Attack of the Killer Fursuit!

 It hadn’t been the first time my followers shit themselves with anger. Not by a long shot.

 Waking up from a dreamless sleep, I could only hear two things: the birds chirping in the trees outside of my apartment, and the *pings* that serenaded from my nightstand. My hand blindly searched for the source until I grasped the unplugged smartphone and raising it to my tired face. The semi-intense light only blinded me for a moment, only for my eyes to widen at the sheer number of replies from the morning’s scheduled video.

 Specifically, the one of me wearing my new Swift Kitsune costume, all while I explained to my audience how I made it and what materials I used in the creation stage. And apparently, all the rubes could talk about were the main ingredient.

 *@Todd\_the\_SwiftKitsune you are scum!!!*

 *@Todd\_the\_SwiftKitsune WTF would you use REAL FUR on a suit?!?! Those poor foxes…*

 *@Todd\_the\_SwiftKitsune THAT IS REAL FUCKING FUR????*

 *@Todd\_the\_SwiftKitsune Fursuits can’t have real fur, you bastard! >:C*

 I didn’t create the new Swift Kitsune out of malice. I did it primarily out of boredom over my previous fursuit. Granted, there wasn’t much wrong with the previous design, but it always felt good to push myself to my limits. With quarantine in effect across my state and all the bigtime furry conventions canceled for the entire year, I desired to keep Swift Kitsine relevant. I wanted to make him much more realistic than artificial fur could provide. And the furrier I met with last month definitely gave me some exquisite (but very expensive) vulpine pelts to sew together the new and improved Swift Kitsune.

 Elbow grease went into it, yet on and on went the drama-queens of Twitter.

 *@Todd\_the\_SwiftKitsune You definitely did it now. You officially lost my respect as a member of the fursuiting fandom. >\_<*

 *@Todd\_the\_SwiftKitsune How many foxes did you kill you monster!!*

Honestly, the temptation nearly hit me to reply with, “About twelve pelts were used to make my fantastic fursona, you talentless nobody.”

 #noregrets

It wasn’t worth it though. I convinced myself this was to be expected, then distracted myself by getting out of bed. The prior night’s game session with a couple buddies resulted in me falling asleep at three in the morning, and it was almost noon already.

 After a relaxing shower (and jack-off session to the thought of a few furry artwork, like the one depicting a sultry ocelot twink anally mounted by the dark-furred wolf in a motel room, or the one of hung gorillas getting serviced by a meek badger in a bathroom stall), I dressed myself in a casual t-shirt and silky pajamas, then went into the kitchen to make myself some breakfast while glancing here and there at my displayed laptop on the counter. The smell of fried eggs and bacon filled the small room, so I glanced between the salivating meal and the rest of the ‘critics’ continuously belting my video.

 *Sheesh, they’re acting like it’s a war crime or something…*

Nowadays, the simple act of breathing resulted in some entitled dipshit or two rallying against you. They would go around social media, calling you a horrible person because they disagreed with an insignificant thing you did in the past, let alone the present, conforming you to their wills. The truth was that popularity had its consequences, especially if you became as successful in the fandom as me.

I rolled my half-awake eyes at the number of comments appearing in my notification inbox, either telling me to go to Hell, calling me a sicko pervert—very original, plus join the club—the Antichrist or even a hero for sticking it to the oversensitive nobodies too afraid to use real fur on a suit.

*They’re just jealous of you*, I reminded myself. *They don’t have the time or the imagination and just want you to stoop to their level. Well, fuck them!*

Some distant noise raised itself over the sound of sizzling bacon, but I shook it off as some leftover drowsiness. That, or maybe one of my neighbors dropped a plate in their apartment.

I was about to close the laptop when a new reply to my video appeared in my Twitter inbox. It came from Bejewel, another famous fursuiter I often met at conventions. She had decent talent when it came to crafting her dragoness persona and even excelled in dance competitions, even going so far as to promote me on her Instagram occasionally.

She seemed very nice…until I read her comment.

