

Tailored Coolness  
by Padingo, aka 8-bit-machine

"This place, please!"

"Alright. Have a nice trip!"

After waving goodbye to the taxi driver, Az looks around- the pumpkin's mouth gapes open as the lights of the city flood their vision. Advertisements for various things they've never heard of, the conversations of strangers walking by them, it's all so new! Sure, they probably can't afford most of the things in the city, but the experience of being here is what sold them to come here.

"Hmm..."

Az came here in just a hoodie and shorts, while most other people on the street wore VERY spiffy clothes, such as suits or coats or even coats on coats. They were never the type to really wear such outfits outside of special events, but being surrounded by people in them made them feel... underdressed to say the least.

Eyeing around the place, they spot a clothing store and quickly walk towards it. They know that no one's batting an eye about what they're currently wearing, but they decide to keep their head down, hiding as if they can't be seen in their uncool clothes right now.

"Just wait, grand city, I'm gonna exit that building looking so cool!"

...

"Hmph."

From just out of their vision, a cool soul nods his head, deciding to follow the pumpkin inside...

...

"Ah."

Decision paralysis quickly stuns Az. They were never the best at finding clothes for themselves, but the AMOUNT of clothes in the building was... overwhelming to say the least. It has two floors! And both were equally as big! They couldn't really tell where to start.

"Yo dude, you need help with something?"

The sound of another voice in the room causes the pumpkin to quickly turn around, seeing a person in streetwear coming round from behind a counter. A nametag on them reads "Cashier."

"Ah, okay, so, I, uh, uh, I-"

"You're here to look dressed, right?"

The pumpkin nods, grateful that the other person understands what they came for.

"Okay! I know this place is huge, but finding an outfit you love's gonna be easy! You just gotta find something you vibe with and build the rest of the outfit off that. Walk around! You're not gonna find what you love if you don't look for it."

They lightly push Az towards the hats.

"Just my opinion, but lots of peeps love hats."

They twirl their own cap from off their head, playing with it for a bit as if to prove their point, before eyeing a customer waiting at the register.

"I'm sure you'll find one you love too. Go have fun!"

They head back to prepare their transaction. Az is absolutely flabbergasted with what just happened, but with hats on their mind, the scope of what to look for becomes a lot more manageable for them. They start to try out different hats...

A few minutes pass, yet the pumpkin is still undecided on what to wear. Everything would probably work out perfectly fine in an outfit, but they want something that exudes... cool.

"What does cool even look like..."

They let out a sigh as they put a baseball cap back onto a nearby rack. They decide to take a short break in a changing room to think about what they actually want.

Throwing off their hoodie, they decide to look in the mirror. Apart from their mothly antennas, their orange body is pretty plain. Perhaps a tiny bit more built from going to the gym often, but nothing noteworthy otherwise. A plain canvas for anything...

\*knock knock knock\*

"Oh! Coming!"

Opening the door, Az sees... no one. It's not until they feel a tug at their leg that they look down to see the source of the knocking.

"Huh?"

"Hmph."

With shades covering his gaze and a gray hat and blue coat covering pretty much the rest of his small body, there was no mistaking Hanu being Az's visitor- ESPECIALLY with how cool his grunt just now was.

"HANU!?"

He nods. The pumpkin stammers. A lot. Hanu lets them soak in his cool presence. After regaining their composure, Az manages to form a sentence again.

"Um... do you- do you need this room, Hanu?"

He shakes his head.

"U-uh... you need something else then?"

"Hmph."

He pulls out a hat not unlike his own, the only difference being its size. Whilst being far too big for him, it's obvious his intent isn't to put it on himself. He holds it out to Az, who then points a finger at themself.

"Me?"

Hanu nods. After taking the hat, the small man scurries away, leaving the pumpkin in awe.

"Hanu..."

Az lets out an objectively less cool, yet still enthusiastic grunt, causing them to giggle. They look at the hat they've been given, before putting it atop their head. Apart from squishing their antenna in, they obviously like it!

"Heehee, so cool..."

This on its is already plenty cool to the pumpkin, but with only a plain tee and shorts on, the rest of their fit is still plain. They contemplate for a bit, before thinking of what the cashier earlier said...

"Build the rest of the outfit off this... oh!"

The solution became clear to them- why not just wear what the coolest guy here's already wearing? With how different they physically are, they assume it'll look fresh on them regardless. Plus, they've never really worn a fancy coat or anything before... they can feel their body already

gravitating towards the coat section... along with a tingling in their antennas that they brush off to them getting numb.

