

Summer had definitely arrived.

While officially the calendars had announced it over a month before, it was only recently that Ofenna was really feeling the heat. The weather seemed to have flooded up overnight, striking the coastline she'd travelled to almost immediately on her arrival.

The thought of retreating home to relatively cooler climes nagged slightly at the back of her mind, yet if she did she'd simply be out of the money she spent on her lodgings for the week with only a day spent within them.

She cast her eyes outside, from the small house she'd rented she could see the waterline. While not normally one for the beach, the idea of sprawling out under a sea breeze had a greater appeal than ever. She cast her eyes to her belongings, not having packed any true swimwear, a crop top and some gym shorts were her best bet.

Besides, if the beach was too crowded she could either abandon her plan and walk back until she made time to shop in the nearest town.

The surroundings were calm and quiet, just enough people around to put her at ease without too many to make her self-conscious. Ofenna tried to tell herself she was on vacation anyway, if she wasn't dressed perfectly for the beach, why would it matter, she'd probably not be remembered by any of the people here.

The lioness found a patch of cloud-shaded beach, setting down to sit and cool off, her eyes were drawn to the glittering waters and the lulling sound-rich flow of the waves. Bright sands stretched in all forward directions, nestled in the gently curved grip of granite cliffs. It was still quite warm but the cooling waft was appreciated.

Time passed without her even needing to consult her phone to keep herself occupied, it was only when the clouds shifted away that she felt a need to get up. As she was rising a pair of seal women walked past, quite engrossed in a conversation, enough for her to hear their accents and judge them to be local to the area. "Excuse me!" She interrupted softly as she dusted herself off.

"What is it, pet?" the nearest of them asked, making her stomach flex a little, though the innocent epithet was just part of the dialect.

She had to collect herself and clear her throat before continuing. "Sorry to interrupt, I'm visiting the area but I need a few more beach things. Like, sunscreen for example." She began, they were listening so she continued. "Is there a nearby shop that might have it?"

"Ooh, that's a pickle." One said thinking for a moment.

“Mmmh, quite. There’s the place down the coastal road isn’t there? Ooh, we should go there, get some ice cream for the heat!” Her companion said.

“No, no, Glenda, that place shut over a year back. I’m sorry, the only spot I can think of is in the town, it’s just a forty-five minute walk from here, but it is an uphill trek.”

“You sure? Wasn’t there-...”

The conversation continued for a while, with Ofenna struggling to take in all they were saying, beyond understanding that the only shop was far enough away that she’d probably just head to the shelter of her lodgings instead, rather than risk baking in the sun on the walk.

She thanked them and away they went, back to their own day, another swatch of cloud cover drifted over the sun offering a short reprieve, one that she welcomed as she stood to enjoy at least a last few moments.

“You’re looking for sunscreen?” A voice offered, interrupting her thoughts and making her sit up suddenly, surprised at the owl woman who had arrived nearby.

Her eyes flicked about, lightly on guard given how quietly the stranger had approached. The beach was still populated enough that she didn’t feel pressured. “Uh... sorry?”

“Ah, apologies, I didn’t mean to overhear, I just can’t help it.” She said, flicking a feathered hand near her head. “Always been a keen listener.”

“Sure.” Ofenna replied, answering the earlier question and the comment in the one syllable.

“Well, the town’s a bit far but my friend owns the beach shack. You see it over there?” She asked, pointing. It was hard to miss, even without attention being drawn, though it also didn’t look open to the public.

“Oh, does he run a shop there?” She asked, trying to see where this was headed and spying some closed shutters along one of the outer walls.

“Oh no no, but he’s lent me use of the place and I’d be happy to help you out. There’s a few summery supplies he’s got there!”

“I couldn’t trouble you for that.” Ofenna mumbled, as if waiting for the penny to drop and the woman to try and charge her double for a bottle or the like.

“It’s not a problem, like, as luck would have it sunscreen is one thing he has in abundance, there was a special product run and he ended up with a crate when he thought he was getting a single spray.” She paused and then blushed with a squeak. “Oh, gosh, I see how this might look, I’m sorry I wasn’t meaning to be pushy with a stranger.” Unsure how to reply herself, the silence hung for a moment before the owl broke it once more. “Look, I’ll run off to

the shack, grab you one and then it's up to you if you use it." As if flustered by her own speech, she hurried off.