*@Todd\_the\_SwiftKitsune I can’t believe you’d do this! Fursuits can’t have real fur! How’d you feel if someone else wore YOUR SKIN?*

I subsequently blocked her. And every other hater who posted negative comments on the video. By the time my breakfast found itself on a paper plate and I started scarfing it down, careful not to drip any grease onto the keyboards of my expensive laptop, I’d decided to switch tabs and watch a few videos on YouTube.

*This will die down*, I convinced myself, chuckling as the host of one of my favorite history channels told a well-written, well-timed joke that nearly made me choke on a semi-burnt bacon strip. *These ‘controversies’ always do. Just gotta not think about it and not let them get to you, Todd. Remember that you’re the god of this fandom.*

 There were better things to do than pretend I gave a shit about their ‘criticism’.

Ever since I started raking in some good money from my Patreon, enough to lower my retails shifts to twenty-four hours a week, it gave me plenty of free time to focus on some of my other projects. When the pandemic hit this side of the state, it lowered my hours to a mere twenty or even eighteen hours. Just enough to keep working without losing either the rent or money for essentials such as food or sewing supplies.

And boy, did I always need sewing supplies.

Bored from the video and finished with my meal, I stood back to my feet and tossed the paper plate in the garbage. I almost into my ‘creation room’ near the back end of the apartment when my smartphone began vibrating on the kitchen counter. “Hello, this is Todd…”

“Hey Todd, it’s Jase,” replied a deep yet energetic voice I’d long since gotten familiar with, at cons and outside of costume. “Dude, are you seeing what people are saying about your video? They’re going nuts!”

Jase Gunner, another fursuiter (almost) as popular in the fandom as me.

“You tell me,” I groaned in agreement. “Shit like that is the reason I turned off app notifications on my phone. Each time I even comment on another person’s post, some of my whiny fans have this goddamned urge to give me an essay of why I should crucify myself or something.”

“Sorry you gotta go through this again, man.”

“I mean,” I exhaled in frustration, “don’t they have something better to do?”

“Of course, they don’t,” Jase snickered on the other end. “Those losers are just jealous yours suit looks better than whatever rags they got.” He loved nothing more than kissing up to me at times, which sometimes got annoying when I didn’t require it for my ego. “I mean, who cares if its real fur or not? It looks so good too.”

“Anyway, you going to post your suit too?” I asked, teasing him that, “We can endure their outrage together, you know. Us against the world, am I right?”

“Hehe, nah,” he sighed, “I think it would be a good idea to wait. Don’t get me wrong, I love what you did for Jasperfux, but my plate is already full, with work and classes and fucking parents…the last thing I need is what you’re going through. No offense.”

I shrugged, despite it being a phone conversation. “None taken.”

“Besides,” Jase added, “the last thing I need is Roxie getting pulled into it too.”

Jase lived on the other side of town with his long-time girlfriend, a nice girl named Roxie. She didn’t parade around in fursuits like either of us did, but still supported her boyfriend’s hobby, nonetheless. Even if she didn’t fully understand it like any other normal outsider would.

Good for them. I never went for dating those who didn’t understand me. Besides the steamy random hookup on Grindr, my last boyfriend brought nothing but trouble to the Swift Kitsune brand. Once he found out I was a popular furry on the Internet, and we finally broke up because of some ‘exclusive’ bullshit talk that went out of control, he suddenly decided it was okay to spill all my personal secrets to Twitter.

No more. If history had taught me the last instance that I tried openly dating somebody outside of the fandom, it resulted in the ‘N-Word Fiasco’ a few years prior.

*I mean, I only said it once…in private!*

“So anyway,” Jase thankfully changed the topic, “what are you doing to pass the time lately? It’s been so boring over here, and I was wondering if we could hang out? I don’t have any classes until six tonight.”

I checked the time on my phone. Tomorrow morning, I wanted to lounge around before work at 1:00, and get as much of the side projects as done as possible before nightfall.

“Sorry Jase, but I got some things to do. Maybe another time?”

“Sure thing, dude,” he sounded slightly disappointed, but said nothing else. A distant voice could be heard in the background. “Huh? Alright honey, I’m coming! I gotta go, Todd, but you take care.”

I nodded, despite it being a phone call. “You too, Jase. You too.”

