his mind becoming that of a raptor as well? More reptilian thoughts urged him onwards as he felt pangs of hunger again and he had to struggle to control himself. Horror flooded his mind as he realized the horrible mistake that he had made by letting himself get so lost in the sensations of his new body. He couldn't let himself give in! The jogger was almost in front of him now, and Shawn still didn't know if he could stop himself. His body tensed as the unsuspecting man got closer.

The jogger went by Shawn without ever knowing how close he had come to dying that day. Shawn sighed in relief that he had held himself back. Apparently, he should have paid more attention to the old man's warnings. What was he going to do now though? Part of him wanted to just give in to his instincts again, but his sheer fear of what he might end up doing won out. He had to get out of the costume, but how? Well, if he could take it off, he certainly shouldn't do it out here. He didn't want to walk home half naked.

He ran back to his house as fast as he could, even ignoring some tasty looking deer that darted away as they heard him coming. After fumbling with the knob on his front door for a few moments he managed to open it again and slip inside. Shawn began searching for a way to get the costume off. It was somewhat difficult to bend his head to look at himself, so he found a large mirror to help find a seam. Having only those short

raptor arms didn't help much either. There didn't seem to be any seam on it however, and pulling at his skin only hurt him. Was he going to be stuck like this forever? What if he forgot who he was again?

"It will probably be a few hours before you can take that costume off, Shawn Talan, it wouldn't have gone through all that trouble of making you wear it to just let you take it off again", Shawn practically jumped in surprise, both at the voice and that someone would recognize him as he was now, and turned to find that the old man from the costume shop was there. Shawn tried to ask him why he was here, but found that he couldn't say the words.

"Ah, you can't speak right now, can you," the old man said with a chuckle. "Well, you should be thankful that you even know who you are right now considering that you let yourself be controlled by your desires. If you hadn't gotten some sense into yourself when you did you would have tried to eat that man and I may not have been able to get there in time to stop you."

Shawn hissed at the old man, but he knew that he was right. It was his own fault for letting those instincts control him, and he felt that if he had given in then he may never have freed himself from them.

The old man looked Shawn over for a moment and sighed, "Well, considering what has happened to you I guess I owe you an explanation. Though you may find this hard to believe, I am a wizard and my name is Drethan. I have been studying the powers of dreams and desire, and I've 'drafted' you into my studies so to speak." He paused to gesture at Shawn's body, "the 'costume' that you're wearing is powered by your strong wishes. It is infused with the living essence of a raptor you see...and it responded to your wishes and turned you into one."

The old man smiled at Shawn. "It is a quite effective technique, don't you think? You see, a normal transformation spell would take a huge amount of energy to perform, but you generated the energy for the transformation yourself, and the suit channeled it and used it. With some work, such power could have many uses. Of course, as you can see, it has drawbacks. It is difficult to control, and it requires you to actually control your desires so that you don't go too far. If you desired to be a raptor too strongly, and let those desires control you, you would have been stuck like this forever."

Shawn couldn't believe what he was hearing. This guy was actually a wizard? On top of that, he had used him like some sort of Guinea pig! He growled in anger and stepped forward intending to teach the geezer a lesson. Drethan smiled, and pointed a finger at Shawn's feet. A bolt of blue energy sprang from his fingertip and struck the ground around Shawn's feet. Freezing water and ice burst from it and hardened around his legs. Shawn screeched as he suddenly found himself anchored to the floor

Drethan laughed at him, "Ha! You don't know who you're dealing with!" Shawn

growled again and struggled to get free, but he couldn't move his legs. He was going to have a taste of that human one way or...what?!

An annoyed look crossed over the old wizard's face, as if he knew what was happening within Shawn's head. "I see that you're still having trouble with those instincts. It is unfortunate that you seem to lack the self control to resist them. You had better get a hold of yourself, otherwise I may have to move you somewhere else....a jungle in Africa perhaps?"

Shawn gave Drethan a perplexed look. He had used him as a guinea pig and turned him into a raptor without his permission, but the wizard was worried about him eating people? Talk about a strange system of morals!

