

Shape in shape

It was a day like any other in the academy of arcane arts on the chaotic plane of existence which has no name. Professors were giving lectures, students were taking walks during breaks... and one pair of such students were two anthropomorphic fennec foxes, one of them slightly older than the other. The younger one was called Agreus, while Trefe was the name of the older one. Around them were beautiful gardens sustained and kept unfluctuating by the powerful wizards of the academy - something that was necessary in ever-changing chaotic reality that surrounded this place. But on the other hand, it was also making magic extremely potent. And one aspect of magic was a subject of conversation between these two fennec foxes right now: the school of transmutation that was concerned with matter and its forms.

Agreus twitched his ears in thought and looked at Trefe. "Well... what actually is matter?" His big eyes even more curious than usual.

Trefe scratched his chin and answered. "That's not really complicated. Matter is physical substance which occupies the space and has volume and mass. It can be solid, liquid, gaseous or plasmatic. As far as I know..."

Agreus nodded, but then looked at Trefe again. "And matter has a shape, right? For example I have a particular shape of a fennec fox! And you too!"

Trefe smiled at him softly laughed. "Certainly so. And your shape is great, really." He scratched Agreus behind the ears and continued. "And since you're so curious, I will tell you a little more about shape. It's generally the form, outline, or outer boundary of an object. And it can be something more of an abstraction, so to speak. For example, there is no mathematically perfect circle in the nature, but circle is a shape that serves as an useful abstraction. O-or I guess so generally. I'm not your teacher."

After Trefe stopped scratching his head and finished his thought about shape, Agreus hummed in thought and asked another question. "Uhm... and... and what is the shape of universe?"

The older fennec fox was weired out by another question of this sort given to him by Trefe. He didn't know how to reply at first and leaned against a tree in the garden, looking at his

friend. "I don't know. You should ask master Ambrosius." He then shrugged and felt a little bad for not giving him a reply.

The young fennec fox didn't have an intention to stop though. "No matter the shape, it is three-dimensional. I remember teachers talking about time being an additional dimension, but I don't remember much. Just that space and matter is three-dimensional. And think about this: when a two-dimensional object is inside a three-dimensional object, is it really an object with its own distinct shape when you look at it from three-dimensional perspective? You said that shape is an outer boundary, and an outline. And in the case I am talking about it's restricted by the three-dimensional object! Like a prison!"

His older friend was even more weirded out now. What did Trefe has on his mind? Why is he like that now? "Uhhh... right. Okay. I guess... you are right." He said uncertainly.

Trefe was only getting more excited now though. "And do you remember the master herbologist Shutiye? How she talked about seeing fourth dimension and interacting with it? How she considered it more real than real and so on?! And we are lesser than fourth dimensional spirits that Shutiye mentioned indeed, because our form in its entirety, in its all potential existence is completely determined by the higher dimension as if we were a circle in a sphere!"

Agreus was actually getting kinda worried now. He didn't want him to risk his health too much by taking some drugs and such, and it seemed like he wanted to suggest doing exactly that right now... "L-look, Trefe. Maybe we should think more about this, okay?"

Trefe was walking back and forth in front of Agreus now, looking quite excited. He nodded and his eyes lighted up. "Yeah. We can talk about it more, but..." He put down his bag and looked through it, pulling out eventually a scroll. Agreus was looking at it while still leaning against the tree and just waited for Trefe to say more. When Trefe took the scroll in his hands, it was radiating a powerful energy.

Trefe looked then at his slightly older friend and began explaining. "I took it from the desk of master Ambrosius after the lecture on transmutation. By the energy it is emitting, I can tell that it contains a very powerful source of energy from this domain of magic. And I have an idea. You were a good friend, Agreus. I bid you farewell."

Agreus didn't know what to say at all. He tried to respond somehow nonetheless, in hopes of understanding what is even going on here. "W-w... what do you mean now? I thought you wanted to take drugs..."

The younger fennec fox twitched his ears when he heard that and narrowed his eyes. "No, you dumbass." He tried to say it playfully and he chuckled slightly afterwards, trying to smile at his friend. "I didn't talk about shape for no reason. I want to free myself from the prison of the shape and be more than what I am, as a result becoming the most powerful fennec fox who ever existed, achieving apotheosis! Master Ambrosius has said that transmutation has to conform to rules of the matter and space it is being done upon, so it cannot transcend it and make my form fourth-dimensional. But I have a better idea! I can make this form vanish and become a pure spirit who will transcend boundaries of matter! Not bound to any form anymore, because it will cease to exist!"

Trefe sighed and shook his head. "And why do you think you just won't die?"

The younger fennec fox had a prepared answer already, just like he steered the direction of the conversation according to his plans. "Master Shutiye talked about that too. She said that we are in fact fourth-dimensional spirits trapped in forms bound to three-dimensional space. So, if I destroy this form, I will free myself from this prison!"

It was typical for mages to differ on various matters of this sort, and not many shared the view that Agreus subscribed to, along with master Shutiye who seemed to be his idol now. Trefe didn't think that there are souls existing outside of natural reality, but that consciousness emerges from the matter, like it seemingly is the case with brains. And he was getting quite worried now. Always unfortunate to lose a friend, no matter how often it happens in the academy of mages located on the chaotic plane of existence which has no name. He really liked Agreus too, a lot. It didn't help in any capacity though, as Agreus was definitely very determined to go along with his plan.

The younger one of the two waved his hand and giggled. "Wish me luck in the higher dimension of reality with me as the most amazing fennec fox ever!"

Trefe had a thought now that he should stop him by force, and he stepped away from the tree and walked quickly towards Agreus. "Wait, you idiot!"

He couldn't do it on time though, because Agreus opened the forbiddenly powerful scroll containing forbidden transmutation and read the forbidden incantations in his head, casting the forbidden spell of self-transfiguration on himself. It was certainly very forbidden, because he just vanished. Completely.

Trefe stopped in his tracks and looked at the spot where his younger friend once was. His tail drooped. But... it was just another day at this academy of arcane arts. He took a deep breath and shrugged. Without any form and shape, was he everywhere now? Maybe nowhere, but still existing somehow? Or maybe he really transcended this reality? Well, Trefe thought that most probably he was just dead. He had to go back on another lecture, and he thought about what explanation he should give to his elders.