

Metamorphosis

A Halloween Tale

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“Mistakes have the power to turn you into something better than you were before.”

Daphne had been looking at the serum on her lab table for God knows how long, now. At least to the point where text messages had piled up on her phone and her oven cooked meal had gone cold. Day had turned to night, but there was no telling just how many had passed. It was the caged American pit bull's bark that pulled Daphne from her trance, losing her train of thought. She just looked at the large beast, which growled back at her aggressively.

Daphne pulled a voice recorder from her lab coat and placed it on the workspace, examining the serum again in obsessive detail. When first created, it had a pinkish hue, which shifted over time to blue and then changing once again to settle on orange, retaining a fizziness throughout its conversion. “It is now Saturday, October twenty-fourth. The time...nearing midnight.”

If she was right, and not tricked by some sense of tiredness, that meant Daphne had been staring at the serum for the better half of four days. Just staring at it.

“It has been reported prominently that the military has taken interest in Project Apollo. My great work.” Hearing those words roll from her tongue stung Daphne. She had been working closely with the Department of Defense on a top-secret project with the goal of enhancing the capabilities of a soldier, bringing them up to par with those often seen in comic book movies. The success of that project would've made Daphne a billionaire, but the lack of ethics in her approach brought her to the new low she found herself in. “The fools at the company have saw fit to bastardize and neuter it, only give the military a slight boost in comparison to the serum's *true* potential.”

Daphne removed the lab coat, casually tossing it aside to land over the cage of a captive silverback gorilla. Matching the earlier pit bull, it roared aggressively. Most people would flee for their lives over such a display, but Daphne, with her back turned, didn't even flinch. What she did do, though, was look in the small wall mirror panel in front, catching her reflection, a stern glare looking back.

“Prior to making their changes to it, the company made sure to destroy all evidence pertaining to my involvement in Project Apollo, including the baseline. But they did not account for my superior intellect retaining that data.” Daphne keyed in a command that prompted an extensive report to appear on her screenless display. It showed information related to several animals: tigers, bears, gorillas and even certain dog breeds, like pit bulls. A smirk formed on Daphne's lips. “I've not only managed to replicate the baseline from mere memory, but improved upon it.”

Daphne keyed in a different command, this time displaying a 3D replication of her body's current proportions, which was then cross-referenced with a post-consumption mock-up. Just seeing the *potential* results was enough to make the woman's crotch twitch.

“Recorded simulations suggest my size and strength will increase sixfold. These improvements are derived from the isolation of genetic strands related to strength unique to specific animals.” Daphne couldn't resist smirking at her own words. She knew this was going to work. So focused on the future was she, however, that Daphne didn't pay much attention to the prowling tiger in its pen. This beast was not much like its wild and free companions, double the usual size of a Siberian, its fangs matching that to grotesquely overlap its jaw. The large cat's eyes were mismatched and glazed over. The collective result of Daphne's past experiments and research. “It is with the carefully applied combination of these genetic strands being augmented with Apollo that will allow it to reach the heights suggested. Perhaps even higher.”

Daphne stared at the serum again. She had spent years, close to a decade working on Apollo. It was her brainchild, the initial formula thoughtlessly written in its entirety on a napkin in a cafe in broad daylight. She was barely eighteen then. Now close to twenty-three, the

improvements she made would make this her crowning achievement.

She took the vial from the test tube rack, thumbing the glass container gingerly. “Drinking the serum now. Effects should be noticeable almost immediately.”

The orange contents were swallowed in one go, the test tube carefully slotted back. The taste was bitter and burned Daphne’s throat, like singeing the insides. She scratched it instinctively, unaware of the subtle changes already taking place; her arm was slowly expanding into a modest-sized bicep, the other relaxed limb matching it. The results were coming in as expected, which permitted Daphne to let out a small chuckle.

“Results are promising so far. I already feel a great deal stronger than before.” The scientist couldn’t resist running a hand along the limb as its growth continued, a layer of vascularity already starting to surface. She watched as her hand, too, expanded to keep up with and match the proportions of her arm now comparable with a bodybuilder’s, then quickly exceeding them. “Interesting. It seems my hands are also affected by the predicated changes, nearly double their original size.”

Daphne took a moment to examine her hands more closely. They were definitely bigger. There was no denying that, comparing them with the width of the nearby support pillar for reference. She couldn’t believe it. Her hands were nearly just as big! A tinge of worry did crawl up Daphne’s spine at that moment, though she wrote the freakish width of her hand as an unfortunate side effect of the serum. No matter. The other effects wielded far more promising results, the pros outweighing the cons.

She looked down at her legs next. The fabric of her trousers were already yielding to her metamorphosis, shredding and tearing apart in a vain attempt to keep the woman modest. But Daphne didn’t want modesty, yet results. With a casual flex of her quad, the remaining fabric succumbed, revealing the woman’s thighs in all their powerful glory. She didn’t say anything, just watched. Her breathing, without warning, had shifted in tone, swapped for something huskier. She ran a hand down her thigh and moaned, the deep, abnormal inflections almost guttural in nature.

The pit bull watched as Daphne craned her neck to look at her reflection in the mirror above her workspace. Her changes were still coming in slowly, subtly. But some weren't so hard to miss. Her eyes widened upon noticing her ears had become malformed, reshaped to match the captive canine's. She rubbed them in a predictable panic. No. No, this kind of change wasn't part of the simulation. Something was definitely wrong.

“Fuck, fuck, fuuuuuck!” Daphne cried out, her gruff tones even deeper than before.