After inspecting him for a few more moments Drethan smiled, obviously pleased about something. "Your costume is absorbing your energy quite effectively at least, and aside from its instincts I don't see any sign of side effects. Very good. You should be able to take it off in a few hours when its hunger for energy is sated. Naturally, when it goes back on is up to you. Well, mostly at least. I bet that with your raptor obsession and self control problems that you'll be wearing it quite often, and the suit itself may have some opinions about how often it should be worn as well."

The wizard looked Shawn over one more time before nodding. "Well then, I hope that you enjoy my gift. I am looking forward to seeing what you do with it, and what it does with you." Drethan's mouth formed into a smile that Shawn couldn't help but be worried about. "It is too bad that you probably won't be able to wear it for parties and Halloween like you wanted to."

Suddenly, the wizard disappeared with a burst of light, leaving Shawn pondering what to do next as he waited for the ice on him to melt.

The hours went by faster than Shawn had expected. He had been able to start enjoying his raptor form again, was amazed by how agile it was. He was still hungry though, and he let himself give into the raptor enough to go hunting. It took some effort, but he kept himself under enough control that he went and found a deer to eat instead of a jogger. The deer actually surprisingly tasty, though he just hoped that his stomach would still be able to handle it when he went back to being a human.

As Shawn laid on the ground happily digesting his meal, he suddenly felt a strange tingle go through his body. It felt as if...some sort of grip on him had been released. Did that mean that he could change back now? He was still enjoying himself, but the episode with the jogger still haunted his mind. After letting out a sigh of resignation, he got up and headed back to his house.

As soon as he got inside his room he reached behind his neck and felt for a seam. It was somewhat difficult with his arms' limited range of motion, but after a few moments he felt that a seam had formed along his back. Apparently, the suit was letting him out. Shawn got the impression that while the suit had a mind of its own, it was mostly instinctual. There was probably no way he could reason with it; it would want to absorb the energy of his desires when it wanted to and would leave him alone only when it was done.

After carefully gripping the edges of seam with both of his 'hands' Shawn pulled the costume open. It was the strangest sensation; it felt like he was pulling a layer of his own skin off. He reached further up, right behind his head, and pulled. There was a lot more resistance this time, but slowly the raptor mask came off, accompanied by a lot of disorientation and some rather nasty crunching sounds. His head pulled back into its original shape, and his reptilian tongue and teeth pulled out of his mouth.

Shawn looked into a nearby mirror and almost laughed. He looked like a raptor with a human head stuck on it. A hiss underneath his head interrupted his musings though, and he looked down to realize that the costume's mask was still quite alive looking. Not wanting to risk it changing its mind about letting him go, Shawn quickly continued pulling the rest of the suit off. His body gradually reshaped itself as his human skin was uncovered. However the process was generated a lot of sickening crunching noises, and Shawn couldn't help but wonder if this was healthy for him in the long term.

As his tail retracted back into his body and his hips grinded back into their original positions Shawn found himself able to stand upright again, even if he was a little unsteady on his reptilian feet. He pushed the costume down his legs, finding that his shorts were somehow back on him, and stepped back as the costume dropped to the floor.

After testing his body and finding all that all the bone grinding hadn't caused any damage, Shawn carefully picked up the costume. It seemed different than it had when it came out of the box; he could almost feel the life within it. He poked one of his hands into one of its arms to see what would happen, and almost immediately he felt a yank as it tried to pull him in. With a little work he was able to pull his hand back out, and the suit relented. Though it was sated for now, the suit was still quite eager to be merged with him apparently.

All of this still seemed so improbable. Even the idea of transforming had been an impossibility just a few hours ago, but now he was dealing with that plus a living suit and a wizard. Then again, did the method of living out his fantasies really matter?

Shawn resisted the urge to put the costume back on and put it down on his bed. He had a human life to live, and he had learned the possible consequences of letting his fantasies rule him. Of course, that didn't mean that he didn't intend to become a raptor again. Maybe tomorrow...