

Mindstrike: A LIT RPG Adventure

By Cooper and Kadee

“What if we play as girls this time?”

Bret dropped the question in an offhand way, like, what if we get some Rockstar? Like he didn't care. His heart, though, was racing.

Jack shrugged. He was sprawled out in Bret's gaming chair, the two of them lounging in Bret's dorm room, a cluttered and sloppy room with clothes scattered on the floor, posters of swimsuit models on the walls, and all manner of sports gear— baseball bats and mitts, lacrosse sticks, footballs and soccer balls and jerseys.

“I'm kind of sick of gaming,” Jack said. “It's always the same crap. Shoot this. Steal that.”

“But the reviews for Mindstrike...

“I know. I know. Revolutionary AI, blah blah. Just like every other game. But, like I said, in the end it's always the same.”

“Why don't we just go in, play the starter mission?”

“I don't know.”

“What else is going on?” Indeed, rain pelted the window, and the dark, gloomy sky offered no hope for change. Meanwhile, their quad-mates, Jen and Hannah, had commandeered the common room to watch some horrible chick flick. The dialogue leaked through Brett's bedroom door:

“Why can't you just admit you love me?”

“Because everyone I love dies....”

“Don't tell me you can stomach any of that?” Bret added.

Jack thought. He was sick of gaming. That was true. And yet, as so often happened, when confronted with the challenge of finding something else to do, his mind went blank. How many hours had he wasted just grinding through missions only because he had no better ideas?

“Whatever,” Jack said. “But I swear to God, if even one NPC tasks us to collect ten wolf pelts...”

“They won’t.” Bret said, sitting up, excited. “They won’t. This isn’t just another paint by numbers game. The story is supposed to be amazing.”

“Okay. Just one mission.”

“And let’s be girls,” Brett said. “Just to mix it up.” He could feel his growing excitement at the idea of the two of them playing as girls, and he took a deep breath. He didn’t want Jack to see how into it he was.

“I don’t know,” Jack said. “I always found it kind of weird, those guys always playing as girls. I mean, what’s the point?”

“We can check each other out during boring cut scenes,” Bret said.

“That actually sounds kind of creepy.”

“It’s just a game, and I mean check out our avatars.”

“What’s this thing with you wanting to play a girl all of a sudden?”

Bret slumped and went into who cares bro mode. “Just to spice it up. I’m kind of bored with the same old thing, too. I mean, whatever.” Bret sat, waiting.

Jack’s face was blank. Later, he would not be able to explain why, but for some reason he just said, “Okay. Why not?” Had he given it more thought, he may well have said no. Mindstrike was a fully immersive game, and they would both experience being IN the bodies of their avatars.

“Why not?” Bret said, trying to keep his feelings hidden.

“So, let’s jack in and get started.”

“One more idea,” Bret said. “Just to mix it up.”

“Now what?”

“Well, you know, you’re always a brick, and I’m always some kind of stealth character.”

“So, you want to be the brick this time?”

“Yeah. I mean, since we’re both bored with the same old same old.”

Jack once more just said, yes. Why not? Hell. Maybe it would be fun. “Just make sure you are hot as hell,” he added. “I want to have some good eye candy.”

“I will if you will.”

“And don’t tell anyone about this. Not anyone. I have a rep.”

“Oh, I am telling the whole world,” Bret said.

“Dick,” Jack said, and then he logged into Mindstrike.

Static. The world jumped. Flames and an explosion. A car reeling around a curve. Gunfire, and then the words Mind Strike flashed across Jack’s vision. He found himself in a dark, futuristic lounge that looked like a set from Star Trek, Next Generation. Plastic couches and track lighting. The words Continue and New Game floated in the air.

Jack consciously focused on New Game, the words lit up, and then, Choose your Class. He cycled through— warrior, cybernetics, engineer, spy... For a moment, he thought about ignoring his earlier promise, picking warrior again, but if they were both warriors they could run into troubles. So, he picked spy, and was immediately confronted with his next uncomfortable choice: gender. There were three choices: male identifying, female identifying, fluid.

So, woke culture has taken over video games, too? Jack thought, sourly. Why do they have to impose their agenda on everyone else? He stared at the choices. He couldn't admit it to himself, but the thought of choosing female scared him. My Dad would kick my ass, he thought....

But Female lit up, and then he looked at a slender female figure, naked, with small breasts, round but slender hips, at this point hairless with generic features. What would it feel like? What if people found out?

But his mind reeled away from the rest of that thought. He almost backed out, but then he just told himself— it's only one mission, and it's a game. It's not like it really matters.

He started to build his character. The slender almost androgynous character felt safe, but also a little chickenshit. He figured Bret would give him hell, and once more an idea popped into his brain he couldn't explain: I'm going to fuck with Bret, he decided. She's going to be hot as hell.

He thought about different girls— some were girls he knew from college, some were models, actresses, porn girls. Then, he started to design HER: a mass of glossy, wavy black hair poured down over her shoulders. The game zoomed in on her face, and he went to work. As he made his choices, her eyes grew bigger and turned a deep, emerald color. He loved girls with big, green eyes. He gave her a smaller, upturned nose and then paused, cycling through the different choices of lips.

He loved plump, full lips, but seeing her with those lips brought dirty thoughts to mind, and the thought of having those lips on that face made him— uneasy. Still. He didn't like the other mouths, and finally once more just went with it, giving her the full, inviting lips he craved. She smiled as he finished her face and tossed her hair, and Jack actually felt his heart flutter. That was a perfect female face as he was concerned.

Moving to the body, he smiled as her perky little breasts swelled and rounded into, as the game informed him, D cups. They were gravity defying perfection, jutting out from her chest, so full they blocked his view of her little arms. Wait until Bret sees these honkers, he thought. His resistance to making her his own wet dream fading, he made her waist smaller and her hips wider. Rotating her to the side and then back, he could only sigh at the sight of her stunning, heart shaped rear. Her legs were already long and perfect, and he gave her a cinnamon complexion, her radiant skin glowing.

Next came height. He was surprised to see the default had him only 5' 1", and he quickly dialed it up to 6 feet, but a red warning flashed: stealth characters lose effectiveness after 5' 5". Damn. Oh, well. He wasn't a brick this time. And, it was only one mission. Might as well go all in, and he dialed it back down to 5' 1", pleased to see a new message in green that read all stealth skills receive a plus two bonus.

Rotating her once more, he liked what he saw. She was hot as hell. The next choice was voice, and now getting into the idea of the character, he decided she should have a small, high-pitched voice, so he dialed it to the highest pitch possible. "Hi!" She said, and the sound of that sexy little voice gave him chills. He found that little girl voice so damn hot in real life it was too crazy.

Next was name. Hmmmmn. He really had no idea, and almost just went with Jack. He knew a girl who went by Jack, but then again, he didn't want anyone to even suspect this was HIM. Who knew who they might run into in the game? A name popped into his mind: Kiyo. She was a girl in his Western Civ class, cute, petite, kind of like this character but not with that

bombshell body. Fine. He entered the name, and the character giggled and said, “I’m Kiyō!”

“Oh, my God,” he thought, “I want to make out with her, not be her.” Next was her characteristics. The two stealth choices were spy and assassin. He figured on assassin so he would at least have some better kill moves. As for her stats, he honestly had no idea about this game, so he just went with the defaults for an assassin character without really paying any attention to what they were. Then, rotating her one more time, taking in those dramatic curves, he resisted the urge to start over and mentally clicked Enter Mindstrike.

Static, and a kind of falling motion as the system synched his mind to his new body. Then, as if slowly waking from a dream, Jack found himself blinking as the world materialized around him: he was back in the lounge he’d seen in the set up. Now, there was added ambience— soft techno music.

Jack immediately became aware of something crushing his chest, like a compression wrap around his upper body. Looking down he saw the swell of those huge breasts swelling out from his chest. Impulsively, he cupped his breasts, lifting and squeezing. Hey, he’s a guy. He’d had his hands on more than a few, but feeling hands on HIS breasts, feeling the way the soft, sensitive skin reacted, he couldn’t help but laugh, surprised at the sound of that pretty little voice he’d selected.

“Agent!” He heard a man shout. “You need to get to work.”

Jack jumped, surprised and embarrassed, immediately pulling his hands away from his chest. Turning, his hair fell in his face, and he brushed it

away, looking at a huge, muscle-bound man with a thick beard, wearing a tattered general's uniform. NPC, he realized.

“Work?” He asked, feeling super self-conscious of how he sounded.

“I'm General Grizz, your handler for this mission.” The man walked over and put an arm around Jack's shoulders, bringing him into very clear awareness of how small he was now— he only came up to the bottom of the man's rib cage. Having that big, meaty arm draped over him made him feel super uncomfortable, and he tried to free himself, but the man's hand clamped hard on his shoulder, and he found himself being dragged toward a small observation slit that cut across one side of the bunker. “Get off me.”

The man ignored him, effortlessly dragging him along. “What kind of game is this?” He activated the Intercom function and called, “Bret? Where are you?”

“On my way,” he heard a strong, woman's voice answer.

Jack found himself at the wall, beneath a window. The man peered out the window, keeping his hand firmly gripped on Jack's shoulder. “See? Over there?”

Jack could not see. He was too short. He found himself staring at the wall. Grabbing the window ledge, he tried to pull himself up, his breasts pressing against the wall, but with a pretty little grunt he fell back down, his little arms too weak to do a pull up.

“Shit.”

“Come on! We don't have much time!” The man growled.

“Pause!” Jack demanded. “Pause.”

The scene froze. Jack freed himself from the man's grip. He did not like that way this was going at all. “Brett? Come on!”

“Just a sec.”

“Shoot.” Jack pulled up his inventory. Like most games, his character did not start with much. A medical kit. A holster and a pistol. A blow gun and four darts. Rudimentary armor—the skintight outfit that made him feel like a sausage. And the “tactical bra” that did give him +1 armor. He suddenly realized why he felt all that compression around his chest. Grabbing at the bra, he tried to stretch and adjust it, but his effort did nothing.

Equipping the holster and pistol, he felt the belt drape across his full hips. He pulled the pistol and thought about shooting the NPC idiot, but in all likelihood that would just reset the mission. So, with a grunt of displeasure, he holstered the pistol and, after a moment, could not resist the distraction of his new bust, once more planting his hands on them and giving them a squeeze.

“Having fun?” Bret asked as he materialized.

“Yup,” Jack said, not wanting to show any embarrassment over playing with himself.

“Wow,” Bret said, letting his eyes roam over Jack’s body. “You went all in.”

“Don’t check me out,” Jack said, though he was doing the same thing to Bret, who had gone in a very different direction. “I thought we both agreed to be hot?”

“I should probably be offended by that,” Bret said.

Jack had to look up to meet Bret’s eyes. Waaaaay up. “How tall are you?”

“I don’t know. 5’ 11”.” Brett said. “You know volleyball players drive me crazy.”

Brett did look like he could be a star on the women's volleyball team. Tall, athletic, broad shouldered for a woman. Small, firm breasts swelled beneath his own black bodysuit, and Jack couldn't help but notice his legs went on forever.