Finding a coat that looks like Hanu's takes a bit of time, but eventually Az finds something similar enough- it didn't match his coat exactly as the buttons were placed elsewhere and the color being gray, but they assume it was tailor-made for him. They think about what else they need: dress shirt, dress pants, tie, shades, and boots.

"Should be simple enough to find. I'm gonna look so cool!"

An unexpected tug on their leg again captures their attention.

"Ah!"

The sight of Hanu again so soon catches Az off-guard, causing them to drop the coat.

"Oh, Hanu! Hi!"

He waves back.

"Uh... I was just looking to see if this place had a coat like yours, but this was the closest thing to it. If you don't want me to do that I could look for another style-"

Hanu hovers his pointer finger at Az's mouth- at least as close as he could get it with their height difference- signaling for the pumpkin to stop speaking for now. He then pulls out a blue coat from the rack previously just out of sight- the coat looks exactly like Hanu's. The pumpkin's mouth is agape.

"Was that always there?"

"Hmph."

Az takes the coat, carefully throwing it over a shoulder to wear later.

"So... is it cool if I do this then?"

He gives them a thumbs up.

"Okay! If it isn't too much to ask, could you help me find the rest of your fit? You seem to have an eye for your clothes."

Hanu begins walking off to another clothing section, with Az taking this as confirmation. The two converse- as much as they can when one couldn't actually understand the cool grunts of the

other- as Hanu pulls out a cool pair of shades from just outside the pumpkin's view, shocking them again. They slap them onto their face, feeling even cooler...

As time passes, the pumpkin continuously feels their antenna getting more and more itchy, though they can't exactly see them without a mirror. They feel... way more fluffy than they should be.

"Hanu, can we take a little break? I think I've worn this hat for a little too long."

With his arms beginning to shake from all of the clothes they've gotten, he quickly agrees. The two find a bench to take their brief respite on. Az takes off the hat, rummaging a hand through where their antennas should be. From this, they also notice the rest of their head is feeling way softer than a pumpkin should feel, as if someone is wrapping a soft blanket around it.

"Gahhh, I don't know what's happening! I know my antennas don't react well to being squished under a hat, but it usually doesn't feel like this."

Unbeknownst to the pumpkin, they've slowly become gray canine ears during their walk with Hanu. The latter stares at this. They let out a... confused grunt.

"Hm? Is something up?"

Az's new ears flicker.

"Ahh! This feels so weird! I need to find a mirror!"

They dash back to the fitting rooms, with Hanu struggling to keep up due to the combination of his small stature and Az being surprisingly fast. In his haste he leaves the clothes they've gotten behind.

Az's hoodie being left in the room does not surprise them as much as the confirmation of actual wolf ears developed on them and gray fur growing out everywhere else.

"Woah..."

Hanu reaches the room after a few seconds, setting himself onto the ground to breathe. Az looks at him with a curious glare.

"Hanu, did you know this would happen?"

He quickly shakes his head.

"Aw... I was wondering if you could... uh... complete whatever's happening?"

The short man looks stunned, before grunting in a monotone voice.

"This reminds you of how you once looked? You're right, you were probably a wolf when you were still huge..."

Hanu takes off his shades, doing a double take as he squints at Az's ears, to which they stick straight up in response.

"Oh? Did something else develop?"

He quizzically grunts.

"No, I couldn't understand you before... ah."

They both stare poker-faced at each other. Nothing seems to be able to break the silence, before Az lets out another grunt as they begin scratching their nape- at least, they're trying to.

"Gah, the fur's not done growing yet!? It's getting super thick!"

This distracts Az from their protruding snout- notably gaining a nose. Sideburns quickly grow from the side, only adding to the suddenness of everything. Az plops themselves onto the floor as this happens. Hanu- after putting his shades back on- only watches as the changes continue down the former pumpkin's body. Their pumpkin orange body is continuously being more hidden with gray fur, with a lot of fluff noticeably sticking out from the collar of their shirt. Their chest and arms also slightly grow with some mass, further tightening the shirt.

"Ha- hmp- Hanu! Hmp!"

Their voice begins to develop a deeper tone, with some mild hoarseness also coming in. Az tries coughing it out, but it seems to be part of their new voice. The man himself nods to them after hearing the grunts and locks the door afterwards. Looking back at what used to be the pumpkin, he notices their hands gaining SHARP claws at their fluffy ends... he grunts seeing them, looking at his own less sharp fingers with a frown.