He hung up seconds later, leaving me alone in the silent apartment.

Before getting straight to work, an impulse inside of me led to the wooden armoire resting comfortably in the far-left corner of my bedroom. According to my parents, this mahogany-colored wardrobe closet belonged to my grandparents before both died in their sleep’s years ago. Grandpa had claimed to them he bought it from travelling migrants, who were convinced it had been built from a hangman’s oak tree that was cut down, while Grandma asserted they found it in an antique shop outside of town. In her version of the armoire’s origin story, that very same shop burned to the ground soon after.

Despite either story’s morbidity, the armoire was beautifully carved in intricate patterns along the frame. Neither of my parents wanted to keep it in their modern-styled home (“It looks like it came from the Amityville house!” said Mom), so when I finally graduated college and earned enough money to move out on my own, they gave it to me without so much as a second thought. My apartment already came with a closet, except they didn’t care. They thought it’d be a decorative piece to place some of my business suits for when I landed higher-paying jobs.

I opened the wooden doors and marveled at Swift Kitsune, hanging from the interior rod to the right side. The head and paws sat presented on the left side. When worn, sandy red covered the back while ashy white and specks of black splattered on the chest and stomach, whilst the fluffy, black-dappled tail itself would swish via a mechanized motor at the base. The head itself looked more realistic than heads usually did, with even the ears itself looking like they belonged to a larger-than-life-sized anthropomorphic fox.

Besides the blue-and-red eyes on the head, one of Swift Kitsune’s most striking things to help him stand out were the jet-black angel wings sewn onto his back. One would have to painfully squint their eyes to notice the well-hidden stitches that held it all together.

Overall, counting a combined total of nine years of professional fursuiting in the online community, it had to be my finest handiwork yet. The fox furs were expensive as fuck, especially regarding the specific coat coloring I needed from Mom’s furrier friend, but it was worth every penny and every grueling hour.

 Yeah. Fuck the haters.

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 All in all, I made some excellent progress before one phone call soured my mood.

 My hands were sore from the amount of sewing and delicate threading I’d performed on the pair of giant devil wings I’d been forging for Halloween. More than one distracted occasion resulted in a needle piercing my skin like hornet stings, leading to me taking out a bandage from the box I kept inside of the sewing kit for experience’s sake, then carried on without blinking. Hours of work and an occasional break concluded with me marveling at the pair of wings finished, shaped like a bat and capable of easily fitting on a shoulder strap that would be hidden underneath the rest of my themed costume.

Then...I heard my phone ringing to the sound of death metal. Reaching for it on the table counter, a familiar bitterness returned to my tastebuds once I read the caller ID.

I groaned, answering with feigned interest. “Hey…Mom.”

“Todd! It’s been a while!” exclaimed the voice of a woman who clearly had too much time on her hands since her only son left, devoting it to condescending phone calls periodically to micromanage his life. “How are you doing lately? Did you find a job yet?”

Mom and I had always maintained a…strained relationship, to be honest. Even though Dad had the decency to keep his opinions about my ‘strange quirks’ to himself, she did not. She couldn’t comprehend the idea of her own son having a hobby that paid the bills.

Our irregular phone calls usually never deviated beyond her saying ‘hello’, immediately asking if I found a job, a dumb story of hers where a poor cashier didn’t give her a discount or some shit, then another dumb story revolving around her group of friends in their collective suburban bubble, followed by me trying to tell my own story of something that happened to before getting interrupted again, this time to remind me of something she wanted to do. Truth be told, I wanted nothing more than to hang up on Mom, but nobody—not even her version of God—could get away with such an act.

Not without getting an earful of lectures and angry texts.

Even when I asked for her to thank her furrier friend once again for the fox skins, Mom could not resist turning it around to getting me a ‘better job’. “I’ll be sure to do that then,” she answered, then cheerfully yet insistently asked, “So Todd, I hope they’re more than satisfactory for that little hobby of yours?”

“They…” I tightly gripped my phone, threatening to crack the screen, “They sure are, Mom. T-Thanks again.”