Ofenna felt tempted to disappear from the beach out of some embarrassment yet she felt the owl was genuinely trying to help. The lioness brushed herself down again, kicking off a small trace of sand, then followed the tracks of the plumed, slowly disappearing figure. She was close enough to the shack to hear the door creak once the owl hopped out, carrying a blue plastic bottled spray. She gave a little wave as she hopped back to Ofenna, thrusting it forward.

The lioness took it, sighing softly to herself. "What do I owe you?"

"Oh don't worry about that, like I said, it's one of many, you can keep the whole thing! If you're really concerned and only want to use it for the day then just return the bottle on your way out!" She said.

Ofenna took a breath and nodded. "Thank you, then. I appreciate that."

The owl shook it off with a wave of her hand. "Oh, don't worry about it, if anything you're doing me a favour. Now enjoy yourself, I'll let you get back to it but hey, you know where I'll be during the daytime." She added with a wink, as if trying to encourage Ofenna to make a new friend.

"I'll think about it." The lioness said, cagey but earnest enough, walking off with the bottle. She turned it in her hand looking for the description, only to see the labelling wasn't written in her own language or one she'd even partly studied, the only part that stood out was at the other end of the bottle, a familiar pair of names; Sonic the Hedgehog and Miles 'Tails' Prower.

The first written bold across the top, the second at the bottom below a silhouetted print of the foxy character it mentioned.

Ofenna frowned and sighed, feeling a bit self conscious suddenly at using a branded sunscreen in public but at least it made sense why someone might have a surplus. If there was a branded line, there was bound to be people who collected them, she just hoped the owl was right and this wasn't a valued item.

Putting the thoughts out of her mind, she walked until she found a discreet corner of the beach, vision towards her was partly cut off by the cliff. It was good enough she concluded while giving the bottle a shake, popping the cap off and turning the nozzle to her body.

It hissed and sprayed, feeling cold and chilly. The contrast to the hot air was welcome and the lioness shut her eyes, spraying down her arms and legs before starting to rub it in. The cool feeling grew, almost like a cold liquid gel than a spray. Part of that felt due to how it seemed keen to spray out a lot at once, rather than the gentle mist she'd expected, ah well, more to spread straight away.

Her hands rubbed and rubbed into the nooks a little but focused more on the surface of her skin. It also felt very clingy to her palms, enough that she planned on beelining to the water and rinsing her hands off when she was done. Palms travelled across her shoulders, up her neck, a fresh squirt for her brow and cheeks and around the eyes. She felt a light tingle on her upper arm, rising to rub it.

'*Squeaaak.*' The unexpected noise shocked her as it felt like her skin caught and vibrated? Her eyes dropped from the shore to her arm and she gasped. Her tan toned fur was hidden underneath a brighter glossy cross between orange and yellow with the stickiness on her palms thickening before her eye into a shade of white.

Her hands reached to the neck she'd just rubbed, digits squeaking and feeling resistance as they were softened by the thickening gloves, her legs, too, showing that shining colour, and now she felt that tingle all over. It wasn't just in her head, the stuff *was* vibrating, or perhaps more accurately to say; moving!

"What?!" Ofenna gasped, standing up in shock, the bit she'd rubbed over her face ballooned as if on cue, blocking her eyes. She tried to hurry but her leg caught on a rock, tripping her and making her keenly aware of a chilly yet yielding crumpling as she fell on the bottle. A sharp squeeze of more of the previously presumed lotion was spat out, catching down her back and rump. "Gaah!" She yelped, in shock at the cold contents.

The spreading oil grew more solid as it set, turning into rubber, spreading to meet where she hadn't rubbed, even glooping over her sandaled feet to cover them in large red and white shoes of that same material.

Her fingers tried to grip where she'd rubbed, finding bare fur a few times and only speeding up the spread there. The trickle reached her nose, forcing her to breathe through her mouth, too embarrassed to shout for help, yet worried that soon she might not be able to.

By the time it reached her lips, it had formed a cartoonish point of a nose, complete with holes, allowing her still to breathe as her head vanished. Her body fared little better, the spread flowed over her clothing, covering it up, turning to white at her front, even making a thick white ruff that hid her breasts into the smooth and stylised body.

When it set around her head, she tugged and pulled, yet it gripped on too tight under her chin and cheeks, stretched and snapping back if she released. Her vision had at least returned with that settling, turning from opaque, to cloudy, to tinted blue and black lenses in mimicry of the fox character's eyes.

