

*(In which a Star Fox fan gets a much more unique experience than he thought he paid for...)*

You had been looking forward to this weekend for a while, and at the outset, it was shaping up to be a good one. The area's annual pop culture convention, ModCon, was set to kick off in earnest on Friday. Despite its humble size and location, it still managed to draw in several respectable names. Although the prolific guests were not actually what you were excited to see – sure, there might be some famous attendees with their own appeal, and scattered, intriguing events hosted by them and other panelists throughout the weekend. These were only short encounters though; they might make a good story later, but lacked a certain lasting appeal in comparison to something more tangible.

No, to you, the biggest draw was inarguably the Vendor's Floor, where all sorts of unexpected goods and merchandise could be known to pop-up. Previous years had produced incredible discoveries – a few hard-to-find comic books at a reasonable price; high-quality prints and art by the attending artists; and other physical media such as used games and movies that had been out of print for years. Sure, there were retro stores in the area where you could find that sort of thing, but when the *real* collectors brought their goods to a place like this, it imbued a certain allure that the regular shops (not to mention their sometimes stagnant inventories) could never match – and that meant ModCon had the best prizes.

When the first day arrived, you eagerly entered the gallery floor, giving different tables a once over. Nothing jumped out immediately as a must-have, but after a while you stumbled upon a table of retro games and reproductions. Scanning the display, you noticed there were even games that had never seen a wide release (if a public one at all). Many were obvious custom prints, but one instantly caught your eye nonetheless: Star Fox Alpha. Never heard of that one before...

"Hey, how much would you want for this?" you asked and held it up for the vendor. For whatever reason, there were no tags on either the covers or tables denoting prices – maybe he was just one of those types who didn't like to leave too many lasting marks on the merchandise.

He walked over from the other side of the table toward you, smirking when he saw what you had pulled. "Oh yeah, that's a rare one. Supposed to be another version of Assault that only came out in Japan. This one is an English fan translation though, so since it's not official... I can probably part with it for, say, 40 bucks?"

Repro or not, for something so obscure that you didn't know it existed before today, that was a steal – assuming of course that it was legitimate. Instantly, you reached in your pocket and pulled out your wallet. “Sounds like a deal! Thanks.”

With money and the game having changed hands, you walked away with it to find a comfortable spot where you could sit down and give it a closer look, off the convention floor. The case and cover had been reprinted in English, as had the manual inside – quite a lot of effort for a fan translation. You decided to pull the booklet out and give it a look, to try and predict for yourself how the game might differ from the version of Assault most of the world knew or what it might be like when you took it back home. You managed to get about 4 or 5 pages deep, skimming past disclaimers and controls in the front of the booklet before you began to feel... strange.

It was subtle at first, but your clothes were gradually beginning to change in texture – no longer like the fabric and denim you had arrived in. Instead, somehow the material felt smoother, akin to rubber in a way, though you didn't notice immediately as they still hung somewhat loose upon your body. It was only when the next phase began and they tightened around you – constricting themselves right around your arms, legs, and even your torso – that you took note, putting the pamphlet down in your lap.

And what a moment for your focus to land, as you were just in time to witness an undeniable change occurring right before your eyes – your shirt and pants seeming to *merge* where they met, with any gaps between them closing as they wove together around your waist. Your once short sleeves crept down the length of your arms, growing beyond even your wrists. The material continued its crawl, reaching along the backs of your hands and forming points where the sleeves ended. Most of your clothes – or suit now, more aptly – all seemingly became one, singular article.

You quickly tucked the booklet back in the game's case again and sprang to your feet. You had already found a relatively isolated spot here to do your reading, but passerby nonetheless came and went in both directions. The last thing you wanted was to be caught in the middle of... whatever this was. You remembered a bathroom you had passed a way's back and set off for it – at least a stall would offer some privacy, hidden from sight.

You had quite a walk ahead, and all along the way your outfit continued to change. You felt a weight tightening around your midsection, with a silver latch at the middle that materialized just below your navel, one you quickly recognized as some sort of belt. Similar accessories also sprung up around

your wrists and hands like bracelets. Most surprising was a pressure suddenly growing around the top of your head, and as you reached up with a hand, you felt another metal object that had suddenly spawned there. A tiara? Maybe a headband? It was difficult to say from feeling alone.