Driven by her panic, Daphne reassessed the simulation, running it over and over for any kind of error that might've slipped through the metaphoric cracks. But the math, equations, formulaic evaluations— all of it was perfect, as expected. Daphne's mind, science and experiments were always perfect, as usual, so why was this one going wrong?

She bent over the workspace as she felt her back widen, the sinewy insides squirming and bubbling like a witch's cauldron amidst its growth. The pain had become unbearable, but the accompanying increase in strength and size was too satisfying to stop now. Not that Daphne had control, now completely at the mercy of her own growth.

“More! Moooore!”

Daphne didn't mean to drool as she felt her calves throb and distend like balloons, her skin creaking like old leather, reasserting her footing as her weight tipped the woman's balance. She had to be a good few inches taller now, well over six feet at least. But the woman wanted more. So much more, even if the pain was excruciating.

Moaning huskily, Daphne reached behind to worshipfully explore the thick sinews of her lats, mesmerized by their sheer magnitude. They had grown so much so quickly, yet not enough. A mane of black fur had started to sprout across her spine, growing thicker with the woman's every breath. The former Daphne would've panicked at this development, but something in her had changed since her calves bloated to over thrice their previous size. This Daphne wanted more hair, thicker hair. As a matter of fact, she moaned at the idea. Or at least, she thought it

was a moan. The tone was different, huskier. Upon recognizing it, Daphne realized the moan sounded more comparable to a dog's soft howl.

Daphne's changes continued. Looking down at her ass, she could see a small growth had formed. She smiled as her hand gripped it, solid as a rock, it twitched and thickened to over double its previous size and length. And that was when Daphne had realized. She had grown a tail! It wasn't furry like that of the captive tiger now huddled in the cage's corner in fear, but made of pure fibrous, sinewy tissue. The appendage's muscular definition was put on full display as it flexed between its involuntary, whip-like motions, knocking over lab equipment. Drool had gathered at the woman's mouth again, clearly aroused by her changes, her jaw elongating and protruding grotesquely to no longer appear human, but something monstrous.

Daphne was no longer herself, but she didn't care. All she wanted was simply more. More of everything she felt. As her forearms continued to grow larger and stronger, pushing down on the workspace to casually warp its surface, she felt their hairs thicken to almost cover the limbs. Her stomach shifted in its attempt to grow and make space for the bloated abdomen underneath. Green, sickening pustules had formed, some already preparing to pop and expel their vile recesses on the woman's skin. Those that had already popped left acidic, burn-like markings in their wake. There was one particular pustule large enough to grip in one's hand jutting out from Daphne's side.

A vein had risen to the surface of Daphne's forehead. It visibly throbbed and writhed like a worm, thickening under the woman's flaky pale skin. Patches of red had formed, a clear indication of irritation, or worse, infection. But Daphne just wanted to be bigger.

"Not enough! Biggeerrrrraaaaaggh!!" Her voice had deepened further, completely unrecognizable and not matching any kind of human tone. But Daphne saw this as bonus, a sign that her transformation into something truly unique had reached its next stage. Daphne was smart enough to know she wasn't human anymore, but something better, bigger. The massive, tumour-like ulcer on its side popped, spilling its acidic juice over the lab floor. This only supplied yet another moan of ecstasy from the transforming thing, another dose of growth. Bent over the worktop again, it shuddered as its legs extended to allow its height to climb even

higher.

The thing that was once Daphne looked down, feeling pressure tighten around the confines of its shoe. The leather had already stretched and tore at the sides to reveal the grotesquely misshapen appendage that was its foot, furred and riddled with pustules. Even as this unnatural monstrosity maintained its curious stares, drooling mindlessly, its body continued growing, an abhorrent mass of musculature inexplicably formed on its jaw, bulging and tensing as if with a mind of its own. Then it started growing, visibly roiling with muted squishes.

The creature's foot had metamorphosed into a claw, its nails long and sharp, curling over its thick soles. The beast's weight had more than doubled within the next few seconds alone, its pronounced musculature reflected in the workspace's mirror. Whatever the monster was, its former humanity mutated into some kind of hellish creature, it still retained the awareness of how to flex, growling as its lats were tensed to spread and grow. The remaining spots on the monstrosity's back started popping in quick succession, like a sequence of mines detonating in a domino effect. Then, from the fresh scars sprouted fibrous wings, their thick sinews flailing wildly. Its tail had broadened to match the wings' girth, forming striations in areas science thought impossible.

Grumbling, the winged beast moved to raise its arm into a flex. Its skin had turned viscous and gooey, some kind of acidic liquid dripping from the elbow as its bicep rose higher still. It was clear the thing was pleased with the current results, the same liquid casually dribbling between its crusted groin. A layer of spots had sprouted across the monster's peak after pervasively observing it long enough to drool. But it didn't care.

Looking down at the pool of its own excitement, the creature noticed the flooring had cracked under its weight. Even then, its thighs continued broadening, the tiles carrying on to futilely withstand its power, splitting like porcelain. The beast had retained some sense of human-like lucidity for the briefest moment, as if the former Daphne had managed to break from some kind metaphysical bond. A noise came from the monster, not of pain or some sense of regret, but...pleasure.

It was touching itself. The thing's wings extended and its tail wagged in an obvious display of stimulation. Following that, its secreting arms swelled to over double their previous size, and just kept going, it's flesh splitting as it struggled to keep up with the accelerated changes.

The voice recorder caught an inhuman shriek that was unquestionably sensual in nature, a shadow swelling rapidly....