Like Jack, Bret couldn't resist putting his hands on his new breasts, squeezing. "Yikes," he said, surprised at how sensitive they were despite having been told by every girlfriend he'd ever had. "Maybe we should just skip the mission and play with these?" Bret said.

"Maybe we should just bail," Jack said. "This is weird." Curious, he hopped up and down, feeling his whole-body jiggle and bounce.

Bret did the same, laughing. "How do girls put up with this?"

"I feel like my body is made out of gelatin."

"Oh, you are jelly." Bret had a rich, mature woman's voice, and it made Jack feel even — he wasn't even sure of the word, but he deeply regretted his choice to go with the sexy little girl voice. "You're so cute."

"I think I've experienced enough. I have to study anyway."

"Oh, come on. Don't chicken out. One mission."

"I don't like it."

"We haven't even started."

"It's stupid to play as girls."

"So, let's just embrace the stupid. It's just one mission."

"It's stupid."

"Man, I knew you would be a little bitch about it."

"Fuck you!" Jack said.

Bret couldn't help but laugh. Jack was really cute when he was angry now.

"What?"

“Nothing. Nothing,” Brett said, not wanting to unnerve Jack any further.
“One mission. Come on.”

“Just shut up,” Jack said. “Let’s get this mission over with.”

“What’s the mission?”

“I’m not sure yet. I froze it waiting for you to get here.”

“So, let’s do it.”

“Over here.”

Jack turned and walked back toward the wall, his long hair swaying. Bret couldn’t help but enjoy the view, and the feelings he had made him feel all kinds of confused. He was checking out a gorgeous little female. Gorgeous, and yet he knew she was actually his best guy friend.

“What’s with Soldier McGrizzleface?”

“Unpause,” Jack said.

The NPC flickered, the AI adjusting to the addition of a new character. “Ladies,” he said, turning to address them both. “We don’t have all day. Look.”

Bret and Jack exchanged a glance. It was strange to be referred to as ladies.

Bret went to the window. They were up very high, and he had a sweeping view of the city. Long and narrow, the city nestled in a valley between a pair of snowcapped mountains. Above the whole city read the words, Recon Junction, with three neighborhoods named Georgian Pond, Outer Vail and Inner Vail. “Recon Junction,” the NPC said. “The best mess on the planet.”

“Cool,” Brett said, looking over the city, his eyes immediately drawn to a tall, narrow spire-like building in the distance that dominated the whole city, looking down over the entirety like a watchtower.

“What is it?” Jack said, jumping, trying to get a look.

“It’s just basic orientation,” Bret said, “Kind of a disappointing start. Lore dump right at the top?”

“I can’t see.”

“Oh,” Bret said. “You *are* tiny.”

“It’s an advantage for stealth characters,” Jack said. “I didn’t want to be this small.”

“Okay,” Bret said, then without asking he put his hands on Jack’s waist and lifted him.

“Hey! Put me down.” Jack hadn’t been picked up like that since he’d been a child.

“You said you wanted to see.”

“Oh, right,” Jack said, looking over the city. “It does look cool.”

Bret was surprised and pleased at how easy it was to lift and hold Jack. He had shifted points from charisma— why would a brick need charisma?— to strength, but he didn’t expect to be this strong. It made him feel powerful to pick up this little female-- even if she was actually a guy.

“Here’s what you need to know about the city,” Grizz said. “Georgian Pond— rich people. Upper Vail— business district. Lower Vail— poor people.”

“What about that?” Jack asked, pointing toward the tower.

“Essentialus. They own the town. Maybe even the planet.”

“So, what’s the mission?” Bret said.

“Okay, put me down,” Jack said.

Bret set him down, patted him on the head.

Jack slapped his arm away. “Cut it out.”

“Ah, yes, the mission—“Grizz said.

“A client of mine needs something acquired. I’m transmitting the details now.”

A box popped up in the air. “To access your messages, go to Inventory and choose data pad.”

They both did, reading the location for their meeting, a place called Threads. Another help box popped up explaining the fast travel feature and identifying jump points.

“Thank God,” Jack said. “I hate games where you spend half your time walking around from place to place.”

“Or trying to drive cars that don’t really drive right,” Bret added.

“Don’t remind me. Cyberpunk. Ugh.”

“Let’s roll.”

There was, mercifully, a fast transport hub right outside the door, so they headed. Bret let Jack walk first, enjoying the view.

“Girls,” Grizz said. “One more thing.”

“Yeah?”

“If you do this right, there are more missions— and credits, to come.”

The fast transport took them right to Lower Vail. Jack pulled up the mission map and saw Threads just a couple blocks away. “This way,” he said.

The sidewalks were narrow, cracked and worn. “Go ahead,” Bret said. Jack started to weave through the crowded sidewalks, easily weaving his way among the other pedestrians. Once more, he felt like a child, with all the NPCs towering over him. Bret found it a little more difficult with his bigger body. He accidentally collided with a man in a suit, and instantly a red bubble formed above the man’s head. “Watch it!” The man said.

A help box appeared: red bubbles indicate a character is angry. Escalating the situation can lead to violence. De-escalating will likely result in them moving on.

Bret was tempted to start something. He'd spent more than a few hours playing Grand Theft Auto, constantly beating the crap out of random people for no reason. Something in him liked it. Plus, he wanted to test out his Brick. "You got a problem?" He said, stepping toward the man.

"Yeah, I got a problem."

Jack, seeing what was happening, started back toward Bret. "Let's just get to the mission."

"Listen to your friend," the man said. "I got no problem hitting a woman."

"Oh, I am the only one doing the hitting here," Bret said.

"Ohhhhhh!" The crowd gathering around them said.

"You got a big mouth and—"

Bret unleashed a roundhouse punch that slammed into the man's chin and sent him reeling. Clearly stunned, he wobbled unsteadily on his feet. Bret charged and punched him in the face and then gut. He collapsed to the ground.

"Call the cops!" Someone yelled.

"That was tight!"

"Let's go," Jack said. "Before we get sidetracked."

Alert! Alert! A box appeared. You have committed a crime and it is currently being reported to the police.

"Now!" Jack said.

Bret laughed and the two of them bolted through the crowd, running around the corner and plunging through the door to Threads.

Bret and Jack both laughed. “I never get tired of beating NPC ass,” Bret said.

“I wish I had jumped in now,” Jack said. “How did the action feel?”

“Very good,” Bret said. “Everything feels so real, and there is no lag. The world is primo.”

“Ah, hem.”

The two looked to see a man in a three-piece suit, a well-trimmed beard and full head of salt and pepper hair. “Mademoiselles? Judging by your, er, clothes, you are here about a little business?”

“Yeah,” Jack said. “Grizz sent us.”

“I am Pierre,” the man said, locking the door and turning the Closed sign to face out. “Please join me in the back.”

“Of course,” Bret said, mocking the man’s French accent.

The showroom at threads was old world elegance— all oak shelves, brass fixtures and mannequins dressed in high end suits. The door to the backroom led first to a storeroom that looked much the same, but then Pierre touched a spot on the wall, and a secret panel slid aside to reveal something much different— a modernistic surgical room with masses of computers, bundles of wires snaking along the ceiling.

“This some kind of chop shop?” Jack said.

“I perform surgical procedures here, primarily related to cybernetics,” Pierre answered with a sniff. “I do not— chop.”

“So, we can get mods here?” Bret asked.

“If you can afford them, yes. Since you come with recommendations from The General. Please, take a seat.” He gestured toward a card table in the corner.

Bret and Jack plopped down in the seats. “I hope this scene isn’t going to go on forever,” Jack said.

“I will be brief,” Pierre said. “I need you to recover a briefcase. It was stolen from a courier meant to be delivered to me yesterday. It is currently being held by a man who calls himself simply Badness. Not very creative. He means to sell this briefcase to my rival this evening, so you must recover it right away.”

A box appeared. “Do you accept the mission?”

“That’s why we’re here, right?” Jack said.

“Good.”

Both boys pulled up their mission maps. The job paid 500 credits, with a bonus if they rescued the courier. Badness was located a few blocks away, working out of the back room of a coin laundry operation. “We’ll be back in a few,” Jack said.

“See, ya, Frenchie,” Bret said.

“Good fortune,” Pierre said.

“Yeah, yeah.”

They headed back out, plunging back onto the crowded sidewalks. “I don’t have any weapons,” Bret said. “I hope the mish isn’t too nuts.”

“Check your inventory. You have to equip.”

“Oh. Duh.”

Chapter Two

Brett pulled up his inventory, saw he had a sawed-off shotgun and a Bowie knife. He equipped both. The shotgun appeared in a sling across his back, the Bowie knife at his waist. “Cool.” He pulled the knife and wove a

figure eight pattern in front of himself as they walked down the sidewalk. People in the crowd gasped and cowered or ran away.

“Stop it!” Jack squeaked, hating how much he sounded like a little girl.

“Scared?” Brett said.

“As if. This is supposed to be a stealth mission, remember?”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah. Nag, nag, nag.” Brett sheathed his knife. They arrived at the intersection where the coin laundry stood. “Sentry on the roof,” Brett said, pointing toward a figure with a sniper rifle.

“One at the front door,” Jack added, pointing to a woman in a hoodie leaning against the wall right next to the glass door, cigarette dangling from her lips. They could both see the bulge of a weapon in the pocket of her hoodie. The front of the building consisted of a large window, dirty and cracked, with the words “24 Hour Laundry” painted across them in chipped, faded red, white and blue paint. They could see what looked like a couple of civilians doing laundry inside, but it was hard to see much more through the filthy window.

“Let’s recon,” Jack said. “Check around the back. See if there is a side or back entrance.”

“Sounds good.”

The sniper on the roof was standing right above the front door and never seemed to look any direction other than forward, so to avoid being seen they headed up the street a couple blocks, then cut over and approached the building from the rear. Jack noticed that just above male NPC they passed checked him out, and it made him feel kind of self-conscious and creeped out. He didn’t want to say anything, though, because it almost felt weird to him that he was noticing being noticed.

Then, just as they started down the alley that ran behind the laundry, breaking free of the crowd, Brett asked, "So, how does it feel?"

"What?"

"Being ogled."

"What? I don't know what you're talking about."

"Oh, please. Like you didn't notice all the guys staring at your tits?"

"You're so full of it." Jack felt himself blush. It just made him feel super weird to even think about it, let alone talk about it. He was definitely getting a full-on dose of male attention, and it was-- he didn't even know. Before he could finish his thought, Jack spat, "quiet."

They were now at the corner of the laundromat, backside. Old, weathered brick. A rusted dumpster. A green side door, and a set of steps down leading to a basement door in the back. "Basement?" Jack said.

"I think so."

Jack started to head toward the basement stairs. Jack grabbed his arm and pulled him back. "Wait!"

"What?"

"Camera."

"Shit."

The camera was partly hidden beneath the hood of a streetlamp, but once Brett pointed it out, Jack could plainly see it there-- like a lot of video games, the designers of Mindstrike had gone with an old school security camera design, complete with a glowing red light above the lens that would have been visible from 30 yards away at night..