Accessories aside, your core attire wasn't completely done changing either – having already become much like a jumpsuit, it was becoming a solid shade of blue before you noticed new padding appear along the sides and surface. The neckline that used to be your collar was sinking, too, exposing more of your chest and neck. Some of the material lingered around your neck, tightening itself into a deep blue choker of all things, whilst other shifted position to layer up your chest and shoulders in armor or pads like you might see on athletic gear. Other sections of your suit felt like they were being reinforced the same way, and were made apparent by visible color differences, but otherwise it already felt to be as tight as things were going to get.

The sound of your footfalls subtly changed against the tile floor caught your attention, too. The ankles of your shoes were no more – but were now climbing your calves as they shifted in color to become a blue comparable to the rest of your new suit. It was their soles that were to blame for the sound of your steps, as these were hardening into a less commercial material so that you were marching along in higher grade boots.

After what felt like an agonizingly long trip, you reached the bathroom. Not a moment too soon, either, as the sight of yourself in the mirror brought on a shocking new revelation. You sat your purchase down on the sink countertop and propped yourself over it with your hands, watching in shock as the changes persisted. Your *hair* had dyed itself a new color just like your suit – or was beginning to. Azure streaks were painting themselves throughout, with no signs of stopping. What was more, as the shading reached your hair tips, the strands were growing along the sides of your head. Soon, your ears were covered, and your hair in general had reached down to about the length of your chin or neck. You could only blink in shock, but each time you did the once dark shade of your irises subtly shifted in hue, brighter and brighter as they became a watery blue. You realized at last that you were indeed now wearing a tiara and bracelets. What was more, a series of small but pretty stones were inlaid within them all, each of which matched the new color of your eyes perfectly.

You received another surprise when something new poked out from beneath the blanket of blue draped around your head. They were pointy, fuzzy, and seemed to be growing larger. You became acutely aware of noises elsewhere in the room, more sensitive to the buzzing lights, picking up on a leak

or a drip someplace inside that you hadn't noticed when you came in, and quickly realized that these *things* were your ears. Not only that, but they began to scale the sides of your head, climbing to positions closer to the top than the sides where they originated. They looked like they belonged to an animal – which was when it clicked that they *did*. It was no wonder your sense of hearing had improved when you had the ears of a fox.

Not just any fox, you realized. A vixen. For although the flight suit dominated most of your experience so far, you undeniably recognized it now. It was the very same one worn by Krystal of the Star Fox team, herself featured prominently on the cover of the game you just picked up. It couldn't be a coincidence that this all began as soon as you walked away with that, could it?

"This... this cannot be happening. This doesn't just *happen*," you declared to yourself, and no one in particular. As soon as you spoke, your anxiety welled about whether you were *actually* alone in the bathroom. These convention venues usually had big restrooms that made other visitors hard to notice after all, and you had yet to reach the privacy of the stalls as intended. If anyone else heard you, what would they think? Would they even have a clue? With your new ears however, you would have heard any eavesdroppers or intruders, soothing your worries just as quickly as they had come.

Well, one worry anyways.

You stared at and studied yourself in the mirror again, gulping and murmuring reassurances to the person staring back. "The hair and ears could at least pass for a cap and wig for now... I still appear human – and male, thank god. Maybe I can make it back to the vendor before things *really* kick into gear?"

Suffice to say, you spoke too soon, as your reflection started to warp more noticeably. The tight flight suit you had been dressed in started to stretch in a few very distinct places – your chest for example, pushing forward behind the padded plate that decorated and accentuated what was to come. You felt the pressure under your skin like someone was blowing up a balloon that you could feel but not see. It simultaneously stung and stimulated your chest, leaving you extra confused as you watched it expand before your eyes. After a few seconds had gone by, the window of your suit and collar that formed earlier gave you quite the view of your new cleavage.

Your belt felt tight in the next moment, only to loosen itself as your hips started growing wider, as well. The sensation was like the one in your chest seconds ago, albeit less sensitive now. As the pressure built though, you realized it was not just your hips alone and turned your head to muster the

best view of your back that you could – sure enough, your rear end was swelling up, too. In a matter of moments, there was a curvature to your backside that you could already tell was fated to affect your usual gait. You stumbled slightly as the weight settled – in both positions – and realized that you would be forced to adapt to a whole new center of gravity. At the very least, your flight suit matched these growths without issue. It must have either expanded to fit or had already tailored itself initially to your new proportions, but it was embarrassing all the same to see in the mirror how it clung tightly around your body's new feminine curves. On anybody else, you would have defined it as a nigh-perfect hourglass figure.

