

The **ZENTAI INVASION**

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Nah it's Sarah Berry and a collection of nylon-covered kinksters



Photos by Colin (Scottishlad) and Mortice

Most fetishists hide their passion from the public. Some even hide it from their loved ones, only occasionally satiating their love of feet, rubber or furry toys with illicit wanks over internet sites. But not the members of the Zentai Project. These kinksters proudly stride through public streets bringing joy to all those in their wake. And as bringing joy is one of my main aims, I was determined to join them.

Zentai suits originate in Japan. The term is a contraction of zenshin taitsu, which is Japanese for full body tights. To me, this conjures up images of smelly feet, but to an increasing group of kinksters around the world, the feeling of restriction, the anonymity and bizarreness of the Zentai suit is the stuff of wet dreams.

The Zentai Project is one of the new internet fan groups to abound. Started five years ago with just three members, the group now boasts hundreds of nylon-encasement lovers who enjoy getting photographed mooching around in public. Their aim is to unite Zentai lovers and give the nation something to smile about (in a non-sexual, fun way) and I put in my request to join them at their December meet. When their leader, Mortice, asked me to call him, I felt like I was contacting another race. A very polite race as it turned out. And one that was only too happy for me to walk amongst them.

'But won't it be cold?' I moaned when I heard we'd be walking along London's Southbank.

'In winter I usually wear a wetsuit underneath

my suit. This doesn't spoil the line of the Zentai,' said Mortice, who is actually not an alien but a 44-year-old IT worker.

'Oh, I'm not a diver, I don't have such things,' I replied.

'I'm not either, I just like tight-fitting clothes. I always have. It started with cyclewear and now it's a fetish. I like the whole total enclosure thing.'

I asked for some suit-ordering tips and was told, 'Don't get one that's too tight in the face, because your nose will get squashed. The Chinese eBay sellers are good and cheap when you're starting out, though they are quite small. There was an explosion in China about three years ago and they started making lots of Zentai suits in all sorts of patterns.'

When I got to our meeting place, the Royal Festival Hall, at 3pm on a very cold Sunday, it was filled with the usual middle-class crowd of families and cultured couples on their way to the ballet and art expos. As a figure in a Dalmatian Zentai suit—complete with ears and tail—emerged from the gents loos, I noticed a few heads turn and titter.

Turns out this was Spot, a 27-year-old light and sound engineer. From his broad shoulders and small waist I could tell he was in very good shape. Indeed, like Mortice, it was his love of sportswear, specifically running gear, that led him to be dressed like a giant dog with no eyes. 'I was searching for something else on eBay and came across these suits. "Ohh, that's quirky," I thought, so I ordered one. My ex girlfriend didn't understand it. She thought it was a bit too weird. She suggested I get something more mainstream like Spiderman or something. So I ended up with this dog one then the dog side of me exploded. I love puppy-play as well.'

Behind him appeared a purple camouflaged Zentai-er. This was Mortice who had holes cut

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Top: The Southbank walk; Below: Down with the animals at the Natural History Museum



Beam us up Spotty

for eyes. 'Isn't that cheating?' I asked.

'Some suits are thicker than others and we need to be able to see on the walks. Of course at home I prefer total enclosure.'

It was time for me to Zentai up and I hurried to the loo, stripped off to my thermal vest and tights and zipped up my leopard print suit from www.legwearuk.co.uk. It felt wonderfully snug, like I was wrapped in a very tight duvet and thankfully I could see, though it was like looking through a thin net curtain. I peeked down to check there was no camel toe... there wasn't. I was also relieved to see that my titty hard-on didn't look too offensive, as it was disguised by the print.

Stepping out the loo I realised I wouldn't be able to wash my cloth-covered hands so blew on them and gave up a quick prayer to the God of cleanliness. I guessed nose-picking, smoking and drinking would also be out while in the outfit. And then I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. 'Fucking hell!' I exclaimed to the empty room. Inside the suit I was just scatty little me. But looking back at me was a mini-martian. I looked

weird. Inhuman. All traces of my personality (but for my love of animal print and from the midriff bulge—a penchant for pies) had been removed.

'Oh my God!' came a shriek behind me. I turned round to see a pretty girl in a faux fur coat giggling at me. 'Sorry you made me jump. Are you in a show?'

'Eh kind of,' I said, bundling my clothes into a rucksack. This was going to be fun.

Outside Mortice and Spot had been joined by a tiger, a bright pink chap and Colin the photographer. 'Does my bum look big in this?' I asked Mortice, doing a pirouette, lifting my foot up and so pulling the suit tighter into my groin. 'No, the print is very flattering,' he said kindly. I had a quick glance down at the boys, and felt bad, but then realised they couldn't see me. So I had a proper, long look at their packages. They were of varying sizes, none of them erect.

'Shall we start? I think this is everyone for today. The cold has seen off a lot of people. We're trying to recruit more women as well.' Well I certainly wasn't complaining about being the only femme. We took a few steps towards the door.

'Excuse me, why are you dressed like this?' enquired a lady in a flowery dress.

'Why not?' laughed Mortice.

'Are you doing a show?'

'No we're just having a walk.'

'Oh, righto,' she said and walked off,

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looking perplexed.

As we reached the door, a smiley Japanese tourist asked us for a photo. 'Yes, of course!' giggled Spot, and all the Zentais gathered round to be snapped. 'Everyone smile,' I quipped. 'Make sure you get my best side!' My fellow suited companions found this very funny.