"So, let's see. I can't get to the side door either without being spotted."

"Front door is a no go."

“Oh, well!” Jack said, brushing his long hair away from his face. “Guess we might as well give up! Time to log out!” His skin was still crawling from the guys staring at him.

“Nah. You know these are always puzzles. I bet there is a sky light. Let’s see.” Jack looked at the building next to the laundromat, the one they were currently hiding next to, and sure enough he spotted a drain bolted to the wall. “Ah. That’s it. Climb the pipe, jump across, take out the sniper silently. Easy.”

“Have fun.”

“Me? You’re the stealth character.”

“Yeah, but...”

“Aw, she’s scared. That’s so cute.”

“Idiot. These-- my arms? I couldn’t even pull myself up to look out the window. How am I supposed to climb anything?”

“You’re an assassin. You have to-- wait. Check your skills.”

Jack pulled up his skill menu, and sure enough, there it was-- Scaling. LVL1. “Yeah. I can probably do it.”

Going to the pipe, he activated Scaling and found himself easily climbing the pipe, instinctively finding hand and footholds. Reaching the rooftop-- flat, asphalt-- he saw the figure of the sniper at the front of the building over. There were pipes coming out the roof of the laundromat, steam roiling into the sky. He decided to jump across the buildings behind the pipes, so if there was any noise, he would have sheltered from the sniper. His armor class was only 3, and he had all of 8 hit points, so taking a bunch of bullets from a high velocity rifle was not a winning bet.

Bret, checking his own skills, found no Scaling, but he started carefully climbing the pipe. His character was strong enough, but he had to work

slowly and carefully, finding the handholds and footholds himself. Switching to intercom so as not to alert the guard, he said, “wait for me.”

The message crackled through to Jack. “I got this,” he answered, checking his skills, finding Jumping, LVL 1. He figured it would be enough to make the leap to the next building. He also had a Stealth, LVL 1, with a 5 second limit and a 120 second recharge. He didn’t want to have to linger on the roof once he jumped over, so he decided to save his Stealth, make the leap and hope he didn’t alert the Sniper. He made the leap.

Brett, halfway up the drainpipe, saw Jack flash across the sky. “Idiot!”

Jack skidded to a halt behind the steam pipes, his boots sending a rooster tail of gravel flying in front of him. He crouched, heart racing. He didn’t have to glance to know he’d been heard. The sniper muttered, “hunh?”

Jack made himself smaller, hunching, his full, heavy breasts pressing into his thighs. The feeling threw him off, reminded him he was not just female in this world but sooooo female. He could hear the sniper’s footsteps approaching. Saw the man’s shadow moving carefully toward the steam pipes.

Jack fought off the urge to activate stealth mode. He would only have 5 seconds. He held his breath. He could see the shadow of the sniper shifting, as if he were trying to get a look around the pipes. Glancing back from his vantage point, Jack caught a glimpse of Brett climbing the pipe. If the sniper saw him... He activated his intercom. In this, like most fully immersive games, he could “talk” just using his mind. “Wait...”

Too late. “Hey!” The sniper shouted, having spotted Brett.

Jack heard the bolt action as the sniper loaded a round into his rifle.

“Oh, shit!” Brett said, trying to hurry up the pipe, he missed a hand hold and his legs slipped out from under him, kicking in the air as he held on with one hand, a sitting duck.

Jack had no choice, and there was no point in Stealth now. He stood, pulled his pistol and charged from around the pipes, throwing his arm up and into the rifle-- just in time. The muzzle flashed and the lethal round popped off into the sky.

The man was at least a foot taller than Jack, and he swung the butt of his pistol up and into his jaw. The sniper stumbled back, and Jack charged into him, tackling him to the ground only realizing his mistake as the man wrapped his legs around Jack's mid-section, grabbed his tiny wrist with one hand, then rolled them both over, pinning Jack's arm over his head and his body to the ground. Jack swung with his other fist, connecting with the sniper's temple, but his skinny little arms had no strength and the man barely recoiled, then grinned down at Jack, amused. “You're gonna pay for that.”

Using his free hand, he punched Jack hard in the belly.

Jack felt the impact. “Ooof.” He saw his hit points drop from 8 to 4. *Shit.*

Struggling, Jack tried to hit the man again, but he easily batted the weak little punch away. Flailing wildly, Jack tried to free himself, but the man was too big, too strong. One more punch, Jack thought, and I'm done... All thoughts of hating the game and wanting to get out had fled. Jack hated losing at anything, and he didn't want to listen to Brett giving him shit.

Brett, meanwhile, had regained his hold on the pipe and made his way to the roof. He saw Jack, pinned struggling. Without hesitation he ran and leapt.

The sniper grabbed a fistful of Jack's hair and, letting go of his gun hand, raised his fist for a mighty haymaker. Jack tried to swing his gun up. He didn't want to alert the people below-- the sniper's rifle had been silenced-- but--

Just then Brett slammed into the sniper, knocking him off Jack, and finishing him with a knife slash across the throat. Jack struggled to his feet, breathing hard, breasts heaving, he wobbled, his head spinning. Brett caught him just as he was about to collapse. Strong arms wrapped around him, pulled him back to his feet, and he found himself pressed against Brett's body, momentarily clinging to him as he regained his balance.

They froze like that for a second, listening. Years of gaming kicking in. Nothing. No sound of alarm. No NPCs chattering. Jack became aware of Brett's strong arm around his waist, the feeling of his soft chest pressed against Brett's ribcage. He tried to squirm free, but Brett held him tight.

"You can let go now," Jack said out loud in his tiny little voice.

"What? Oh," Brett said, embarrassed to realize he'd been hugging Jack to his body. He yanked his arm from Jack's waist and stepped away. "I was just... You know. That wasn't anything."

The boys looked away from each other. "I know."

"It was..."

"Just forget it," Jack snapped. "Let's finish this mission."

Holstering his pistol, Jack crept toward the skylight, but he had to pause, still feeling woozy.

"You okay?"

"One punch took half my hit points," Jack said, going into his inventory, using his one med kit, watching his hit points rise back to 8. The wooziness and ache from the punch in the gut vanished. "The biofeedback is

tremendous,” he said, mostly to himself. “I really felt that. I can’t believe one punch almost killed me.”

“You need better armor. Your hit points will always be low as a stealth character.”

“Yeah. Remind me never to play one again.”

“You’re not built for direct combat,” Brett said, moving toward the skylight. “Me, on the other hand?” He flexed his bicep. In fact, he had lithe, feminine arms, but solid, like a girl who lifted some weights “I’m built to bust jaws.”

“What am I built for?”

Brett couldn’t help but give the shapely little female in front of him a once over, his eyes eventually landing on the swell of Jack’s breasts. “Poll dancing?”

“Idiot.” Jack would have been more satisfied with his comeback if he hadn’t been forced to toss his long black hair out of his face as he said it. “Let’s get back to the game.”

They crept up to the skylight. It was toward the back of the building, behind the laundry area. There was just one woman down there, watching TV, an automatic rifle across her legs. Jack equipped his blow gun. “I’ll take her out.”

Brett carefully lifted the skylight. The rusty joints creaked, and they both froze, but the NPC didn’t react. With a sigh, Jack lifted the blowgun to his lips. Catching the amused look in Brett’s eyes, he glared. “Don’t say it.”

Brett smirked. Jack had full, soft lips, and he couldn’t help but find it suggestive to see him slip that blow gun between those full lips, then his cheeks puff out as he blew...

The dart arced down, hitting the NPC right in the neck. She slapped at her neck like she'd been bitten by a mosquito and immediately slumped over. There was a table just below the skylight. Brett dropped down. Jack hopped down next. Brett went over and grabbed the automatic rifle, checked the specs. It was a Level 2 item, slightly better than what he had, so he equipped it.

"Anything else?" Jack asked.

"Those boots are +5 armor class," Brett said.

The NPC wore knee high boots-- with high heels.

"No, thanks."

"They would more than double your armor class."

Jack knew he needed the extra AC points, but the boots were-- sexy. Still. "It's just a game, right?"

"That a girl."

Jack removed the boots from the NPC and equipped them, feeling himself rise onto his toes. "At least they make me a little taller." He took a couple steps. "My character seems to know how to walk in heels."

Brett resisted the urge to make a comment. The heels had added lift to Brett's plump rear end, making him even sexier. A narrow hallway at the back of the room led to a stairway leading down. "Stealth it up."

Jack walked back to the stairs. Brett couldn't help but notice his walk had changed with the heels, his hips swaying, and his character's arms now held out to the sides in a very feminine manner. The view was very nice, and Brett couldn't help but enjoy the view. He felt his cheeks growing warm.

Jack crept down the stairs, sneaking down until he got a view of the basement. There were three guards down there, and the courier sat, tied to

a chair, gagged. Although his character automatically moved fluidly in the boots, it still made him feel a little off having his heels raised like that, walking on his toes. Jack had never worn heels, and he once more couldn't help but cringe at what his father would think if he saw him now. One guard, a huge thug, stood near the bottom of the stairs, back turned. Another was over by the courier, and a third was off to the side, robotically counting money.

Jack signaled to Brett to go for the money counter, mouthing "on my signal."

Brett, hanging back due to his lack of stealth skills, nodded.

Jack snuck up on the guard at the base of the stairs, getting closer and closer, until a sign flashed, "Take Down."

Arming his blow gun and clenching it in his teeth, he activated Take Down. His character leapt into the air, locking her legs around the man's waist as she locked her arms around his throat. At the same time, Jack fired a dart into the guard near the courier.

The third guard looked up, shocked, and grabbed a Luger from the table. Brett, who'd barreled down the stairs as soon as Jack attacked, charged across the room, hoping to take the guard out without gunfire. The barrel rose, flashed. Pop! Brett felt something slam into his shoulder, and then he dove over the table, crashing into the NPC, knocking her to the ground. Stars swam around the NPC's head as she shook her head, stunned, and Brett used his knife to finish her.

The NPC Jack was choking, meanwhile, fell backward and Jack hopped clear as he crashed to the ground, his hair swirling around his face.

"What's going on?" They heard someone yell from upstairs, and then the sound of feet running.

“Shit!” Jack said.

Brett flipped the table on its side and took cover behind it. “Get ready.”

Jack ran over and took up position next to Jack, arming his pistol.

A generic looking thug came running down the stairs with a sawed-off shotgun, blasting away, fire and smoke pouring from the barrel.

Jack and Brett ducked, then popped back up. Pack. Pack. Pack. Brett let loose with the automatic rifle, and the thug spun and crashed to the floor, blood oozing from his body. Two more thugs followed, equally blundering down, firing, and getting cut down as Jack and Brett fired away. The air smelled of gunpowder, and a thin layer of smoke now hung in the air near the ceiling.

Their avatars reflected the intensity of the battle-- the boys found themselves breathing hard, their breasts heaving, their faces hot, hearts racing. "I think that's it," Brett said, looking down into Jack's pretty face. Their eyes met, and locked. Jack tilted his head back. His bangs trailed across his forehead and covered one of his eyes.

