Feather Dysphoria

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Content Warnings:
- Species dysphoria.

My phantom feathers have been floofing much more often lately and it's always a weird feeling. They move and are meant to warm me, but they're not there. Like invisible goosebumps that don't even do anything.

I always have phantom feathers, and I floof involuntarily for a lot of reasons--angry, cold, sick, upset in general, you get the idea. Nothing bothers me as much as the cold one though, because they're meant to make me warm, but no matter how much they try, they can't warm my actual body.

I like layering coats and shirts to feel warmer but it's not quite the same. Wearing a shirt and jacket combination that matches my feather colours helps a little, but it's still not right. It's like missing having fur, really, except no one sells feather-lined jackets. Jackets with feathers in them are a thing, sure, but you won't get fluffy feather collars or comfy feather linings on your clothes.

I have feathers in headspace, and my body is basically human plus wings, antlers, a tail and feathers. Which adds an extra air of weirdness to this--I'm so close to feeling right, the shape is okay and I can handle my legs being plantigrade or not having my wings, but I'm missing such a basic part of myself when I front.

I'm happy I can have phantom shifts to feel them at the very least, but it still feels weird. Bittersweet, in a way? I can't have friends or partners preen my feathers in the front, I can't give warm wing hugs, I can't floof them voluntarily for dramatic effect. There's so many ways I can't be fully me without them--they're my emotions, my flight and my warmth.

It's just weird.