Az seems to notice Hanu's momentary moment of weakness and grunts at him, before looking dumbfounded. They let out a weaker grunt. Hanu stifles a laugh, explaining something to them in a few grunts. They continue to converse like this while Az gets used to their new voice, which has fully developed to sound just like Hanu's in a matter of minutes.

Something else that's fully developed in this time is the rest of the fur across Az's body, most prominently on their exposed legs. They've also gained a bit of beef, which they don't mind too much.

Az questionably grunts at Hanu, who gives a thumbs up in response. Az- after taking a deep breath- starts taking off their shirt. After momentarily struggling to get it around their new snout, they throw it off, revealing more of their changed body. The gray fur is mostly spread equally, coating the former pumpkin in a BLANKET of fluff- though some extra fluff's tuffing out near their somewhat defined pecs and the point leading to their crotch, causing them to cover their face as it turns mildly red. They let out an even weaker grunt, clearly flustered with the changes.

Hanu is clearly enamored with the fluff, staring at Az's new body... before coughing into his arm and putting both arms behind his back respectfully. He grunts out a question, to which Az nods in response. He looks back at their body, once again staring at it... he mindlessly approaches them. Hanu reaches a hand out onto their body, very cautiously touching it and gauging Az's reaction. They don't seem to mind in the slightest. He decides to step it up and uses both of his hands to ruffle the fluff around. Az almost immediately relaxes their shoulders in response while letting out a content sigh. Now knowing how they feel about this, the smaller canine pets the larger one on the head, further helping them feel more calm about their new bod.

Hanu continues feeling their body, sometimes looking at his own shrunken body as if he's comparing them. Again, Az picks up on his discontent. Instead of trying to speak again, they instead do their best to hug Hanu.

"Hmph?"

They aren't sure about how tight to hug, but regardless, this action proves to be very effective, with him letting out a gentle grunt as he returns the hug. The two stay like this for a minute, before Az lets go. They both seem generally happier. Az looks at themselves again... as cool as being a shirtless wolf is, they should probably still get drip. They grunt at Hanu, who then leaves the changing room momentarily to pick up the clothes left behind earlier. During this time, Az decides to inspect their new body in the mirror.

Az gets a good view of the volume of fluff now on them with the sight of their new self. Lots of it is flowing from behind their head. They lift it up with their jaw agape- there's so MUCH of it. Normally they'd feel super hot from how much is covering their body, but Hanu's form seems to be more heat proof than they are, which they're thankful for. They then take off their shades. Though their eyes are naturally glowing yellow, they're now actual eyeballs in place of carved holes. They run a hand on a scar on the left eye, grunting curiously. They mentally note to ask Hanu about it later. They stare at themselves, before looking away... they slip their shades back on, now knowing how powerful a stare from Hanu without them is.

They take off their shoes and shorts to investigate their lower body better, setting them aside with their hoodie. It's a lot less interesting than their upper body, though they do notice Hanu is mysteriously missing a tail despite being a canine. Other than clawed toes, the rest of the body is simply more fluffy and stronger-looking in general.

They hear a small knock on the door, and after slipping their shorts back on, they open it and reveal Hanu with a pile of clothes stacked on his head. Az excitedly grabs everything, putting them on with unmatched speed.

With boots at the base of the outfit, dress pants snugly fit above, an overcoat above a dress shirt and tie, cool shades, and a spiffy hat, Az grunts at the mirror very excitedly, with Hanu giving them a thumbs up for their looks.

"Hmph!"

"Hmph!"

Carrying their old clothes in a bag, Az leaves the changing room happily with Hanu walking right beside them, both equal in their coolness. As they're about to leave, they hear someone coughing.

"Ahem, you need to pay for those."

In the midst of everything, Az completely forgot that they don't actually own any of the clothes they're currently wearing as the cashier that greeted them looks at them with their arms crossed. They let out a weak grunt as they begin digging for their card to pay. Hanu then pulls out... an amount of money that can only be described as excessive, before giving it to the cashier.

"Woah! Uh, you sure? Those clothes aren't NEARLY this much."

Hanu gives an affirmative grunt.

"Well, thank you! You two look SUPER cool, by the way! Have a nice night!"

Hanu takes Az out of the store before they question anything. They're still confused, but the hustle and bustle of the city distracts them from thinking about it more. Now that they're outside again, they take a look around. Everyone still seems cool to them, but now they're ALSO super cool... they let out a very happy grunt! Their joy rubs off on Hanu, grunting with glee as well. Together, the two have a long walk around. Az notices multiple people commenting about how COOL they and Hanu look... they're happy they came to this town tonight. The two of them grunt at each other all night long...