"That was so--intense," he said, his voice slightly hoarse.

Brett felt-- he wanted to kiss her so bad. Her pupils were so big, and there was a glassy eyed intensity that made him feel--- hot and thirsty. He reached out, put his hand on Jack's soft cheek, his eyes drifting down to those wet lips...

“Let’s loot,” Jack said, pulling away, terrified at what Brett had been about to do, terrified that he felt something.... clench within him, terrified because-
- had he wanted that kiss?

"Yeah. Loot," Brett said, heading to the other side of the basement, wanting to get as much distance as he could from HER.

In addition to the weapons, which the two scooped up, they found 240 credits, two med kits and body armor. "AC 30," Jack said, admiring the gear. It looked like the kind of thing a SWAT team wore. He equipped, then switched to third person view, checking himself out. The armor actually hid his figure, giving him a more androynous looking body.

"I should probably get that," Brett said. "I'm the Brick."

"I need it more."

"I'm the bullet catcher."

Jack knew Brett was right. "Dick." He transferred the armor, watching as it appeared on Brett's body. Brett had a very pretty face, Jack had to admit, that kind of female face that looked even hotter with short hair. Big eyes. A kissable mouth.

"I did find something almost as good for you," Brett said, smirking.

"I don't want to know, do I?"

Brett held up a scrap of pink fabric with the word "Bitch" stenciled across it.

"What the hell is that?"

"It's another plus ten armor for you."

"But what is it?"

"Um, a mini skirt?"

Chapter Three

Jack grabbed the mini-skirt, then held it out and away with two fingers, like it was a dead skunk. “Never,” he said, stashing it in his inventory, but not equipping it. Instead, he started searching the bodies, hoping for more loot. “The gear for women in these games is always so sexist and stupid.”

“If you aren’t going to wear it, give it back,” Brett said. “I found it.”

“And I gave you that armor, so suck it.”

Just then, they heard some mumbling, and the sound of wood tattering on concrete. They both looked up, hands on weapons, to see the courier, still tied to the chair, rocking back and forth, trying to shout through her gag to get their attention.

“Oh, shit!” They said in unison.

“Are we supposed to escort the courier back to Frenchie?” Brett asked.

“I hope not. Escort Missions suck.”

Jack untied the courier’s wrists and ankles. She immediately pulled down her gag and shouted, “Thanks, girls! I’m outta here!” and ran up the stairs, disappearing from view. Jack and Brett had both followed her with their eyes, and they now starred at the stairwell. “So, I guess that’s it?” Jack pulled his long away from his shoulders.

“What if we were supposed to go with her?”

“Well...”

But just then, they heard a bell ring, and a starburst appeared reading Courier Rescued. LVL UP! Skill Points +2.

“Sweet.”

They both went immediately to their skill menus. As tempted as Jack was to put his points on strength— he hated being so weak— he knew it was not going to help him, so instead he added points to speed and dexterity, though it kinda didn’t matter since they were over and out soon. Brett

added to strength and perception, watching his hit points and firearms accuracy rise.

“Well, let’s get this briefcase back to Frenchie and call it a day, so I can get rid of these tits,” Jack said, tugging at the base of his bra, which seemed to have slipped under his breasts and was pinching.

“Oh, I like your tits,” Brett said. “I’m gonna... hmmmnnnn....”

“What?”

Now that Brett had raised his perception, he noticed that a section of the basement wall seemed— off. Like an ill-fitting joint. The edge seemed to glow, faintly. “There’s something...” Brett said, going over to the wall. Once he got close, he noticed that certain bricks had faint etchings— each of the bricks read either left or right. Brett started to press them, and sure enough they depressed into the wall with the grinding sound of stone on stone— only to grind back out again.

Jack came over. “Some kind of secret door,” he said, still tugging at his bra, trying to get his boobs to sit comfortably in the cups.

“I wonder what the proper order is?” Brett said, pressing them in a different order, but failing to get the door open.

Despite his eagerness to get out of the game, Jack found himself intrigued by what could be behind the door. His bra emergency settled, he went over to the desk, looking for a code, a hidden drawer, anywhere that might have the answer. He found a bunch of takeout menus, and some crude drawings, but nothing that looked like an answer. He sat down, watching Brett, looking around the room. There had to be a clue. There was always a clue. Rat.tat.tat— Jack tapped his long fingernails against the desktop. He’d never understood women’s obsession with long nails,

painting them, decorating them. To him they had always just seemed like an impractical waste that made actually using their hands less effective.

Thinking about women and all their confusing ways, his eyes fell to Brett's body. He actually looked pretty sweet from behind— those long, athletic legs, a firm, round ass. He wondered what it would feel like to cup one of those sweet cheeks and squeeze...

Brett kept pushing, hoping to randomly hit upon the right order. Finally, Brett he threw up his hands. "I don't know." He turned to face Jack, who quickly averted his eyes, locking them onto the computer screen, pretending he'd been looking there the whole time. The screen was green and gold, looking like one of those terrible websites from the 90s. Fuzzy letters spelled out the word "Link."

"The odds against guessing the code are astronomical," Jack said, reaching for the mouse.

"There has to be a clue," Brett said. "There's always a clue. Somewhere you don't expect." With a sudden burst of inspiration, he ran over to the chair the courier had been sitting on, lifting it up, thinking maybe there would be something on the base of the seat. Nothing. He threw it down, annoyed.

Jack, meanwhile, had moved the cursor over the word "Link" and tried to click. Nothing, though it did roll-over to spell out the word "Legend." He moved the cursor away, and back. Link. Legend. Link. Legend. *This has to be it*, he thought to himself. *This has to be the clue.*

Brett had picked up the briefcase, was turning it over and around. "Maybe it's inside here?"

Suddenly, Jack laughed, a high, sweet, feminine laugh. "It can't be," he said, getting up and skipping to the wall, his hair bouncing prettily.

“What?”

He reached up, and if it hadn't been for his heels, he wouldn't have been able to reach the top brick, but he pushed Left, then Left, then Right, Right.

Nothing. His heart sank, and the smile disappeared from his face.

“I thought for sure...”

And then they both heard it, the sound of a bar sliding open. Jack pushed on the door. It swung open, revealing a small room with an old-fashioned film projector and a small, silver screen. Jack turned, a wicked smile back on his face, and took a bow. “Ta da!”

“How did? What was?”

“It's the famous code from the Legend of Zelda,” Jack said, amused with himself and pleased to have figured it out instead of Brett.

“But how did you figure it out?” Brett said, as equally annoyed Jack had beaten him to the solution.

“I'm smart,” Jack said. “That's how.” He went to the projector.

“She's got brains and beauty,” Brett said, wanting to knock Jack down a bit.

Jack didn't take that bait. “Let's see what's on this film.”

Chapter Four

“Old film projectors,” Brett said. “So cliché. I'm surprised there isn't a phonograph.”

“I know, right?” Jack said, leaning over, looking for the switch to turn on the projector. His hair fell in his face, and he pulled it back and threw it over his shoulder.

Brett couldn't help but enjoy the view of Jack bending over like that in his heels— it was like an invitation, and then the hair toss... Brett didn't even think about looking away this time. In fact, he took a screenshot, wanting to keep that one for the memory book.

“The switch has to be here somewhere,” Jack said, lifting one leg as he leaned around the projector, his foot coming up right to his ass, a hint of feminine frustration in his pretty little voice.

Oh, my God, Brett thought, feeling a surge of desire and then shock as he felt his nipples harden and more disturbingly a heat and wetness growing between his legs as well as a kind of emptiness growing inside, a need to be filled... *Shit!* Not only did he force himself to look away from the sexy little female, but he turned away, pretending to be looking around the room, utterly shaken that the game was making him feel like a woman getting turned on and not a man.

“Got it!” Jack squeaked excitedly as the camera rattled to life, a distressed, black and white movie flickering to life on the screen, a spiraling clock and the numbers 10... 9.... 8.... He glanced over his shoulder to see Brett looking at the wall. “You wanna get in the game?” He asked, puzzled.

“Yeah, yeah,” Brett said, turning around. His nipples and breasts ached with need, and he crossed his arms over his chest, embarrassed.

Jack stared at Brett for a moment, seeing his cheeks flushed, the confused look on his face as well as the fact he stood with his knees pressed together. Something in the pose, the glassy look in Brett's eyes lit Jack up, and he found himself warming, blushing. Their eyes met, and Jack

took a deep breath, his mouth falling open. Neither could look away, and each of them felt himself drawn to the other female, longing to...

“Subject 1” a deep, male voice said as the movie started.

The voice broke the spell, and the two girls... boys... finally broke their gazes off and turned their attention to the film. On the screen, they could see a man sitting in what almost looked like an electric chair, a steel helmet bristling with wires on his head. They could see part of a man in a lab coat in the foreground. “We now begin the second session.” The film had been made in what looked like a retro lab with banks of computers around the walls, reels of tape rolling back and forth. Sunlight arched in from the narrow windows that ran along the wall just below the ceiling.

Brett walked closer, mostly so he wouldn't be tempted to check out Jack's ass anymore. Jack, for his part, felt like his breasts were almost swelling, getting more firm even as his own nipples stiffened and began to tingle. Like Brett, he crossed his arms over his chest, squeezing, trying to make it stop.

The camera pulled back, and they now saw a second chair. A woman dressed like a 1950s Hollywood starlet, with big wavy blonde hair spilling out from under the metal helmet, spilling over her slender shoulders. Her sparkly dress had a plunging neckline, revealing an eyeful of her full, creamy cleavage.

“We will begin in 10 seconds.”

“You'll never get away with this!” The man shouted, struggling against his bonds.

“All systems go,” a voice called from offscreen.

“Transfer protocols loaded,” another said.

“It looks like the mind swapping machine from Gilligan’s Island,” Brett said.

“I think that’s what’s about to happen.”

“No!” The man shouted. “No!”

“Initiate!” The man in the lab coat shouted, throwing a large switch, sending sparks flying and sputtering from the head gear. Silvery, double-negative images of the man and woman appeared, then rose away from their bodies and exchanged places. The sparking stopped, while a haze of theatrical smoke pooled on the floor. The woman’s eyes fluttered, her thick, false lashes like butterflies. She looked down at herself, looked up and barred her teeth, her big, pretty eyes flashing with defiance.

“I’ll destroy you for this!” She shouted, struggling against her bonds. “I’ll destroy you!”

The man in the lab coat laughed, and the ran out, flapping against the reel as it continued to spin. Jack turned the projector off. “That was...”

“... weird” Brett finished for him. “I wonder what...”

A glowing green box popped open with a “ding.”

You have discovered a secret mission. Accept or Decline.

“Decline,” Jack said, ready to get out of the game, which was beginning to make him feel very confused and uncomfortable.

“Accept,” Brett said. He loved secret missions, and though he also felt confused and even disturbed by what had just happened, he also felt... curious?

“Both participants must agree,” a robotic voice said.

“I agreed to one mission,” Jack said. “And we did that.”

“We didn’t finish it yet.”

