

Shameka

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"Oh! Uh... thank you?" Melissa forced a smile as she accepted the clumsily wrapped package. The Black man standing on her porch—Booker, he'd said—was in his 40s, massive, his arms corded with muscle, a jagged scar running down his neck. Not the kind of guy she expected to show up with a "welcome to the neighborhood" gift.

Her father, a cop, had always warned her about strangers. *Especially* in this part of town. But Booker's grin was warm, his voice surprisingly gentle as he chatted about the local diner and the best bus routes. There was something charming about him. Her fingers tightened around the package, a little curious, as she ended the chat and waved at him.



She entered her apartment and after a while curiosity had the best of her and she peeled back the paper.

Melissa's stomach lurched. "What... is this?"

It was a mask. Not an ordinary one. Silicone, espresso brown, shaped into the face of a young woman. She turned it over in her hands. A Black woman's face, eerily lifelike, the lips slightly parted as if mid-breath. The material was smooth, almost warm to the touch. High-quality. Expensive, probably. "A mask of a Black lady? What kind of present is this?" "Is this some kind of joke? Blackface is messed up. Why would he...?"



“Maybe it’s more like a message: White people are not welcome here. Who knows...”

She lifted the mask, hesitating. “I could wear it, just to see. For a party. Or... for my boyfriend. He’d lose his mind haha.”

The mask dangled from her fingers. She took a breath. She raised it to her face. Soft suction. A tiny sigh of air. As soon as she wore it, it stuck on her face. Her nose flattened and flared to match the broader bridge, her lips swelled with tingling pressure, stretched into unfamiliar fullness by the mask. The cheeks followed, swelling outward until her cheekbones nested perfectly in the mask’s pre-shaped hollows.



Her face was now round and pouty. Her expressions were limited but all in all it felt reasonably comfortable and quite realistic too, apart from the rubbery texture. "Wow, look at how full my lips are now!"- she thought. A giggle bubbled up. "This is mad."- she said, loud, noticing her consonants sounded a bit like those of a Black girl, due to her distorted nasal passages.

It was complete with veneers, and color contacts, which she applied. "Wow, this looks so good!" She turned her head, admiring the high cheekbones, the way the light caught the mask's artificial sheen. "Black girls *are* pretty... in their own way."

Her phone buzzed.



A text from Booker: "Looks good on you."

Melissa froze.

Her curtains were closed. Her door was locked. She had checked, before trying on the mask.

"How do you know?" she typed, fingers shaking.

Three dots pulsed. Then: "Doesn't matter. Try removing it now."

Her nails scraped at the edges—nothing. The rubbery edge had melted against her skin. "No no no—" She clawed at her jawline. The mask stayed. "What have you done to me?" - she typed.



She left her apartment to try and talk to Booker in person. She knew where he lived, in the condo facing her apartment.

The apartment complex loomed, a hive of peeling doors and flickering corridor lights. Neighbors stared as she ran past.

"Booker! BOOKER!" She hammered on doors.

"Hmmm please help mee" - she struggled to say.

Her phone buzzed. A reply: "I'm not home."

Back in her bathroom, the fluorescent light hummed.



The brown skin was *spreading*.
Creeping down her neck, towards her
chest, spreading like ink.

"Nooooo!" Her reflection gasped.

She screamed in a deep, husky, smoky,
unfamiliar tone. A voice that wasn't hers.
Deep. Rich. *Black*. *She grabbed her
throat*, She tried tearing at contacts that
would not budge. When she did, the
irises underneath were the same brown.
Her brown irises seemed dilating
regularly, as if they were her own
natural ones.



In the bedroom, she fumbled for clothes.

Frantic, she tore at her shirt. She could only watch in shock as a wave of pigmentation flowed across her skin. Brown crept from her throat to her collarbones, painting her torso like slow ink in water. Her nipples darkened too. She watched as her breasts grew and changed shape.

Melissa bundled herself in a wool coat, gloves, and a scarf despite the sweltering heat. She needed to see a doctor right now.



The trip was terrible. The skin suit already made her hot and sweaty, and the winter clothes didn't help. Once arrived at her general practitioner's clinic, she asked to see her doctor. The receptionist barely glanced up: "Name?"

Melissa opened her mouth. "M-Melissa Whitaker."

The receptionist frowned at her chart, then at Melissa's face. "ID?" Her gloves stuck to sweating palms. "I... lost it."

A hand clamped her shoulder. A doctor seemed to recognize her. He flashed the receptionist an apologetic shrug. "Forgot her damn wallet *again*."



As he steered her inside, Melissa disrobed, desperate to show the doctor the truth.

But there was nothing left to reveal except for a uniform dark brown skintone, from head to toes. Her last bits of light skin had vanished under her warm clothes.

Her whole body had gained weight, too. Her breasts were drastically different. From small, pert tits with soft pink nipples, to heavy D cups with black areolas. They hung so differently that even the tension they put on her chest felt different.