Minutes of deflecting her passive-aggressive questions later, we finally hung up on each other. The judgmental silence only remained. The sense of accomplishment and fulfillment I felt from before now suddenly turned to sour envy. Why couldn’t she see how hard I worked on my ‘little hobby’? Why couldn’t the others online see that I put blood, sweat and tears into the new Swift Kitsune?

*So, what if the entire fursuit is made of fox fur?* I asked myself bitterly. *God, I need to be anything but sober right now…*

Through the room’s nearby window, I could spot the sun setting over the dark shapes of other buildings in downtown. The time on my smart phone read 6:45 PM, but even with the extra amount of time on my hands before bedtime, the call with Mom drained me of any further work on the other side projects.

Hours passed as I wasted time on my couch, surfing through Netflix with a beer can clenched in my calloused, bandaged hand. Whatever troubles or plot lines the main characters onscreen were going through slowly blurred together as the beer can became two, then three, on and on. I eventually drank down the last of the six pack before squeezing the aluminum into a small statue that belonged more in an alcoholic father’s trailer than a popular furry’s dwelling.

“Fucking bitch…” I mumbled under my inebriated breath, the taste of stale beer lingering on each uneven word. “Fu…Fucking cunts…Think they can tell me what to do…I’m the KING of the fandom! Imma god compared to them…Can do whatever want whenever want—”

*Yip, yip, yip!*

The loose muscles all over my body suddenly became rigid. “What the…?”

Confused at first, I slowly craned my neck down the short distance between the living room and the door leading to a soft bed. A second of silence ticked by, followed by another and then six more.

I shook my head and laughed casually, turning back to the TV across the room while relaxing back into the couch. Despite considering myself a heavy drinker, my tired, inebriated mind convinced itself I probably misheard the plumbing, or maybe one of the neighbors were watching a nature documentary. Some shit like that.

Minutes later…

**—scratchscratchscratchscratchscratchscratchscratchscratchscratchscratch—**

The sound practically spooked me off the couch and caused me to tumble over, scrambling back up to my bare feet. That wasn’t a nature documentary; something was scratching against the wall, and it was coming from my bedroom!

The moment I started beelining past the kitchen, however, it suddenly stopped.

It didn’t grow quiet or move anywhere. It stopped.

“Fuck’s going on…?” I muttered.

Then it started again, only coming more faintly from a certain area. Slowly, I tip-toed to the bedroom door along the ledge of the wall, the scratching on wood becoming more prominent as I drew closer. If it was a burglar breaking in, then how did he break through the window without breaking the glass. Plus, my apartment was three stories off the ground.

Could I fight somebody off, even without basic defensive skills or a weapon? *No time to think*, I told myself, suddenly feeling sober as the adrenaline of fear kicked into my system. *Gotta catch him by surprise…*

Fists clenched, ears ringing over the noise and gritting my teeth, I slammed the door open and snapped the lights on with defensive, angry vigor to reveal…

Nobody.

Upon quick inspection, I checked everything. The blinds were drawn across the window, no glass shards were on the floor, and nothing was stolen. The ugly beige wallpaper covered in pornographic posters, an unmade blanket made from fuzzy brown cotton, two regular pillows, plus a dakimakura of a scantily-clad, barely naked and muscled Bengal tiger that stared back with sultry eyes, the bare dresser, a framed photo of my parents and I that Mom insisted I hung up, and lastly, the armoire containing my—

Wait. Why was it opened slightly?

I feared the worst, expecting Swift Kitsune to be long gone.

Delicate and irrationally slow, my trembling fingers traced up the edge of the armoir’s door, not finding any signs of forced entry, yet I could feel my knees practically buckle at the despair I’d soon experience. All of that hard work, those hours spent sewing in and out of the expensive furs, hunched on my desk while stitching each piece together until they slowly started forming into my fursona…completely wasted.

 “Oh, thank fucking Christ…”

They were still there. After finding the courage to pull both the armoire’s doors open, relief flooded my veins like the most addicting of drugs, finally causing my knees to give in and slam against the floor. Through the momentary pain though, I desperately pulled at the fursuit until it slid off the hangers, hugging it and the head tightly to my chest. So soft, so comforting.