“What?? Return the briefcase? Who cares?”

“Let’s just do this one quick secret mission. Then we’ll log out.”

“Maybe I’ll just log out and leave you here,”

The boys now faced each other, Jack tilting his head back to stare up at Brett. “You AGREED to one mission, and one mission isn’t done,” Brett said, leaning down, towering over Jack.

“So, let’s go return the briefcase, then!” Jack said. Truly, he was not used to being so small and Brett was physically intimidating, but there was no way he would show it. “That’s all I ever agreed to!” He did not like, however, how shrill his soprano sounded when he was angry.

Looking down into Jack’s pretty face, his green eyes hot with rage, Brett thought— she is so hot when she’s angry. He knew better than to say it. He suspected part of Jack’s reluctance to keep going was the fact that he didn’t love being a hot little girl with huge tits and a perfect ass. So, he decided to change tactics. Turning away, throwing his hands up, he said, “Okay. Okay.”

Jack pursued, feeling triumphant. “You are such an asshole sometimes,” he spat. “Always trying to change the deal after the fact.”

“I said okay,” Brett said. “You win.”

“Well, just remember this next time you try and pull this shit!” Jack said. “And then don’t.” He was actually a little high on anger and part of him didn’t want the argument to stop.”

“Fine,” Brett said.

“That’s it?” Jack said. “You’re just going to give up?”

“Yeah. That’s it.”

“Bitch,” Jack said.

You're the one being a bitch, Brett thought, but he just kept his hands thrown up in his act of fake surrender. "Just log out, already. This isn't fun anymore."

Jack froze, shook his head. "Just log out?"

"Yeah. It's fine. See you later."

"Okay, then." Jack pulled up the Main screen, looked at the Log Out Option.

Brett, meanwhile, went over to the projector and began to respool the film.

"Aren't you coming?"

"Nah. Once you go bye bye, I'm going to Accept the mission."

"It's probably going to be lame."

"Probably."

Jack lingered, watching Jack work the projector. It bothered him Brett would go on without him. "You'll probably get killed going solo."

"Yup."

Brett got the film going again, watching.

"Why are you watching it again?"

"Clues. There must be clues in there about where to find that lab. Go ahead. I'll see you later."

"I'm just going to watch for a minute," Jack said, crossing his arms under his breasts. A strand of hair fell across his eyes, and he blew it away with a huff.

They both watched the movie until it once again ended. "Damn. Nothing. I was sure..."

"Ha!" Jack shouted, a crooked, pirate smile on his face. "You missed it!"

"Missed what?"

“It was in the frame from the moment they pulled back.”

“What?”

“Admit I’m a better gamer, and I’ll tell you.”

Brett hid his feelings, keeping his face blank. Everything was going exactly the way he’d hoped, and besides, Jack looked super cute with that triumphant little smile. “Never.”

“Okay, then,” Jack said. Then, he waved and headed toward the door. “Bye, bye!”

“Where are you going?” Brett said, chasing after Jack.

“To the lab, and if you try to follow me, I will lose you. I am the stealth character, remember?”

“I thought you were logging out?”

“Not if I have a chance to level up and make you look like a fool.”

“Come on.”

“You know what you need to say.”

Brett pretended to struggle, hemming, hawing. Finally, he blurted out, “You’re better at gaming than me!”

“Ha! Yes!” Jack threw a fist in the air and tossed his hair triumphantly. “Never forget it.” And then he bolted for the stairs, grabbing the briefcase, stowing it in his Inventory and laughing as he ran up the stairs.

Damn, Brett thought, watching the sexy little avatar move. I’m totally crushing on her.

Chapter Five

“That’s the lab,” Jack said, pointing to a low-rise 1970s office building of concrete and glass. The run over had left him breathing hard, his breasts

heaving, cheeks and the tip of his nose flush. Brett felt so turned on, and he struggled to calm himself.

“How are you so sure?”

Jack rotated his pointing finger 180 degrees to a street sign. “It was visible through one of the basement windows.”

“Nice.”

“Hey, I got skills. Now, how do we get in?”

“Maybe we can just walk in? It looks like a public building?”

“I doubt it will be that easy, but let’s see.”

They walked up the steps. Brett pulled the glass door open and gestured for Jack to go ahead. “Mademoiselle.”

Jack rolled his eyes. There was a security guard sitting in the corner reading a newspaper. He glanced over, let his eyes roam up and down Jack’s body, then went back to his paper. Jack felt his skin crawl. He would never get used to getting ogled by men. Brett gave him a little punch on the shoulder. “Little hottie” he said.

“Shut it.”

They had both stopped walking, as beyond the door was a metal detector. They both had more than a few things that would set that off.

“What should we do?” Brett whispered.

“Find another way in?”

They backed away and went out the door. “Maybe we should just Matrix the building,” Brett said once they were back outside. “It didn’t seem that well defended.”

“There could be more guards, the police would get called. I mean, it might be that easy, but let’s at least look for another way in. There’s always another way in.”

“Yeah, but it gets so boring looking sometimes.”

They circled the building, tried all the side doors. Climbed to the roof and tried the roof door. All indicated they would need a security pass to enter. They even checked nearby sewers to see if they could find an underground entrance. An hour of fruitless searching later, they found themselves sitting on a bench across the street from the building, frustrated and annoyed. “I’ll never understand why these game designers think wandering around looking for a door is such a thrill,” Brett said.

“I know. Just put some guys in the way for me to shoot and save all the searching.”

“I could log out and do a quick internet search. There’s no doubt a blog or 100 with the answer.”

Jack thought about it. Bret couldn’t be sure if it was just something his avatar did on its own or if Jack chose to do it, but he bit his lower lip as he thought, narrowing his eyes. Once more, it seemed any facial expressions Jack made were impossibly cute, and Brett felt all the bells and whistles going off in this body, a common enough occurrence so far that his brain was starting to register— this is all wrong, you don’t have the body parts to feel these feelings— with less and less urgency.

Brett’s eyes dropped to Jack’s full, firm breasts. They jutted out from his body, thrusting forward impressively. Jack wondered what it was like to be so— busty? He wasn’t sure the word. His own perky little b cups didn’t seem all that dramatic in terms of how it felt to have boobs— yes, they jiggled and bounced a little, but he’d quickly tuned that all out, the same way he largely had tuned out the presence of his junk in the real world. Jack, though? How could he tune out millions like that, big and heavy as they were?

How glorious it would be, Brett thought, getting down to business, to bury his face in those soft pillows, to kiss them all over...

“God! Stop!” Jack said, instinctively crossing his arms over his breasts, hunching over. “I’m a guy.”

“Shit. Shit,” Brett said, looking away. “Yeah, sorry about that.” He looked over at a lamppost, some pigeons, a bicycle rider passing, a cab sitting at a red light with a sign on the top for a cam girl site called “Flirtations.” “So, what about a quick Google search? I kinda want to know what’s in there, but I just stand more searching.”

“I know but give me a second. I like to solve these myself. It’s more gratifying, and I think we are just missing something so obvious. You know how you spend an hour looking for a way to open a barred door in *Assassin’s Creed*, and then you realize the answer was right in front of you the whole time?”

“Yeah,” Brett said chuckling. “Which window should I shoot through? Then, you realize there was a well with a secret door sitting right there next to the house.”

“How many times did the game tell us we needed a security clearance?” Jack said. “I just can’t figure out how to get one. I am betting the door at the bottom of the loading dock would put us right at the lab without any trouble.”

“Hmnmnmn.” Brett’s eyes once more started to drift toward Jack’s face and body. Embarrassed, he pulled them away and once more looked at the lamppost, the pigeons, the cab at the light. *That light sure is taking forever*, Brett thought, and then once more he noted the Cam Girl site— Flirtations, and the obvious answer that had been right in front of them the whole time occurred to him. “Flirtations,” he burst out, jumping to his feet, feeling that

rush of excitement at all the clues coming together. “You need to flirt with him!”

“What? Who?” Jack said, leaning back, not liking at all where this was going. “No?”

“The security guard? Remember the way he was looking at you? I bet if you went and talked to him, you could either pickpocket his clearance or sweet talk him into giving it to you.”

The pieces all clicked for Jack, and he shook his head. “Okay, that all makes sense.” He glanced toward the doors, feeling nervous, insecure. He didn’t like the idea of flirting with a guy, and once more the disapproving face of his father glowered at him. “Why don’t you do it?” He said to Brett, idly twisting a strand of his long hair around his fingers without realizing he was doing it.

“Because my charisma is 2.”

“Hell. Okay, fine. It’s just a game, anyway. There is no spoon.”

“Right, but one thing, and I am not trying to be funny, but maybe you want to slip into your mini skirt for this?”

“What difference would that make?” Jack said, but even still he pulled up the mini skirt in his inventory. It indicated +5 armor, but when he clicked on details he was surprised and a little annoyed to see +1 charisma, +1 seduction as secondary buffs. “Oh,” he said. “It actually might matter.”

“Sweet.”

Jack looked at the skirt— pink, short, and with the word “Bitch” across the front. Fine, he decided. But he was done with all the *stop that and don’ts*... he didn’t like the way he sounded. In fact, he felt he sounded like a little bitch. So, he decided to change the game and start flaunting. He put on the skirt.

“Hoochie mama,” Brett said.

“If you got it, flaunt it,” Jack said with a big, bright smile. Slotting the skirt had, inexplicably, caused Jack’s leggings to unslot, and he now felt cool air swirling between his shapely thighs where they were exposed between his knee-high stiletto boots and his hot pink mini- skirt. He spun on his heels and marched toward the door. Knowing that Brett was checking out his ass, he put a little extra sass in his steps as he headed toward the door. Just as he was about to pull the door open, he put a hand on his hip and looked back over his shoulder, his long hair falling across his forehead. “Wish me luck?” He said, trying and surprising himself by succeeding in putting a singsong, feminine lilt to his voice.

The feminine gestures and sweet voice once more shook Brett up. It was all perfect to turn on a guy anyway, but knowing that was Jack in that sexy little package, Jack in those heels and that skirt, Jack with that fine ass, looking over his shoulder and sound like such a perfect girl– it all heightened and inflamed the feelings, turning Brett on in a way he’d never been turned on before. Shaken, he whispered “Luck” in a hoarse, hungry voice.

Jack smiled and flipped his hair, pulling open the door and heading into the office. Once more the guard looked up, and once more he let his eyes drift down the length of Jack’s curvaceous body. This time, Jack met his eyes and smiled.

“Hi, um, miss. Can I help you?” The man said. He was salt and pepper gray, looked to be in his mid-fifties, but fit. A meter above his head appeared showing one red bar. The bar showed how attracted he was.

Jack ignored a lifetime of societal pressure and ingrained homophobia. “I need your help,” Jack said, his voice full of feminine desperation. Walking

up to the man's desk, Jack put his hands on the edge and thrust his breasts forward. "Please help me? Please? Please?"

The man had no choice but to let his eyes enjoy the sight of Jack's rack, presented to him as they were. A second red bar appeared. "Calm down there, little missy," the man said, talking to Jack's breasts. "Calm down."

