

Before we get to when Anna Holmes woke and went through a similar experience as Glen Harris and Robert Cotten lets back up a little. Her defining change was that she would become a gryphon but that's not enough for the editorial flashback. No, for in her case she is the one person that we're going to follow through this initial period that was to both undergo such a change and do it with witnesses.

The moment after the lights went out and she started feeling the first symptoms Anna happened to be standing at the check in desk of Seattle's Crown Plaza Hotel. With everything at a standstill and enough light coming in from the glass front everybody had a front row position to the spectacle. There were actually more than two dozen witnesses but as things developed no one would be able to piece things together, but perhaps that's because so much got lost in the chaos and confusion that was to follow.

About the time her head was spinning to the point she needed to reach out to support herself a faint glow had appeared around her. As her symptoms intensified the brighter the glow around her became. Like the others that were to undergo changes she was in no condition to notice. Once she was down and out the glow, while bright enough to obscure her fallen body was also somehow not blinding.

To their credit several people came forward to assist her at her moment of need and inexplicable symptoms. None of them were able to touch her, nor were they in turn injured or affected in any other way with the mild exception of increasing their confusion and amazement. For almost an hour the bubble she was encased inside was impregnable. For those who was still watching, actually only two people can claim that, the bubble finally disappeared all at once with a soundless snap.

Like a shoddy magician's trick the white bubble popped like an overinflated balloon leaving Anna exposed on the floor in her new form and just waking up. She was given a moment to get a quick look at herself. The few hangers on still left in the lobby kept their distance. She slowly climbed to her feet and started looking herself over. Instantly recognizing her changed situation she collected and categorized the clues and understood she was now a gryphon.

In that instant just before she turned her attention outward she rightly thought that she would have been huge, at least the size of a lion. All she knew of gryphons she had learned from seeing statues of the mythic beast, and they were all huge, impressive and dripping with power and authority as if those intangible characteristics were Seattle rainwater. Instead as soon as she began comparing herself to familiar things around her she realized she was barely larger than a dog. Instead of finding herself massive like a lion she was at best two feet at the shoulder when standing on all fours. After a failed attempt she found her new body was also not capable of standing on her hind legs. Anna was without a doubt disappointed for a time.

Soon though she came to understand great things can sometimes come a small packages. Her vision was incredible. Looking out the lobby window she could spot movement and not only focus on it but in some way zoom in on the squirrel in a tree across the street from the hotel. Even from that distance she could almost count the whiskers on its face. Such excellent eyesight could only be from the raptor part of her new heritage. In watching the squirrel she only momentarily wondered why it was moving so slowly. There was suddenly more pressing matters at hand that wrested her attention from the squirrel.

The people around her looked huge, overbearing and dangerous to one with her suddenly smaller stature. Out of reflex that she didn't even know she possessed she took to the air. Instantly she was off the floor and high enough to be out of reach. At first it looked to her that her sudden flight had stunned everyone into stillness but things got just a touch stranger as she noticed those in attendance were moving either toward or away from her.

It came to her with the strength of instinct aided by observation that she could flap her wings fast enough to not only fly but hover like a hummingbird. To her it didn't feel like she was straining to keep

the high number of beats per second. She circled the wide space of the lobby fast enough that no one could come close to touching her. The open floor plan of the lobby, basketball court wide and several stories high aided her escape, and she took every advantage of the dim corners and artsy interior.

Landing on high perch afforded by large blocks of architecture over the escalators she turned to watch her wings settle on her back. She rolled her wing joints slightly to help settle her new appendages. With the advantage of a high perch for safety she was able to take the time for a proper self examination. Front legs of a bird, eagle maybe considering the yellow of the tough scales, check. A curved beak in the front of her eyesight, check. Turning her head she saw a feathered back that transitioned to fur at her hips, check. Her hind legs were that of a feline, but with banding and spots dominating the coloration more like that of a hawk. Another check.

Looking back at the yellow beak that made up the front half of her face she brought up an arm with it's clawed hand. She stroked a talon across her beak feeling the new dimensions of her face with an odd sense of familiarity.

It was strange feeling what she knew as a new part of her body and yet it felt as if it had been her shape her whole life. Her memory of her previous life was unchanged, she knew she was once human, could remember her image in the mirror up until that morning. At the same time this new gryphon body felt as natural as if she'd been born to it. With a deep breath she had to admit that whatever had forced such a drastic change on her had also fully acclimatized her to her gryphon form. With no idea how to turn back time she had no option but to accept things as they were.

Somewhat satisfied she looked down. A couple people were looking up at her in amazement. None were doing anything she considered threatening. She would have smirked had her solid beak allowed it. There was little doubt in her mind that they looked at her as if she were a bird trapped inside, well, a hotel lobby. She turned her mind to getting out of the confined space.

The ease in which she discovered her escape route forced the edges of her bill to curl just slightly in humor. Scanning the crowd under her she launched herself. Taking everyone by surprise she dove and arrowed out of the lobby doors that were propped open. Crossing the street and landing on the tree trunk across the street she evaluated her landing. She had been able to stop just short of a collision and grasp the bark covered trunk almost as if she'd done so her entire life. Climbing higher in the tree she found a spot out of sight and safe to think things through for a few minutes.