Accompanying these was perhaps what you dreaded most – and between your legs, you felt a sensation that you could hardly begin to describe. There was a moment's pressure as some unseen force pushed and pulled at your most sensitive flesh and stimulating it. Your moment of pleasure was quickly interrupted by a sudden jolt, as your flesh inverted on itself with a pop that alleviated the ache as quickly as it came. What followed felt like having an upset stomach, as your internal anatomy adjusted itself to match. Your hands wandered idly between your legs to feel around and confirm your anxieties, and indeed an empty gap left behind affirmed your reversal of sex. With a gulp, you suddenly felt your throat tingling strangely – and were able to predict what *that* probably meant.

"Don't tell me that my-..." you began, hearing a radically different voice pass your lips – one that even already had Krystal's distinct tone and accent about it. It would have been nice to hear had it come from literally anyone else. "D-Dammit all! Enough wasting time, I-I have to get back to that seller," you decided, but as you stepped away from the sink and caught yourself from stumbling again.

You had to hurry, or soon you might not even look human anymore. You glimpsed the features of your face in the mirror one last time as they continued to change, becoming slightly softer and rounder, before you finally turned away to leave the bathroom. You were clearly on a ticking clock and waiting it out here expecting answers wasn't going to help you – it wouldn't stop this. You snatched up the game you bought and took off out the bathroom door, hurrying for the convention floor. Your posture felt awkward as you acclimated to the shift in figure, but the farther you walked the more natural each step began to feel. But you didn't have a choice – it was return the Vendor's Floor, or see what else awaited you.

Naturally you passed several other attendees as you hustled back to the gallery, most of whom didn't even bat an eye. For all any of them knew, you were just one of the event's many lady cosplayers.

In the offside hallways, most were polite enough to leave you with just a passing glance. As you got back to the event floors however, that meant more attention was suddenly very squarely on you, and inevitably there were others you soon crossed who wanted to stop and compliment the outfit and accessories you had 'suited up' in.

"Oh my gosh, miss, just a second! Can I ask you about those ears? They look so cute!" one woman asked, practically squealing as she stopped in front of you.

"Sorry, I... I'm afraid I don't have long," you tried to express, eager to stay on the move. After all, it would be harder to brush off your changes in appearance if they were to happen mid-conversation. But the look you received after that made it hard to say no, and you politely, if reluctantly, agreed – despite lacking any of the answers most real cosplayers could provide.

"I suppose it couldn't hurt to answer a couple questions, though..."

"Oh, I promise I won't be long! I just had to know about them. They're so lifelike! Did you buy them online? Or make them yourself?"

She removed a dog-eared headband she was wearing herself as though she wished to compare. Obviously, hers looked a lot less detailed, which made sense considering yours were quite genuine. But she waited expectantly for you to remove your own, which was obviously out of the question in your case. Soon, another curious man stepped up to her side to see what the hubbub was too, and she looked at him with a grin – clearly, they were attending together.

"U-uh... I have a friend, on who... makes props," you lied as your audience expanded, urging you to get them off your back even faster. The more there were, the harder they'd be to shake after all, right?

"Well, their work is incredible. I don't know if I've ever seen a fur texture quite like that! Are you supposed to be some cat-girl? Is your costume based on anything?" she continued to beam. Though the other man was the next one to speak.

"Nah, the suit and hair are too obvious. Looks like Krystal, right?" he asked, giving your body a broader look over. Your face began to turn red as they both eyeballed you expectantly. "I don't blame you for not doing the whole fur-suit deal, but it looks good! Sounds like you even got the voice down, you been practicing?" He chuckled at the last question, taking note of your reaction as you suddenly cleared your throat.

“Yeah, that’s right. And, er, no, that’s just my natural voice actually,” you agreed with a nervous smile as they both persisted. You had been hearing it too, but the fact other ears took note only made you more embarrassed. There was even a warmth brewing in your chest that you couldn’t quite explain. Was that your heart racing?

No... actually, the rest of you was starting to feel remarkably warm too. It couldn’t have just been because of them. Whatever the case, you were blushing up a storm, something the girl picked up on as she asked, “Is everything alright?”

