

I. *working the till, letting you play yrself*

Nothing dangerous like a shifter in heat. We lift the octagonal leather lid. It quiver in its hole. "Still hot for that time-cruise?" he whistled. Skin ripple over its form. It was reducing in mass, cuffs just slid off. *Fuck*—here's one out of the past, without time. We closed the lid.

Police-shapes couldn't shape-shift like that, at least not this decade. Who slid into police-shape still had a choice: weather it or break off the key. *Either way you're locked in?* Enough questions—*Had some time-cop jumped protocol? Why now?*—to work a boi pink....

If we opened the lid expecting answers, we got only questions—5 of them, exactly. It leveled its heater at the slit, waited on it to flick open. Hear it mutter "I'm yr boi" over the bullets.... I was tired of it. Each Liminal Skin session, fucking some whole pack "shifted" into one—or, more likely, coined one. *Why ask for what body open cage it only lift you out?* "That question keep you cold-blooded for sure" he offered. Whatever

I leaned against the balcony. Ashen rain slanted into the plateau. Tongue-like questions snake up my back, eddy long enough in my ear to shift another in. *Who's working who here?* It felt nice, something to ride off. They had an angle after all. But we had a

job. Who has time at work just

shift off, ride a soft rain? "Not me" I concluded sadly. *Wish I was so hot...*
Caustic rain slanted indoor. One pawed its food. Truth is, I'd shift in for
less—lose tongue in boi-soft food. Back at work

lift the lid. Voices waft up. "Hey Kevin how's every little thing in particular?"
J coined a fine answer: blackjack to the ear. "Jackpot" he whispered. Weird, it
echo only in my ear.... Who shift who, again? I got into this to fuck time-
cops, not a shifter with a bad rep. Even if we comp his room

that doll has to be aired out. Protocol: proffer the plate. "Valuables" I rasped.
It took inventory. Several cadmium cuffs rattled in the octagonal darkness.
How many shift in there? I was drunk enough to flash my badge. "Had

fill of bodies?" I asked. No answer. "What, a little odd heat force you off?" I'd
buried this part of me so deep in the past nothing shift in. But here it was,
riding up at a hot canter

putting threats like questions? Lid closed

II. *skim off the transfers*

Pleasure send you off script sometimes. We were no exception. Just then
thick incorporate smoke tipped the alarm. It moved like an alternative body,
lispig "What, Kevin's creature in a cell can't exactly complain about the
service in here am I right?" Other fringe matter braid itself in, also really
unhelpful

hiss "Too little too late pick up the next shift?" Seen nothing like it—
amorphous body-braids out of nowhere. But like it. Doesn't matter who shift
into that. *Even if it's a time-cop?* "Step aside," one sd. "That thing's thick
enough to ride." Had to agree. Only one thing to do: throw down a saddle.
& you couldn't snap before that caustic-as-fuck Warden Creature undulate
on it. & yeah that short fuck seal us in: it wasn't

incorporate smoke but fluent layers of a fucked imago! *That* deal us in—
shifters, agents, angels, species all trapped

in fucked larva! each feeler, each feeder, each wave

not normal. But it felt normal, as if what kept us apart all these years

not. Heat waves strain at leash, crash against larval skin. Take notice: next
roiling larval

cash out is—no, *can't* cash out it

only conjugate singly-fucked whole. "Hey, Warden! We got skin tangling up
in here!" Off-brand pleasure-waves interfere with one another. A sign creak
above us: *Landmark Property* flash in the gutter, barely legible. No sooner had
I read it than this whole larval thing tensed. Then I knew: who see with me
ride

off me.... especially that one lick my spine. Doing it, it lisp "*Just what I
thought*"

so electric before turning harsh: "Yeah just what *I* thought—raw imago like
that fit

only to liquidate." His Cremona blouse slid off faster than his cuffs. *& who
cop this feel?* Hand fumbling in fibrous phosphorescent growth flipped the
switch, opened the grate: a body like a perforated void sift down, viscous
carcinogenic pool on lips, synthetic sweat rattling pore, coin scratching
scabrous skin

glaze least boi. I thought it, then sd it: *Pleasure fucking yr boifrnd forever...* It
always did sound svelte on film, if a bit febrile, hands settling on forkéd
lottery

skin. The insect tangling in half-charred Cremona blazer rattle you
bedside. It was dark, you kept your eyes on us

III. *off shift*

