

Hi Smou! If you're reading this I hope you enjoy the story. I wish I could draw Cici's costume, it's so funny in my head! If you want to keep and store this, feel free :) (opener not included in word count)

Cici LOVED costume season. So many Skireans preparing for the long night, creating costumes both for themselves and to sell. The streets were always full of people in the days before, the air ringing with chatter and the soft pitter patter of footsteps of shoppers. Some bought fabrics and supplies, others gazed at elaborate shop window displays, adorned with this year's trendiest costumes. Everything from silly jester costumes made of the softest red and gold linen, to beautiful and elaborate masquerade style outfits, one of a kind porcelain masks displayed with matching gowns and suits of the finest silks and lace.

Cici smiled to himself as he enjoyed the atmosphere, listening in on snippets of others conversations and excitement and the call of merchants offering their wares.

He wanted a costume that would compliment his dazzling coat... one that would stand out. It would give him even more reason to talk to others and make more friends if people asked about his costume!

A thought crossed his mind...

What if he made his costume this year all by himself? If he made his own costume, he could help others make theirs, too... and if there was one thing Cici enjoyed doing, that was making others smile.

He gazed at the surrounding shop windows for inspiration...then it came to him! Others had compared him to lemons before (much to his amusement) so what if he dressed up as a glass of lemonade?

Yes, he would craft a beautiful floor length cape of translucent fabric to wrap around his body as his glass... and he could even add plush fixtures to the neck to be his ice, and paint a wooden stick striped for his straw! This was genius!

All he had to do was collect his materials...

First things first, he needed fabric for his cape. It needed to be thick and somewhat rigid to give the illusion of a glass...thick vinyl, perhaps?

He wove through the streets and stores, searching for the perfect vinyl, though nowhere seemed to have exactly what he was looking for. He found translucent vinyl that was too thin...thick, durable vinyl that only came in bright colours... it seemed like nowhere had exactly what he was after.

As he began to brainstorm new ideas, he came across one last shop. A textiles shop that almost looked older than time it's self. The font on the sign was fancy and vintage looking, completely different to all of the others on this street. He decided to have a peek.

Inside, shelves were stacked to the ceiling, crammed with every fabric you could ever imagine. Cici looked around in awe. There was bound to be something in this mess that would work for his costume, right?

He spent the next hour digging high and low, feeling all manner of textured fabrics; the softest furs, the freshest cotton and the most exquisite silks he'd ever laid his eye upon. Then, he saw it!

Tucked away in a corner, at the top of a shelf, there was a roll of thick vinyl, clear. Exactly what he wanted. He stood up on his back legs and plucked it down, cradling the roll in his arms with a pleased smile as he took it to the counter. He also grabbed some blue cotton fabric on the way, for his ice cubes.

The fabric, while perfect and pretty, made a sizeable dent in Cici's crown stash... so it was a good job sticks were free, and he already had paint at home. He made his way out of the shopping district and toward the forest.

He walked through nature, on the hunt for the perfect stick. It needed to be thick and tall, so he could pretend it was a giant straw. He walked through the forest for a good while, the wind rustling the trees and dancing through his fur as the sun began to set, filling the sky with dreamy orange and purple hues, looking like a pretty piece of art.

He hummed to himself as he lifted a stick and turned it in his hands. Smooth, straight, and the perfect width. This was the one!

He made his journey home, finally arriving and dropping all of his materials onto his workbench. He started by painting the 'straw'.

He painstakingly alternated red and white stripes along the length of the stick, trying his hardest to keep the lines uniform and straight... there were some smudges here and there- but it gave it character, he thought.

Next would be the cape. He measured himself and began cutting away at the vinyl, referencing a book he'd had hanging out on his shelf for a while. He read the guidance... then completed a step. Read again...and completed.

It was a good job he bought the entire roll of vinyl, because the first cape was a disaster. He tilted his head, confused as he held it up. The hemline was wonky...the drawstring didn't work. When he put it on, it barely reached his thighs.

He would just have to try again!

He spent almost the entire night crafting...retracing his steps... redoing... sewing...cutting...

But eventually, it was done. He smiled as he looked at his creation; it was the perfect length now, the vinyl JUST grazing the ground at his feet when he pulled it over his shoulders. He stood in front of his mirror as he tried it on, his clawed hands clutching the vinyl to pull it around his body. You could see the colour of his fur underneath; it really did give the illusion that he was lemonade, the vinyl perfectly mimicking a glass. It had been a very clever idea.

The ice cube embellishments he had created rested around his shoulders and neck, hiding the opening of the cloak and giving his head the appearance of a lemon garnish. He chuckled to himself, more than pleased with his work. It had come out perfectly after he had persevered, even when it seemed hard.

He finished the look by holding his painted stick straw like a staff, as if he was royalty. He felt extremely proud at the finished costume, but after spending so much time collecting the materials and creating it, he began to grow tired...

He had accidentally pulled an all nighter, after all.

He gave a big yawn, all teeth and tongue, and put his costume down on his chair, ready for the long night tomorrow.

As he curled up comfortably on his bed, he thought about what his friends would say about his costume, and how much fun they would have, a soft contented smile upon his face as he finally drifted into a comfortable sleep.