You scrunched your face a bit and took a deep breath, wrinkling your nose slightly as you breathed in... and realized that that felt strange, too. The way it felt when you had glasses or something on top of it, like there was an extra weight on your face. Clearly something else was happening, and you had the sinking feeling that you knew what that might be. An oncoming ache in your face portended even more, centered around your chin, mouth, nose, the general *muzzle* area. Quickly, you reached a hand up to cover it, just in time to feel an unnatural bump as the shape of your face grew forward. The fingertip touching your nose also found the texture odd, where the nose tip felt more like that of a cat or a dog.

“Yes, fine, fine, I’m fine!” You lied again, chuckling a little even as you kept your face concealed in your palms. “I was just in a hurry to meet someone on the floor, it’s no trouble at all, but I should really be on my-,” you started, only to interrupt yourself with a sudden yelp.

The ache in your nose was nothing compared to the abrupt jolt you felt in your back – or more accurately, just above your rear-end. With a turn of your head, you could see that an opening had formed in your suit, with something small poking out of it – something white, blue, and fluffy. You were beginning to grow a *tail*.

Your new friends had yet to take notice of it, but visibly flinched as you squealed, each of them taking a step back. Never in their lives had a convention encounter gone... quite like this. “M-Miss?” the girl spoke with a worried tone, unsure what to even *ask* in this situation.

But you didn’t wait around to answer her, deciding that it was more effective to turn tail (literally, now) and run than to try and explain your way out of this situation. Bolting off further down the floor, you left them both empty-handed in their hopes of ever matching up to your clear, cosplay prowess. They would forever wonder what could have been, and what was up with that weird convention attendee.

The further you got, the hotter your body felt – and you didn't believe it had anything to do with the sweat or exertion of a brisk jog over such a small area. Behind you, the fur weighing on you from behind had continued to swell longer and fuzzier. First only a foot, then doubling, until a swaying streak of fur trailed behind you like a low-hanging cape. It might have grown even more wild if it weren't for a few silver bracers beginning to appear in it as well, ones that matched several of your other new trinkets. As your hair flapped in front of your face, you could clearly see similar clips and rings in certain braids as well that had begun to spawn.

The convention floor became something of a blur at that point as you charged ahead, as you surprised yourself with the speed your body exhibited. It did *feel* improved, slimming down in the moment as a layer of muscle underlaid itself across your toned form – or Krystal's rather, as your physique continued to shift into her own. You recalled a little too late that your goal had originally been to find the vendor's stall again, but in dashing off had charged obliviously in whatever direction would put the most distance between you and any other curious congoers, and you instead ended up navigating into one of the side halls like where this whole mess had started. When you finally began to slow down, you found yourself in another room, a strange one that didn't quite look like the sort where attendees were supposed to go. Why hadn't there been any partitions or restricted signs along the way here? For that matter, how come you couldn't *quite* clearly recall the path that led you here?

Glancing down again at your exposed chest, you could see that your tail wasn't the only place where fur was growing in. The window gave you all the view you needed that Krystal's familiar white and blue coat was becoming more and more prominent. You used your free hand to reach up and feel your face – the muzzle growing in had broadened considerably, pushing forward far enough that you could even see it by crossing your eyes. You opened and shut your mouth a few times, flexing the altered jaw muscles – and when you bit down, you could scratch your own tongue with sharp, new teeth that had grown in. But what really made you shudder was the tickling feeling as your hands brushed a light coat of fur on your cheeks as well, not to mention the coat seemed to be spreading everywhere else.

From the end of your sleeves, and creeping along to your fingertips, that same layer of blue fur was also coating your limbs. Your fingernails had already begun to change color, darkening to a shade of black by the time your new coat had reached them. Turning your hands over, your palms were even padding themselves, as well as your individual digits, where padded skin grew through the fur like



proper paws might have. Though concealed under your suit and boots, you had the strong feeling that your feet had changed in much the same way.

Simply put, you weren't human anymore. You weren't even *you* anymore. And looking around, you weren't entirely sure you knew where you *were* anymore, either. You flexed your hands in front of your face, watching as they became that anthropomorphic mix of hand and paw that the internet seemed to so delight in.