“Drinking too much…yeah, yeah,” I half-laughed, half-exhaled, shaking all over as my fingers ran through the luscious fur. “Yeah, been…b-been drinking too much…”

During my college years, when I didn’t find myself rising in the ranks of online fursuiters or jerking it in my bedroom when the roommate left, I did pay attention in class. Low grades meant my Mom giving me another lecture about doing less of my ‘silly hobby’. If I remembered correctly, Psychology 101 taught the students that stress often resulted in audible hallucinations, but it did not mean the subject had a form of psychosis.

Yeah, they were just hallucinations. Nothing more. Just some stress brought about from the alcohol in my systems and the relentless comments appearing on my phone.

*Getting late*, I sighed in contempt, pondering if I could sleep in the next day, *Ugh, right, work’s tomorrow.*

Nearly losing a magnum opus tended to exhaust most online celebrities, so rather than place mine back in the armoire where I found it, I gathered enough strength to wear it. Footpaws on feet, zipped up suit over my legs, chest and arms followed by the paws. I half-considered wearing Swift Kitsune’s head, but my half-drunk thoughts recalled the horror stories of children and fans finding their favorite fursuiter resting on a chair in the lobby of a hotel convention. Only to be taken away by ambulances when they didn’t wake up, having died of improper care and dehydration just hours prior. That happened to a guy who went by Blazer\_Eyes on Twitter.

Even without the head though, I never felt more relaxed, more at peace than in the soft, cocoon-like blanket of Swift Kitsune. Not even the blanket could make me feel more comfortable, not when I had an entire soft costume to keep me cozy for the night. The furrier sure knew her products, to the point my lethargic thoughts began to wonder what other applications they could be used on as I drifted to sleep.

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 **Honk! Honk!**

 I jolted awake and witnessed a flashing light zip to my left. The car’s headlights then illuminated the interior of Swift Kitsune’s fursuit head (how the Hell did it get on???), before it immediately registered to me that I wasn’t in bed, or even in the apartment. Through the head’s eyes, I could spot the car disappear around a neon-drenched street corner.

 Huh?

 My arms wouldn’t respond. They wouldn’t raise themselves from my sides. My legs wouldn’t stop moving either, not when I tried willing myself to stop walking down the desolate sidewalk. Was I dreaming?

 Groggy confusion immediately transformed to panic when I felt a warm wetness all over inside the fursuit, covering my limbs and even my neck. Then, panic transitioned to outright horror when I tried speaking out, only to feel hot pain around my lips, and the bitter taste of warm, liquid iron.

Blood.

My blood, pouring down my chin from the tightly sewn thread attaching my lips together.

Whatever screams or sobs could escape my sewn muzzle fell on deaf ears to whoever remained on the streets. Except, to them, they only saw me as a weirdo waltzing around to a destination, unaware that some force I couldn’t comprehend was making me their puppet. I tried to holler through the pain, raise my voice through the constricting threads and slobbering drips of blood to a pedestrian, a woman in a hoodie distracted by her phone at a bus stop.

Our eyes locked, but all she did was turn to wave, likely smiling in amusement at the sight of a Furry this time of night. All she did was wave. All as I pleaded through the sewn threads and tried to beg her for help, only for them to be indiscernible over the howling wind.

God, how much time passed? Where in the fucking hell was this thing taking me?

At some point, the suffering and sharp agony on my enflamed mouth became further unbearable. The bile that was last night’s dinner rose up my esophagus, only to stay trapped in my enclosed mouth. Tears welled down my cheeks as I heaved at the sensation of regurgitated alcohol and putrid pizza well inside my incredibly stuffed cheeks. Then, combined with the tightening pull of the threads keeping my lips shut, enough space between the threads allowed my maw’s contents to leak away. Agonizing minutes passed as I could feel vomit and the blood slide in foul chunks down my hyperventilating chest, then my chest.

Time blurred during this torture. Few masked people turned to gawk, even take pictures with their cellphone, yet none of them questioned where I was going.