Little missy. Jack resisted the urge to punch the man in the throat.

"I'll be glad to help," the man said. "Take a deep breath and tell Officer Geats what's wrong."

Glad to help? Yeah, I can tell by the rising of your "attraction bar." Jack wasn't sure how to proceed, though. Should he make up some story about needing to borrow the security pass? Or just get close and steal it? The thought of "getting close" made him uneasy. His dad again. So, he kept his distance, but glanced up and said, "I left my— purse— in my office, and my security pass is in it. Can I borrow yours?"

"It's up in your office," the man said, standing, smirking. "And everyone has gone for the day. Well, little lady, I'll walk you up to your office to get your purse. How about that?"

Everyone is gone. The two of us alone. Alarm bells went off like crazy. Jack had no doubt he could take this rent a cop in a fight, but what he wasn't sure of is whether the game would give him a choice. Maybe he would be walking right into a scenario where the only way to get the card was to sleep with the guy. Sure, it would probably be a fade to black, but still.

He decided to just bite the bullet. Taking hold of the man's tie, Jack looked up at him. "You're my hero," he said. Caressing the tie, staring up into his eyes, Jack saw another bar added to the meter. *How can I get one more bar*, he wondered. He thought about things girls did. He put a hand

on the man's chest and licked his lips. "I just wish there were some way I could repay you." He tossed his hair.

**The final bar appeared, and list of options: 1) Pickpocket the Guard
2) Lure to a private place for liaison 3)kill him now**

Kill him now, Jack thought. The answer is always kill him now. But, then he saw a red light over the man's shoulder. Damn. Another security camera. Well, pick pocket the guard seemed simple enough and would leave no dead body to raise an alarm. He chose pickpocket.

Let it be said that had Jack any idea what was about to happen, he would never have chosen. What he thought was about to happen was that he would grab the security pass from the man's belt without him noticing. What really happened is this:

The game switched to a cut scene. It was cinematic, with the point of view changing from first person to third. Jack watched as he now slipped one hand behind the guard's head. *What? No!* Jack yelled, but he heard himself say, "You're so handsome."

The guard slipped an arm around Jack's waist and yanked him forward, their bodies pressing together. Jack now felt his soft chest crushed against the man's hard body. He watched as he lifted one leg and rubbed his soft, base thigh against the man's leg, and felt as one of the man's hands reached back, cupped his ass and squeezed. Hot, female passion burst into raging fires of need, and Jack watched it and felt it all. The man brought his free hand to Jack's smooth, soft cheek. Jack tilted his head back. The man leaned down and planted a kiss on Jack's soft lips. Jack heard himself moan softly, even as he watched his slender hand slip the security clearance from the man's belt. The kiss ended. The scene froze

for a moment, Jack gazing up longingly, wrapped in a man's arms. Then, it shifted back to real time, first person, and Jack was once more in control—well, as much in control as a hot young woman who just had her first kiss could be, because in that moment, in the afterglow, Jack did feel like a girl, or at least how he thought a girl must feel. “Never mind,” he said, wiping his mouth with the back of his arm. “I just remembered I don't even have a purse!”

You have completed your first successful seduction, the game reported. Level UP!

“You gonna leave me with blue balls?” The guard protested.

“Bye!” Jack said, once more executing a nice little turn on his heels and freezing.

There was Brett. Poking his head in the door. His mouth hanging open.

“Let's go,” Jack said, pushing out the door, barrelling past him, heading toward the loading dock.

Brett hurried after him. “Dude, that scene was so hot.”

“I didn't do any of that,” Jack said. “It was a cutscene.”

“Yeah, but what was it like? Did you feel it?”

“Tell you what?” Jack said as he swiped the security card over the loading dock door, the light flipping from red to green as it unlocked. “Go kiss him and find out for yourself.” Jack pushed the door open and went into the building.

Brett followed. In fact, watching the scene had lit him up again and all this sexual tension was building. It had been a hot kiss, for sure, but as before knowing that was Jack pressing his breasts against the man, tilting

his head back just like any girl, accepting the kiss— and then that soft moan? God, it was too much. Too much. He felt like he needed to get off so bad, and not in any way he knew how to get off, either. At this point, he felt jealous of Jack, though he was not ready to face that truth.

As for Jack, he was struggling not to think about the kiss and all the feelings that had gone along with it. He just wanted to get through this mission and get out. There was no way he would quit before the mission was done, though. No way. He was too curious to know what was going on, and he'd kissed a guy to get this far. Kissed a guy. He dragged his forearm across his lips at the memory. He'd paid the price, and he wanted the finish.

And so, as they snuck down into the basement lab, our two confused boys pretending to be girls, found their heads swimming with new feelings, emotions and attractions they had never imagined. Neither wanted to deal with any of it, but it might be said that when we refuse to deal with our feelings, then our feelings will deal with us.

Chapter Six

“Hold on a second,” Jack said, once they had gotten inside and closed the door behind him.

“Why?”

“I leveled,” he said. “Let me allocate my points.”

“You leveled? For kissing a guy?”

“Don't remind me.” Once more, Jack felt an urge to put his points where he would have if he were playing a tank, but he put them into his stealth

skills instead. *What did it even matter?* He wondered. He had no intention of ever playing this game again once he'd finished this stupid mission.

They found themselves in a bland corporate hallway, cinderblock and low-grade brown tile. It smelled faintly of bleach. They could see a T ahead, as well as a security camera that scanned back and forth. "Can you take that out?" Brett asked. Stealth characters in a lot of these games had to power to short circuit or even take over security cameras. Jack checked his skills. "Not yet. We'll need to time it."

They watched the camera as it swept back and forth, taking in all three hallways at different intervals. "Which way is the lab?" Brett asked.

"Right," Jack said. In fact, it was only a guess. He had no idea, but he didn't feel like getting into a debate with Brett about it. Luckily, Brett bought his confidence, as he just nodded in agreement. They knew they would have to time it just right, or risk triggering an alarm and bringing down a horde of NPCs to fight, which at this level did not seem a winning strategy. They watched two more cycles. Jack wanted one more, as he figured they would need to leave as the camera was just starting to sweep past their hallway, but Brett suddenly shoved past him, hissing, "Go!"

"Shit!" Jack said, and they sprinted down the hall, watching the camera swinging to the right, then starting back toward them. Barreling around the corner of the hallway, they saw a door about ten feet away and kept running. "Better hope it isn't locked!" Jack said, glancing back over his shoulder, seeing the camera swing toward them. They had maybe two seconds.

"We'll make it!" Brett said, heart racing as the door grew closer and closer, as did the eye of the camera. He put his hand on the doorknob and twisted, the door flew open! Yes! "Oh, no!" He said, freezing for a moment.

Jack slammed into him from behind, and they both rolled to the floor. Jack found himself looking at a pair of steel toed boots. He looked up at the combat pants, up and up to what seemed like a really tall man wearing full tactical gear staring down at them.

“Hey, girls,” the man said with a smirk as he patted an anti-riot baton in his hands. “You lost?”

“Hi?” Jack said, rolling to his feet. A bar appeared above the man—
Delray. Level Boss. The bar underneath his name showed he had a LOT of hit points. Brett also got to his feet, his hand on his gun.

“I thought you said the lab was this way?” Brett said.

“I guess I was wrong?” Jack said.

“You led us right to the boss!”

Jack didn’t feel this was the best time to discuss his choices. Instead, he decided to try to seduce again, turning on the charisma. It was worth a shot. “We got lost looking for the little girl’s room?” He said, his voice small and flirty. “I get so confused sometimes?”

“Nice try,” the man said, his baton sparking with electricity as he lashed out towards Jack, who dodged and— almost— avoid getting hit. The bar grazed his shoulder and the force sent him flying across the room, slamming into a wall. The word STUNNED flashed in front of his eyes, and he found he couldn’t move.

From Brett’s perspective, Jack now lay on the floor, little bubbles swirling around his head. He knew that meant Jack was out of it for now. It was up to him. He pulled his automatic and moved back from Delray, who stood there looking at him, the baton sparking in his hand. “You fire that off, you’ll bring down twenty of my men, and the only question will be whether they get here before or after I beat your ass,” Delray said.

Brett equipped his gun. It made sense; besides he was a tank, built for fighting, and as tough as he looked, this was only a low-level boss. Brett liked the idea of beating him down hand to hand.

“Why not surrender?” Delray said. “I promise not to play rough.”

Gross, Brett thought. A series of dialogue options sprang up, and the action paused while a timing bar showed he had a few seconds to make a decision. Brett took the moment to scan the room— a security office with a desk and an array of monitors showing feeds from around the building. And— bingo! Another riot baton sitting across the desk. The only problem was Delray stood between Brett and the baton.

The dialogue choices were as follows:

I give up. Just don't hurt me.

I look forward to kicking your ass.

Watch Out! (make a run for it).

Brett clicked on the second option, and he heard his character utter the phrase.

Delray smiled. “I was hoping you would say that.” His character flashed, and Brett picked up an office chair- a heavy, stainless steel chair that like much of the game seemed to recall the 1970s— and he used it to block the attack, the baton slamming into the chair, which conducted some of the charge into Brett, taking away 2 hit points, and the words **stun resisted** appearing. Jack, who felt the shock in his arms, continued to circle away, drawing Delray away from the baton.

Delray followed, brandishing his weapon, the arrogant look still on his face. He lashed out again, slamming the baton into the chair. 2 more hit

points lost, and **stun resisted**, but Brett could feel his arms going numb, and he couldn't be sure he would resist again, so he decided to take a chance, taking a step back and then throwing the chair at Delray.

Surprised by the move, Delray swung wildly at the chair, but it struck him in the head, and he stumbled backward. Brett lunged for the baton on the desk, grabbed it and activated it, a shower of sparks dripping from the weapon.

Delray growled and began to flash. It looked like he was charging up for a power attack. Brett considered. His character was not built to dodge, and he had no idea how much damage the power attack would do. The best defense is a good offense, he decided and charged, slamming his baton into Delray, watching his power bar drop, seeing the same bubbles around his head and pressing his advantage. Brett smashed him in the head, then swung up, cracking his chin. The power bar turned red and dropped to less than half.

Jack watched it all, frustrated that he couldn't move. He still saw the word STUNNED across his vision, but watching Brett wail on the boss, he also inwardly cheered. *Yes! Kick his ass, bro!* But then, Delray recovered, the stun effect vanishing, and Jack went to intercom mode and shouted, "Watch out!"

Brett, overconfident, had raised his baton for another power strike, but Delray slammed his baton into Brett's stomach, knocking him backward, making him stumble as he lost an incredible 8 hit points. It was Delray's turn to press, and he unleashed a flurry of blows at blinding speed, knocking the baton from Brett's hands and this time succeeding, as Brett's avatar sank to her knees, and he saw STUNNED flash in his vision.

Brett looked up, eyes slit with rage. He hated losing. Delray stood over him, and then much to Brett's surprise, he dropped the baton and pulled out a gun, placing the cold barrel against Brett's forehead, chuckling. Shit, Brett thought. *Can my character die in this game?* Brett's eyes locked onto the gun, the bright silver ring at the end of the barrel, the dark, empty space in the middle, the dark space from which his death would come spitting in a flash of smoke and fire... Behind the gun, blurry, the face of Delray.