It was only then that it struck you that something was missing – where had Star Fox Alpha gone? As you took off, you had still had the bag in your hand! For a moment you thought you might have dropped it back there somewhere in your rush, but surely you would have noticed a weight like that up and disappearing on you, right?

Running blindly might have gotten you away from it all, but now besides your shifting body you had given yourself a new mystery, as if you didn't have one too many on top of one another already. Somehow the room just looked far too... big, metallic, like it wasn't even part of the same building. The doorway was open wide into a similar looking hallway behind you, but ahead your vision was obscured by what looked like giant boxes and crates. If you didn't know better, you would have thought this was some sort of storage space, or even a warehouse.

There was an opening between the containers just big enough that you could fit. You had already been having a hell of a day, and a part of you tried to discourage yourself from exploring, but something about the space also felt... oddly familiar. Had you seen it before? Maybe in a photograph, an image? With nothing to lose and seemingly no one around to stop you otherwise, you marched forward to squeeze through the gap. It was a tight fit, and your new proportions didn't help as your curves pressed and squeezed between the casings. But what you found on the other side shocked you.

From the other side, you could make out what you thought were great garage doors – the kind that could open for big deliveries and the like to come through. With the containers no longer obscuring your view, you could see what it *opened* to, the sight of which left your mouth agape. Beyond the door were the shapes of distant stars, planets, the emptiness of space. If this was a projection, it was a hell of an impressive one.

Closer still were other props that astonished you to see, as real as could be. Planes and jets hanging from the ceilings, built with triangular shapes of grey, silver, and blue, that you recognized as Arwings. Arwings! In the convention hall!

It didn't take a great leap in logic to determine that maybe that last part wasn't so true anymore. If the game had had the power to alter your body, who was to say it couldn't alter the space around you either? Or transport you through it? Between the far out view through the bay doors and the equipment on display, you were starting to think you could only be in one of the hangars of Star Fox itself – perhaps even aboard the Great Fox, their iconic vessel. The game had done more than turn you into Krystal's twin – suddenly, it was as though you were the telepath herself.

You heard the buzz of an intercom, perfectly timed to answer your wonder. Despite the high-tech look of the room, there was something retro about the way it sounded, as though the audio conduit was a few decades older than it looked. "Attention Star Fox Team. This is Peppy, requesting all members to the bridge at once. We've received a transmission from the Cornerian army about an enemy formation near Fortuna. They're requesting us for immediate backup while they figure out what this is all about. Repeat, all team members to the bridge, a.s.a.p.!"

You heard the voices of the rest of the team follow up with him – your teammates, as it were – chiming in as they reported on their statuses and positions throughout the ship. However what shocked you was the sound of another voice that you heard not just over the intercom, but echoing from right there in the hangar with you.

"This is Fox – Krystal and I were in the hangar, checking in on how those Arwing upgrades Slippy was working on were coming along," you heard, and were able to turn and see the source of his voice was only a few vessels down the line. "We'll be right up."

You could only stare. It was him, *right there* in front of you. Fox McCloud – the fox, the fictional character, the protagonist of the very series that you had apparently been transported into, as clear and real as could be. He spotted you staring, and for a moment looked confused. But he soon spoke up again and started to approach you.

"How'd you end up all the way over there? You were right behind me a second ago," he observed, walking toward you. "Sounds like we're needed up top though, so afraid we'll have to cut maintenance short. Hope you don't mind the wasted trip."

You were speechless. How do you respond to... well, the entire situation you found yourself in? None of it added up. Or at least *some* did while the rest did not in any way that you could explain. Until you figured out what was going on, it seemed you could only lie as not to arouse any of the crew's suspicions.

“I was... just trailing a bit behind. The... ship is still quite astonishing, honestly.” Well, a lie bred from truth, maybe.

“Figured you would have warmed up to the place after so long on the crew already,” he chuckled, waving for you to follow. “Well, don’t sweat it. We can do this later. Better not to keep everyone waiting, though.”

You followed a few steps behind as he marched you to the elevator, realizing what you were walking into. Krystal was a Star Fox pilot now – you might just be diving headfirst into battle with them yourself, if you didn’t talk your way out of flying. It wasn’t what you had in mind when you picked Star Fox Alpha up at that table.

But as the elevator doors shut behind you and your new captain, another adventurous part of you wondered if staying on board the Great Fox might not be such a bad substitute for a simple game after all.