

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

SHIFTER

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Draft 2

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FADE IN:

INT. RILEY'S BEDROOM-MORNING

RILEY (MASC) (a man in his 20's) is asleep in his bed. He is sprawled on his back across the covers with one foot hanging loosely off the edge. His loose tank top and pajama shorts are clashing colours and his floppy dyed hair is a tangled mess. As his cellphone rings he mumbles incoherently, scrunching his face in distaste as he reaches over to feel around for it.

MATCH CUT RILEY (MASC) REACHING FOR THE PHONE WITH RILEY (FEM). USE SIMILAR TRANSITIONS MOST TIMES IT IS INDICATED THAT RILEY HAS SHAPE-SHIFTED.

RILEY (FEM) (now a similarly sized woman sporting the same clothes and haircut) grabs the phone and sleepily answers it.

RILEY (FEM)
Mmmm...morning Bailey. Ever heard of sleeping in?

CUT TO:

INT. BAILEY'S CAR-MORNING

BAILEY (a non-binary person in their 20's) is already dressed and looks ready to take on the day. They are parked outside Riley's apartment, ready to pick her up.

BAILEY
You're crazy if you think I'm letting you sleep in today. I'm not leaving you alone to stew in anxiety and then cancel at the last minute. Get dressed, I'm already here.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. RILEY'S BEDROOM-MORNING

Riley (Fem) stumbles out of bed and puts the phone on speaker as s/he continues her conversation with Bailey.

RILEY (FEM)
You don't have to act like I'm some skittish bunny who's going to bolt at the first sign of danger.

BAILEY

(scoffs)

Like that's not the perfect way to describe your approach to having a love life the last few years.

Riley (Fem) blushes at her best friends gentle ribbing as she stands in front of her bedroom mirror. S/he switches bodies again as s/he pulls off his shirt and Riley (Masc) puts on a layered outfit and gels his hair up.

RILEY (MASC)

Ok well, I really like Dean so I'm trying to be positive about this. I think its worth having dinner with him and seeing where it goes.

BAILEY

Honestly, I'm so proud of you for actually saying yes. I know this is a big step for you. Especially since...

(Beat)

Well, have you told him about being a shifter yet?

Riley (Masc) stops what he's doing for a moment and a look of worry crosses his face. He gets a pang of panic as he gets remembers how badly that conversation went last time...

FLASHBACK:

DARLA (V.O.)

(Spiteful)

I knew something was wrong with you. To think I was going to move in with a SHIFTER. You're disgusting, you know that right? A freak of nature that shouldn't exist.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. RILEY'S BEDROOM-MORNING

RILEY (MASC)

No...not yet.

BAILEY

Are you planning on telling him? You know, you don't have to. Not yet anyway. You could see where the relationship is going before-

RILEY (MASC)

NO!!

(MORE)

RILEY (MASC) (cont'd)

(Beat)

Sorry, I just...I can't go through that again. Not after Darla. I need to know up front whether he's going to be ok with it. I don't want him to waste his time on me if I'm not-

BAILEY

(Derisively)

HA! If he doesn't appreciate you for who you are, then its YOUR time being wasted. Not his. Now get your ass down here. We're finding you a gorgeous new outfit to put some pep in your step tonight.

CUT TO:

INT. THRIFT STORE CHANGING ROOM-DAY

Riley and Bailey are hanging out at the changing rooms of their favourite thrift store with a massive pile of clothes. As Riley works her way through the pile, her enjoyment of shopping with his best friend is marred by flashes of anxiety that s/he can't quite keep off her face as s/he worries about the upcoming date.

MONTAGE OF RILEY TRYING ON VARIOUS BRIGHTLY COLOURED ECCENTRIC OUTFITS, SWITCHING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE AS S/HE POSES AND SHOWS OFF FOR BAILEY.

BAILEY (V.O.)

Look at you! Oh that ones a keeper.
Dean won't know what hit him.

Riley (Fem) looks down at the final outfit, (a layered colourful look that is a mix of masculine and feminine sensibilities) smiles in delight and does a twirl in front of the mirror, shifting as s/he admires himself from all angles.

RILEY (MASC)

You really think so?

BAILEY

I KNOW so. You couldn't ask for a better outfit to come out in. He'll be so dazzled he probably won't even notice you shifting.

Riley visibly deflates and shrinks into himself as his misgivings about revealing his gender fluidity to Dean come bubbling to the surface. Bailey notices this and tries to encourage their friend.

BAILEY (cont'd)
Honestly Riley, you have nothing to worry about! Dean is good people. He's Bi, so he's totally not going to mind you being a chick sometimes, and after what happened at Danie's party...well, we know he's not just after you for your looks.

Bailey laughs at the memory and despite his current anxiety, Riley cant help but join in with a self deprecating chuckle.

RILEY (MASC)
Yeah but...being a shifter...its a lot. That's way more of an ask than just dating a fem when you were expecting a masc. He's never dated a shifter before. I don't think he even knows any. Or at least he thought he didn't...
(beat)
I should call him and cancel. This is too much.

Riley grabs his phone out of his purse and starts to dial Dean. Bailey grabs his hand, stops him, and pulls their panicked friend into a comforting embrace.

BAILEY
Hey, look at me.
(beat)
He's not Darla.
(beat)
I know you're scared. She hurt you in a way I will never understand. But you couldn't pick a better person to get back on the horse with. Dean likes you. He's won't care what you look like. He won't care what gender you are. He won't care that you're a shifter.

Riley looks back at his best friend with tears in his eyes and sniffles as he tries to contain his emotions.

BAILEY (cont'd)
And if he does care, then he's not the one.
(MORE)

BAILEY (cont'd)

But you gotta start somewhere Babe. You gotta TRY. You know I love you, but I can't be what you need. You need another Allo. Someone you can kiss and cuddle and spank in the bedroom. Give Dean a chance to be that someone.

(beat)

Don't let that bitch have the last word.

Riley smiles tearfully at Baileys words, takes a deep breath to regain his composure and nods.

RILEY (MASC)

You're right. Dean deserves a chance. And so do I. I've been too afraid of chances lately.

(beat)

I can't control how he chooses to take it. I can only control my choices.

Riley looks at Bailey with a look of determination and newfound confidence. Bailey smiles and nods approvingly as Riley stands tall and proud in a way Bailey hasn't seen in years.

RILEY (MASC) (cont'd)

I choose to stop hiding. I'm going to take a chance. And if Dean lets me down...then I'll find someone else.

Riley shifts to female form and smiles.

RILEY (FEM)

I'll find someone who likes 'freaks'.

FADE TO BLACK