

Squeeze

This stuff is half a party drug, and half an existential threat to humanity's fundamental understanding of the nature of reality itself. That's not a joke: analyzing Squeeze has already put at least three biochemists into a mental health facility, although fortunately the poor unfortunates aren't violent. Just mostly catatonic.

It's not because of the drug effects themselves, or at least not the *immediate* drug effects. Taking Squeeze at first mostly mucks around with you spatial sense: users feel like they're being pushed in all directions at once, slowly but also inexorably. This sensation is analgesic; users commonly report complete and immediate freedom from various chronic pains and itches, which persists even after the high from Squeeze wears off. It's also widely and accurately touted as a pleasant accompaniment to various forms of physical activities, as it allows for more vigorous movements without strain or other injury. Squeeze is only very slightly physically addictive -- people withdrawing from it sweat a little bit more -- but it's very psychologically addictive.

If that was the end of it then Squeeze would just be another prescription drug that got abused in dance clubs and banned by various sporting associations as a PED. Unfortunately, the drug affects about one in a thousand long-term users in what could euphemistically be described as an 'unique' fashion: it makes their bodies almost infinitely squeezable. Nobody's sure why, because, again, anyone who researches Squeeze too energetically goes catatonic.

This new, **Squeezable** condition is not exactly a burden, though. People with it still retain the ability to walk, lift things, and even (with only a little concentration) apply physical force themselves. But the average Squeezable can fit his entire body through a hole about six inches wide (eventually), stretch out his arms and legs more or less like taffy, and it's virtually impossible to break their bones or pierce their skins. Shoot one with a gun or slice with a knife, and the flesh will instinctively roll itself out of the way of the bullet or blade. You need a grenade or automatic weapons fire to take down a Squeezable.

There are some limitations to being Squeezable. They still need to breathe, and are affected by environmental factors. Throwing a Squeezable into a freezer won't 'harden' him, but it'll certainly make him as miserable as

any other person tossed in there. Poisons still work. Squeezables can't alter their clothing at all, although oddly their hair and skin and nails are just as malleable as the rest of them. They can't extend themselves out forever, although nobody's ever managed to snap a Squeezable in two yet (people have tried). But, all in all, being Squeezable is a powerful advantage to have.

As might be obvious, Squeeze and the Squeezable are law enforcement nightmares. Typically, the Squeezable gravitate towards burglary, not more violent crimes; fortunately, there are far more people out there willing to steal than there are willing to kill. Besides, Squeezable hit men tend to have extremely short lifespans. Many criminals think that Squeezable assassins are just too dangerous to let live, and many cops quietly agree with them.

Still, Squeezables are amazingly good at getting into places where normal people can't, and most places can't afford hermetically sealed storage areas. Keeping them around after you've arrested one isn't all that easy, either. Prisons are one of those places where you can't hermetically seal up everything.

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