"You were a fool to challenge me," Delray said. "I would have been gentle, cuffed you, taken you to lock up. But you drew blood, and for that you must die. Any last... Arrghhhh!"

Now it was Brett's turn to cheer as Jack, finally freed from being stunned, leapt into the scene, doing one of his special takedowns, legs wrapped tight around Delray's torso while he locked his arms around the man's neck and held him in a chokehold. The power bar above Delray flashed, turned red and started dropping. Delray tried to shoot back at Jack's head, but Jack moved, and the bullet crashed into the roof. Brett could only watch. *Come on! Come on!*

Delray now ran backwards, slamming into the wall, bashing Jack in the process. One hit point lost, and Jack didn't have many. Then, Brett could only think, "Oh, shit" as the NPC AI smartened up, and he bent his arm to plant the gun against Jack's thigh. POP!

"Fuck!" Jack screamed, clamping down tighter on the man's throat. The shot had cost him all but one of his hit points. He would be out at even the slightest damage.

Delray fell to one knee. His power bar was almost empty. "You... cannot... defeat me...." he mumbled, once more putting the gun to Jack's leg. "Time for you to...."

And just before he could fire, his power bar read zero, he collapsed.

“Shit,” Jack and Brett said in unison.

The biofeedback in the game, as has been observed previously, was intense, and Jack felt a throbbing pain his leg. Meanwhile, his arms ached and his whole body sagged with exhaustion. His legs were trapped under Delray, and he struggled weakly to free himself.

Brett got up, the world seeming to tilt and turn as he realized he was still feeling some sort of lingering effect from the combat. His right arm hung uselessly from the side. Seeing Jack entangled with Delray, and the pile of their limbs twitching and lurching as Jack tried to free himself, Brett could help but activate camera mode and record a little bit of it.

“You gonna just stand there?” Jack finally said, unaware of how kinky the scene looked from where Brett was standing.

“I’m recording this,” Brett said with a chuckle. “It’s like a live action page from the Kama Sutra.”

“You’re an idiot,” Jack said, finally freeing himself with a powerful thrust from his hips that sent Delray rolling under the desk.

“I know.”

Jack used a med pack to heal up, and then he went to the door that led back out into the hallway, which had remained cracked open. The hallway was empty and quiet, the security camera still sweeping back and forth.

“Nothing,” Jack said. “Looks like we’re good.” He closed the door.

Now, with a moment to catch their breath, the boys looked at the smashed-up room, the crumpled form of Delray. Jack looked at Brett. Brett looked at Jack. “That was a hell of a fight,” Brett said.

“It was pretty amazing.”

Without even realizing what they were doing, the boys felt drawn together, wrapping their arms around each other and hugging. It was only when their bodies pressed together that they'd realized what they'd just impulsively done. Jack's head rested against Brett's firm, athletic breasts, while his own pressed into Brett's belly. His soft thigh pressed against Brett's as well, and he could feel Brett's strong hands on his back, pulling him in, the two of them fitting their bodies together. As warmth seemed to pass between them, they heard a bell ring, and the words "Level Up!" appeared, followed immediately by another bell and another, "Level Up."

Each boy felt his female body growing aroused, sensations in places they did not have in real life, and once more, terrified by these foreign desires, they quickly separated. "Bro," Jack said, trying to make his voice sound lower and husky. "Good fight."

"Yeah, bro," Brett said, doing the same. "We kicked ass. And got two levels for beating that asshole."

"Pretty sweet," Jack said, as the two of them opened their character menus and allocated their points.

"Search," Jack said once he'd finished. He went to the computer station. "I'm going to see if I can override the security system." His nipples were now hard little eraser heads, and there was an extremely disturbing warm and wet feeling between his legs. He focused on the computer, which was, thankfully, not password protected. As he typed, he found he had to adjust his technique to account for his now long fingernails. They weren't extreme by any means, extending just beyond the fingertips, rounded and painted red, but they led to mishits until he changed his hand position.

"Sweet," he heard Brett say.

"What?"

Brett had found a locker. Opening it he found two more medi-packs to replenish their supply, as well as 175 credits, ammo and a pair of combat boots that would up his armor class by ten points. He told Jack. “Boots?” Jack said.

Brett answered, holding them up. They were actually clunky, military style combat boots.

“I want them,” Jack said, perched on his high heels.

“You are so obsessed with cute boots,” Brett answered, smirking.

“Har har. Come on.”

“I’m the tank and…”

“I know. I know,” Jack said. “Whatever. Take all the good gear for yourself.” He went back to the computer. Oddly, he felt comfortable in heels— didn’t even notice he was wearing them unless he thought about it. Once more, he supposed it was a function of the game. No one would want to spend hours trying to learn to walk in heels, and half the girls he knew couldn’t manage stilettos like these. It was similar with his mini-skirt. As tight as it was, it stretched and didn’t limit his movements at all. At first, he’d been aware of the feeling of the cool air swirling around his bare thighs, a sense that the skirt was dangerously close to showing off his – well, to revealing things best left hidden, but once he’d been wearing it for awhile he’d just tuned it out.

Jack’s musings gave way to focus on the mission, and he made a feminine squeal and pumped his little fist as he succeeded in hacking the system.

“Good?” Brett said, coming to stand behind Jack and look over his shoulder.

“I have blinded the security cameras, looping old feed of empty hallways through the system. Also, I found a floor plan. There’s the lab.” In fact, the map left no doubt as the room labeled “Lab” was also flashing yellow with the message, “Mission Point.”

“We should have gone left. I told you.” Standing behind Jack like that, Brett found himself struggling not to pat her on that perfect ass, play with her hair. *Come on man. Keep it together*, he thought, stepping away, confused. When he’d suggested playing female characters, he’d never expected to find himself so attracted to Jack’s avatar, and it was freaking him out for sure. I mean, she was hot as hell, of course, but he knew she was a Guy In Real Life.

“No, you didn’t,” Jack said. In fact, he’d had an intuitive sense that Brett, standing behind him like this, was feeling- handsy? And he’d felt a flush of full-bodied relief when Brett stepped away. “How long have we been playing, anyway?” Jack said. “I have a test tomorrow.”

“Impossible to tell,” Brett said. “You know these games are like casinos. They never want you to know how long you’ve been grinding.” Sensing that Jack once again wavered on continuing, this time he chose to remain silent.

Jack huffed, blowing his bangs up and out of his eyes. “I really want to know what’s up with that lab,” he said. “That’ll be the last thing. Then, I really need to study.”

“Cool.”

“I’m serious.”

“I said, cool.”

“Okay. Just so we’re straight.”

With that, the two boys went to the door and started to creep down the hall.

Chapter Seven

The first time the security camera swept their way, Jack and Brett cringed. Yes, Jack was pretty sure he'd disabled the camera, but there was always a little doubt. The camera saw nothing. There was no alarm. So, they continued down the hall, came to a door that, ridiculously enough, had the words "Experimental Lab" written on the door and went in.

"Yes!" Brett said. It was the room from the film. The old-fashioned movie camera, perched on a tripod, was even still there.

"There must be some clue around here," Jack said, inspecting the first of the mind swap chairs. Wood, with a metal helmet bristling with wires. It looked like something Doc Brown would have built in his garage. "It doesn't make a lot of sense that the film from this lab was in the laundry mat," Jack said out loud as he moved to the next chair.

"I know. It's kind of annoying," Brett said. "Something so random like that."

"The designers could at least try a little harder. Make things plausible."

"Unless we're missing something. Maybe there is a connection."

"Maybe... ahhhh. Look here." Jack had found a logbook.

Brett came over, standing behind Brett, looking over his shoulder. The first pages listed trial runs of the machine, with dates and subjects. The first were all animals. Cats and Dogs. Then a monkey and a parrot. "Just skip to the end," Brett said.

Jack did, and they saw the names of the two subjects: Rene Brand and Tommy Grant. “Who and who?” Jack said.

“Hey, siri,” Brett said. “Who are Rene Brand and Tommy Grant?”

“Okay. Here’s what I found on the internet.”

“Hmmm,” Brett said. Jack turned to see he was looking at his phone.

“You have a phone?”

“It was in my inventory. You probably have one, too.”

Jack checked. He did, indeed, have a phone.

“It seems Tommy Grant is chairman and CEO of Essenetulus,” Brett said.

“The evil corporation that owns Recon Junction?”

“The same.”

“Well, he’s not anymore from what we’ve seen. What about the girl?”

“An actual movie star.”

“So, he’s her now? I can see a motive for the swap— taking over Essentulus. But why swap him into such a high-profile person?”

“Well, she’s an actor, so that kinda makes sense. She can impersonate him.”

“But what will they do with him?”

“Maybe just lazy writing again,” Brett said. “I wonder what we’re supposed to do next?”

“Log out,” Jack said. “I really need to study.”

“I hear ya. Hey, what about we at least take the briefcase back and finish that mission, then shut it down.”

“Deal.”

Checking around the lab one more time for any more clues or treasure, the boys snuck back out and made their way back to Frenchie. Jack once

more found himself weaving, turning and stepping to the side, a small little woman in a big, cold world. He found himself getting used to it, though, as well as feeling almost like Brett's sidekick when they did walk side by side. Brett was so much taller. It was kind of weird to be the small one. He'd gotten used to the body to the point where he didn't think about the way he bounced and jiggled when he walked, the tightness of his bra. He'd just tuned it out, but now that they were about to finish, he was thinking about it again, the weight, the way they stuck out, giving him all this mass in front of himself. The way all the guys kept checking them out.

I'm glad I don't have tits like this in real life, he thought. The shit women have to put up with!

They got back to Frenchie's. "Mademoiselles!" He said. "So good to see you again! I trust you have my materials. The courier returned some time ago."

"Yup." They handed the briefcase over to Frenchie.

The bell sounded. "Mission Complete. +500 bonus."

Jack and Brett both felt a little surge of pleasure at the sound of the bell, the words "mission complete/" It was a purely pavlovian response, built into the game to create an addictive quality. The next thing they saw was LVL UP! Followed by another LVL UP, and then a third."

"Wow," Brett said, endorphins flowing in his real brain. "Three levels? Sweet."

"Not bad," Jack said, feeling the same rush. "Not bad at all." He'd automatically gone to his skills list and was allocating the new points, not even worrying about his vow to never play the game. He still had no such intention, but the game had trained him into a new habit— Level, feel good, allocate skill points, feel even better.

“So, that’s it?” Brett said.

“That’s it.”

“Pardon?” Frenchie said. “Perhaps you could tell me, why were you delayed in your return? I am curious?”

Three options appeared. **1) Tell Frenchie about the secret lab 2) Ask Frenchie why he wants to know? 3) Tell him it’s none of his business.**

Jack went to their private intercom. “What do you think?”

“I don’t trust him. It’s interesting there’s this tie-in, though. Might be worth it to just do it to find out what happens?”