Down the Southbank we walked, waving, getting photographed on mobile phones, shouting out the odd, 'Yoo-hoo!'

'Are any of you excited?' I asked, after we had posed with a group of students.

'It's fun, but I can very much switch off the erotic side of it and ignore it completely. I began doing the walkabouts like fancy dress,' said Spot.



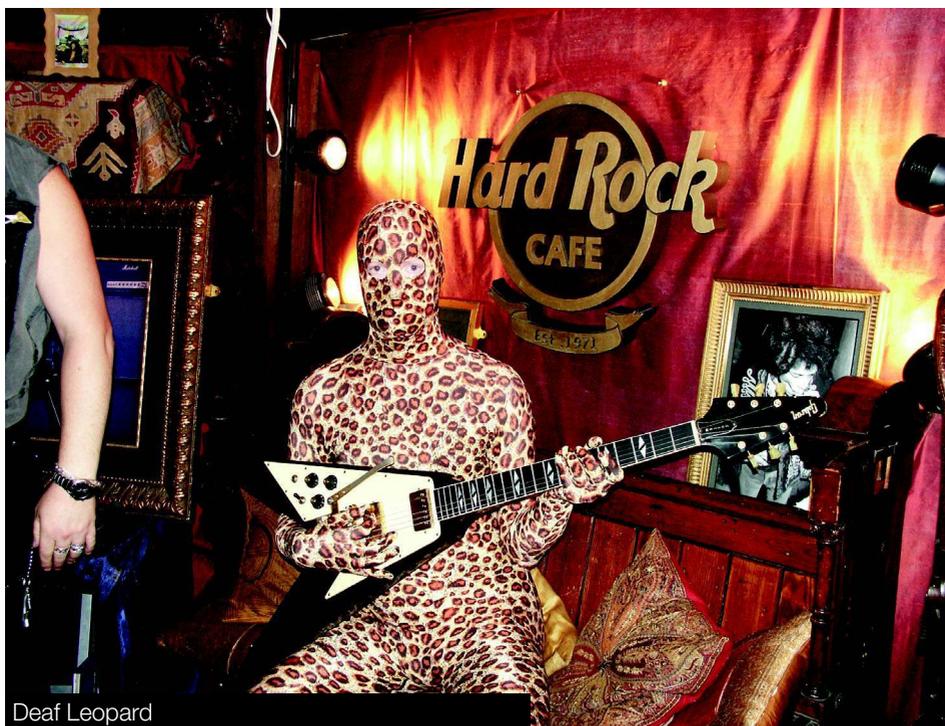
Down boy!



Outshining the exhibits at the Victoria & Albert museum



Co-ordinating basket and shoes. Suits you Sir!



Deaf Leopard



Zentai is truly an underground fetish

'It's exciting, but cold,' said Pink, aka Gareth, a 57-year-old actor, who was also on his first Zentai outing. 'I like the feeling of tightness and being masked.'

'The idea of walking round like another form of human is exciting, but the process of doing it isn't,' said Mortice. 'When I'm in a fetish club I do it more for sexy reasons, though I don't get turned on in a fet

club either—well it depends what's going on.'

'But if you get turned on, you can't have sex?'

'Ahh some suits have zips,' said Mortice. There were knowing nods from the other Zentai-ers.

Posing on the bridge for a group photo, we put all our rucksacks in a pile. Then a mischievous thought occurred. 'Some criminals put tights over their heads before they rob a bank. You could get up to so much mischief.'

'We could,' said Mortice. 'We've had some bad press because of Fathers4Justice. I wouldn't want anyone to come on a Zentai walkabout in a Bat or Spiderman costume because they'll think we're protesting or part of a stag party. A German chap and I wandered past Buckingham Palace and we got asked what we were doing by the security guard. He spoke on the radio and a police car drove up wanting to take photos of us in and out of suits so if anything did happen they could identify us. And then we were allowed to carry on. I didn't mind that.'

'At one of the London Museums a security guard told us we weren't allowed to have our faces covered,' said Spot as we posed on some wooden seats carved into animals.

'I asked him, "So what do you do about Muslims?" He said, "We don't get those sorts of people here." He soon backed down when I asked to speak to the manager and we were allowed to wander round for an hour. As long as we comply and don't cause trouble most people are okay.'

'Do you ever get hounded?' I asked him, and we laughed at my puppy pun as we made our way to Gabriel's Wharf. 'Sometimes. When I was on the Circle line going

up to, I think it was South Kensington, and a couple of youths started hassling me. Then the station manager, who must have been watching, announced, "Cruella de Vil, one of your puppies is missing on Platform One!" He just wanted to show him they could see him and to leave me alone. That was quite fun.'

It was time for us to get changed. My body was totally numb and I was desperate for a cuppa. But a feeling of sadness hung over the group as we schlepped off to our respective loos to get changed and become a face in the crowd once again. When we emerged, blinking into the sunlight, I could tell from the covered hands that most had just pulled down their hoods and put clothes on top of their suits. It was odd to put features and hair colour to the martian images I'd got to know that afternoon. They somehow seemed more awkward in a vanilla state. Walking to the station, we chatted more about our shared fetish club experiences and I forgot myself and waved at a passer by. Rather than eliciting a curious smile as we had earlier, they frowned at me as though I was a weirdo. Hmm... 

If you'd like to join the group on their next outing, go to
www.thezentaiproject.org