During the long, nonconsensual walk, I slowly started to notice something else that was peculiar about Swift Kitsune. Well, beside the fact this fursuit somehow fucking possessed me, of course.

The warm wetness soaking through the pajama bottoms and my t-shirt beneath the copstume, entombing me in dried and dampening liquid…they never stopped forming. That meant…they were coming from the fursuit itself, which, while I hadn’t noticed earlier in my situation, had been slowly writhing over my bare skin like a living thing. Like, the coat itself somehow became warm again. Living again, twitching at the slightest of temperature changes in a cold night breeze.

I blacked out every few minutes, only to find myself walking to another location. I barely remembered robotically walking across a bridge in downtown, then past the city’s university before finally appearing in front of a row of townhouses and apartments. Nobody was awake that early in the morning (nighttime?), not that I still retained any strength to try and call for help, despite my sewn mouth.

At last, something changed in the monotonous puppeteer. Swift Kitsune brought us to a particular one-story house, compelling me to stiffly walk up the front porch until I came to the same door that I recalled knocking on multiple times during the holidays. The same front door I frowned at before forcing a smile on myself when my parents hosted for holiday dinners.

 Nobody answered on the first knock, or rather, nobody answered on the first awkward, pat-pat-pat of my costumed glove of a paw, when Swift Kitsune pounded on the door. The second time resulted in the same outcome. Then the third and fourth and fifth, until…

 An overweight, wrinkling woman wrapped in a fluffy nightgown appeared through the window, tiredly and furiously pulling the door open. “Todd James Hawley, what the fuck are you doing here this time of night?!” she hissed with daggers in her eyes. “And why the fuck are y—”

 My mind drifted into that of a horrified, powerless observer, incapable of stopping what occurred in front of me. The suit…it forced me to watch and act as Swift Kitsune pounced on top of her and jam my fingers into her eyes. Hot blood seeped all over my paws. Her legs kicked the door shut behind us as ear-splitting shrieks resonated across every wall of the building, until my fingers brutally pushed down on her vocal cords. The fur all over me wriggled and squirmed as she did as gut-wrenching sobs bubbled between my bloodied lips.

 When I saw the tear-streaked, red and caved-in holes that used to be where her scrutinizing eyes once where, I vomited into my mouth again. Except now, the putrid bile mixed further with the words my pained lips tried to form. I tried begging the fursuit—whatever it was—to let me go and let Mom live.

 Too late. She stopped moving under me. The warm crimson pooled under her and stained the carpeted floor that Mom bought after I recommended the color to her. She liked it so much.

 Still whimpering and begging myself to wake up from the nightmare, I stood back up and went into the master bedroom. Dad always was a heavy sleeper, even when his son became a possessed murder.

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 “T-Todd?” the door opened to reveal a round, twenty-something young man, who rubbed his tired eyes and stared at the costume at his door. “Todd, is that you? It’s three in the morning, gah, what the fuck? Why’s there red paint all over—”

 The motions repeated themselves. All I could do was scream through the bile-encrusted threads, as Swift Kitsune lunged into the apartment, mindlessly slamming Jase’s bloated head against a countertop until Roxie rushed from their shared bedroom minutes later. Her screams likely awoke the neighbors when Swift Kitsune chased her down the short hallway, holding her down and continually slamming her bloodied head to the floorboards.

 The fur on Swift Kitsune’s body squirmed with glee when Roxie stopped moving beneath me. Then, I heard the faintest of noises in each and every patch of reaped coat I remembered meticulously sewing into a single form. This noise rang in my ears, even as I walked away from the bodies into the bedroom, then grew in unison as I yanked the closet doors open to obtain Swift Kitsune’s equally stitched brethren, writhing to be free.

 My few friends out there were probably trying to find me. Or whatever remained on my body beneath this living skin. However, they wouldn’t find Swift Kitsune anywhere, not unless they searched deep into the woods, where it would puppeteer me to go with the squirming mess of fox furs carried in my arms.

It hadn’t been the first time I angered my followers, but…it had been the first time I enraged something beyond my understanding. Now, the only thing I had to look forward to the rest of my life was where Swift Kitsune would take me. If I didn’t die of dehydration or starve first.