She already knew that was what the whole thing must be, further reinforced by a bunching feeling beside her tail as it too was enveloped. White it wasn't weighted, she still felt the difference in weight distribution around her head and her true tail felt a squeaking second

one had grown next to it. With a shiver she felt the last of the sea breeze on her fur dwindle as the final gap sealed away.

“What is this?! What did she give me?!” The lioness hissed as she saw her body, trying in vain to pull off the gloves or boots. As convincingly separate as they *looked* they were still just a part of the same perfect latex body, stretching until they pulled at the leg, only to snap back unaffected. Her hands roved down her back, her sides, even her inner thighs but there was no apparent way to take whatever this costume was off!

“Damnit, there’s not even a seam?!” She demanded of the air around her, seeing nothing but smooth lines spread across her body. “Nnnngggh!” The fingers slipped and stirred the thick rubber, bunching it up, managing to get a fleeting grasp and pull on it, though it only revealed that it wasn’t truly glued onto her skin. It still shifted back into that perfectly fitted shell around her whenever she released it from any angle.

The exploration gave her one last small surprise, from the thigh to the waist was a darker blue, a pair of swim trunks printed on, presumably for any issues of modesty, though they stretched and snapped back just like the rest of her outfit.

She slowed and stopped as she was quickly tiring herself out, staring at her body in surprise. She was stuck- genuinely stuck within it, and while no one seemed to have seen her, if she rounded that bend they almost certainly would.

Her mind buzzed, would they help? Would they be freaked out? Or would they consider it intended, something to come and see. “What... What should I do?” She asked out loud, partly to confirm another truth to herself. She could still talk, even though her mouth was covered. As she rose, she felt the crumpling bottle, fishing it out and trying to look again. There were no signs she could see, it was as illegible as ever, though as she turned it she saw something her fingers had covered before, an age restriction, transcending language barriers. At least it hadn’t been *meant* for kids then. Although, beyond being made of rubber none of the suit itself seemed that overt. Perhaps it was a mere question of safety.

Still, she couldn’t ruminate on that for long. While it kept the sun off her skin, the suit did the very opposite for the heat, making her feel warmer and stuffier than ever. She’d need to get out of the light.

Hesitating, she walked to the cliff wall, body squeaking, her steps made clumsy by the size of the boots, she peeked around the corner. The beach was mercifully emptied, the people who remained were far enough away and occupied with their own company. It would be asking for a miracle to get to the shack unseen but it seemed likely she could get there unapproached.

She kept to the cliff, mindful of how she squeaked and her now clumsy footed steps caught every lump in the sand. Staying as far back from everyone she could see, eyes turning to

look away she saw two colourful figures walking toward her, one in bright pink the other in blue, matching her appearance though cast in two other characters; Sonic and Amy.

They stopped as if they'd just seen her and then approached rapidly. If it weren't so hot, Ofenna might have thought to run away from them. Instead she just waited in place.

"Tails! Over here!" The Sonic costumed figure yelled in a voice that was a decent imitation, gathering attention, making her all the more embarrassed inside. "What are you up to, going for a walk this close to show time?" He said much quieter when close and in what seemed to be his real voice.

"Show time? I'm not part of any show!" She insisted.

'Amy' clapped Ofenna on the shoulder. "Wow, Fran, that voice is way better than your usual." She said in encouragement.

"Fran? I'm not-"

"Tails then, whatever. C'mon let's go!" 'Sonic' said in a louder voice. With a hedgehog holding her by either wrist and pulling Ofenna was compelled to follow.

She had no idea what was going on, though a theory was starting to form. The owl, likely the Fran they had mistaken her for, was probably meant to be wearing the costume. Why she'd tricked Ofenna into taking her place without saying anything was a mystery. Presumably because Ofenna would have said no in no uncertain terms...

"Look, I'm really not Fran and I don't mean that I'm Tails!" She insisted, pulling them back to try and stop them.

"Then how did you get- look, it doesn't matter. We need you to come with us, we can't do the show without Tails and looking at the state of the bottle in your hand, even if we found Fran, we're out of options!"

'Amy' spoke up a bit more consoling in her tone and words. "It's just for one night, and hey, you might really like the after party!" The hedgehog said, giggling. "You'd be doing a big favour and making sure that everyone who turned up doesn't go away disappointed."

Ofenna groaned, she couldn't believe she was letting herself get talked into this but if it was just the one night- hopefully a figure of speech instead of literal-, these other supposed performers likely had a means to get her out of the costume again.

She'd be forced to stay on their good sides which meant obliging them to start with.

"I just hope I don't need to learn a lot of lines..."