“I don’t know. It doesn’t really matter. I have to go. Let’s just log out.”

“I hear ya. It’s probably getting pretty late. Bye, Frenchie.”

“I’m out,” Jack said, and his character dissolved.

Brett lingered for a second, thinking he might just see what happened, but he stopped himself, knowing he might get sucked into another long mission chain. So, he logged out as well, only to return to the real world to hear Jack cursing.

“It’s fucking 3:30 in the morning,” Jack said, rubbing his eyes.

“Motherfucker.”

“I can’t believe we were in that long.”

“Shit.” Jack headed toward the door. “I’ll catch ya later.”

“Later.”

Brett rubbed his eyes. His head hurt, and he felt off. Not uncommon traits after a long night of gaming. He wasn’t too happy about the time, either, as he climbed into bed, fully clothed. He was not going to get a good night’s sleep. That was for sure.

Jack collapsed into bed, all thoughts of cramming for the test gone. Like Brett, he felt off— his head full of cobwebs and aching. He plunged immediately into a deep sleep, and then into a dream.

Jack found himself in a candle lit bedroom. There was a woman on the bed, watching him. He looked down to see his breasts, crushed together and lifted by the black corset he now realized he wore. There was hair falling across his eyes, and he left it there, because he knew it was sexy. The woman clearly wanted him, and as she stared, he turned, so she could take all of him in.

“Come here,” she said.

Jack obeyed. She was hot, but not beautiful. He wanted her to want him, and he felt a growing need to please her. Jack climbed onto the bed. The woman got on her knees, and they kissed, and it was a good kiss. Jack felt it through his whole body. They kept kissing, feeling, groping, their bodies getting hotter and wetter, and Jack just followed his instincts, kissing her on the throat, the chest, on and between her breasts, down the link of her taut tummy and then he found himself with his head planted between her legs, and eagerly drank of her. The dream seemed to leap forward. They were laying side by side, gazing into each other’s eyes.

The other woman reached out and brushed Jack’s hair back, then cupped his cheek. They didn’t speak. They didn’t need to. Jack felt like they were reading each other’s thoughts, living in each other’s heads. He’d never felt this close to anyone, and to his surprise, he found himself crying.

“What is it?”

“I don’t know. I’m just—?”

“What? You can tell me.”

“It’s just...” We may never know what words Jack meant to speak, because just at that moment, he recognized the other woman. “Brett?” It was not Brett, but Brett’s avatar from the game. “Fuck.”

The shock woke Jack, who sat up, still feeling the Gamer Hangover, and his mind reeling with emotional turmoil. He put his head in his hands. “Why did I ever agree to play a bitch?” He felt comfortable blaming the game, and less comfortable thinking about the possibility the game had merely opened a door that had already existed. His room was typical college bro, much like Brett’s with posters of sports and half-naled women, a sloppy, messy space. His “wet” dream had woken him up a little after six. There was nothing to do but cram for his test. He went out to the common area, poured some fruit loops into a bowl, splashed some milk and started to eat. Something seemed wrong. His body felt— off— somehow. His hand kept going to his flat, bony chest.

Later, as he walked across campus, the off sensation continued. It was good to be tall again, and he decided he preferred to look at the world from this angle, but his walk felt wrong, and there was that feeling that he was— missing something. It wasn’t until he saw a girl with large breasts wearing a very tight sweater that he realized what was happening. Of course, he took a look and felt a little horny, but then he was stunned as he looked at her to realize *he* was missing the weight of his breasts— or his avatar’s breasts, he corrected himself- and his body felt wrong because he’d gotten used to *her* body, and he’d gotten used to wearing high heels.

Fuck. I am never playing that game again. Fucking Brett and his bullshit ideas. Jack looked around, now feeling utterly self-conscious over the fact that he was actually missing the feeling of having his own tits. It made no

sense, but he felt like people would *know*, somehow. Guys were NOT supposed to miss their tits, or even have tits. *This is so fucked.*

It'll fade. It's just some lingering after-effect. I'm not going to keep feeling this— emptiness?

Won't it?

Jack got to class, took his exam. He actually felt like he did pretty well despite the lack of study. Walking back across campus, he still felt all wrong, felt super-conscious of the flat, lack of his chest, his flat butt, his flat shoes. Everything about him felt flat and wrong. He even caught himself reaching up to brush back the long hair he no longer had, stopping himself, humiliated to make what he considered a feminine movement. Then, there were the memories of *that dream* as well.

Was he turning gay? But “Brett” had been a woman in the dream, so that wouldn't make him gay, except he was a woman in the dream, too, so did that make him a lesbian?

“I'm not a lesbian,” he mumbled as he walked across The Green.

A passing coed gave him an almost supportive glance from over the rims of her glasses. “Be who you are,” she said.

Jack, mortified, raced back to the dorm.

Hannah, one of his quad mates, was sitting at the kitchen table, munching her own bowl of Honey Nut Cheerios, bed headed and bleary eyed. Jack sat down, determined to assert his “true” self. “Hey gorgeous,” he said.

“I am so *not* right now,” Hannah said, plucking at her frizzy hair.

“You look great,” Jack lied.” How about some morning glory?”

Hannah considered for a minute. Hell, she decided, she could use a good fucking. Maybe it would help with this hangover. “Sure.”

“Come on.”

“My room,” Hannah said, crinckling her nose. “Your room is disgusting.”

It was fast and raw, Jack getting right down to business, pounding her, then getting off. Hannah grabbed her vape pipe and took a long drag.

“Later,” she said, their transaction done.

“Later,” Jack said, pleased with himself. He was a man. A regular man. Back in his room, though, he still couldn’t get comfortable. There was this ache, this feeling that he was supposed to have breasts. And it just wouldn’t seem to go away.

Chapter Eight

Awkward. Things between Jack and Brett got awkward. Every time they ran into each other in the quad, they each flashed back *that* moment: staring into each other’s eyes, drawing together, coming so, so near to a hungry kiss. To put it gently, two young men who considered themselves righteous bros now had concerns they might be a little less rigidly defined in terms of their gender identities. This was very concerning. In fact, after a first-year orientation session on the subject of gender fluidity, they had both cruelly mocked the idea that someone could be born in the wrong body.

“You know what I think?” Brett had said. “I think they just want attention.”

“Right,” Jack said. “They always have to be different.”

Brett now had serious concerns about his sexual identity. One the hand, he’d wanted to kiss what appeared to be a very beautiful woman. Check straight.

On the other hand, he knew that inside that woman was a guy, and not just any guy but a good friend. Check— confused?

The third thing was, he'd been the one who'd wanted them to play female characters. And, yeah, he tried to play it off as a whim, but he'd been **obsessed** with the idea for a long time. And, he'd, let's say, toyed with the notion before, maybe even like a girl toying with her ponytail. Playing offline, solo games where he'd been sure everything was private, he'd played chicks. He had. The thing was, in those games it had never mattered much, other than his character looked cute. There had never been any interaction. He'd told himself he had the timeless motives of all guys— he'd rather look at a hot girl's ass while playing than a guy's.

Then, fully realized VR had come along. You inhabited the body of the character. You felt what they felt. What would it feel like to be a woman? In a MMORG? To speak with a woman's voice? The intensity of his curiosity scared him. Now, sitting in class, ignoring the professor as she ground through another tedious lecture, he remembered— it had been at breakfast— Jen had shacked up with a skinny, hippie type looking guy, and he was making them omelets— of course, he had to cook. He had a ponytail and a bunch of bracelets, and Brett had wanted to punch him.

Brett had grunted good morning and started making a protein shake.

"You were an animal," the guy said. "I never knew you had that in you."

Jen giggled. "I never knew you could be such a little slut."

They both laughed. "It was pretty weird. I just got into it. Did you like Elle?"

"I liked her tits," Jen said. "It was kinda fun banging a sorority girl." Jen was— well, Brett had never been sure how to characterize her. She seemed to morph to different looks every day— art girl, punk girl, goth girl, confused girl who put on parts of three different styles and dyed her hair purple girl. But, whatever the look, she was anti-Greek to the point of being psychotic.

Brett was pretty sure what they were talking about, and he felt himself getting turned on just hearing *her* talk about *his* tits.

“And I will never look at a Ken doll the same way,” the guy said.

“Hey,” Brett said, unable to stop himself. “What happened?”

“We had a close encounter,” Jen said. “Of the kinky kind.”

“We swapped genders in VR,” the guy said, super enthused, as he plated and delivered the omelets. The whole room smelled of chives and onions, and Brett’s mouth watered. “I was the girl. She was the guy. It was—intense.”

“Mmmm,” Jen agreed around a mouthful of omelet.

“And you guys...”

“Oh, we fucked,” the guy said. “Hard.”

“Are you fucking serious?”

“I am fucking serious.” While he ate, Jen jumped in.

“It’s so real. You can’t even believe it. You feel everything. I had the biggest boner. It was like, so weird to have that— sticking out!”

“But, how do you know that it feels real? You’ve never had one to compare in real life?” Brett asked. “This is the thing I’ve always wondered about any VR experience that comes from outside the person’s realm of experience.”

“You ask a very good question,” the guy said. “And the thing is, we don’t know. We can’t be sure. But there is a lot of evidence to suggest the experience is absolutely, authentically parallel to the real thing. It’s all— you have to try it. You’ll see. Or, maybe *feel* would be a better word.”

“So, you guys fucked?”

They looked at each other, eyes full of mischief. “Yup.”

“Dude,” the guy said, waving his fork, a piece of egg dangling from the tines, “you will learn so much from having a vagina. I can’t recommend it enough.”

“I don’t think so,” Brett said. “That’s a little extreme. I mean, you do you and everything, but I’m a regular bro, you know?”

“You’re the one missing out.” The guy said.

“I’m pretty much okay with that,” Brett said, trying to keep his interest hidden.

“I gave her the grand tour of the pussy,” Jen said. “And showed her what to do with a clit.”

“Just wait till next time we do it here,” the guy said. “I’m going to light you up!”

“You better, bitch.”

“I will, slut.”

They both started laughing, and when they started feeding each other, Brett sensed it was time to leave.

That conversation had lit the match. Over the next few weeks, it started to become a trend around campus. More and more people were gender swapping in this new VR world. Everyone agreed it was totally realistic. The rumor spread that the college would soon offer a gender swapping class, intended to use the new software to teach students to understand gender bias, and also to walk a mile.

The urgent need grew for Brett, but the more the need grew, the more he’d fought it. It—scared him, the thought. It scared him that he just might like it a little too much. He’d started to wonder, as a baby step, if he and Jack could play some kind of action game as girls.

Now, back in the present, they had done just that. And, it had been *interesting*. Jack had felt all kinds of off balance and lack, since he'd given himself such dramatic curves. For Brett, it had mostly been a matter of getting used to being *not* tall. In real life he was a solid 5' 8"-- not short, but not tall. His avatar was not just taller, but bigger, and it felt odd to see the world from a less lofty height and to carry less bad assery in terms of his physical prowess. He felt the difference between the firm, smallish breasts he'd had and his now flat chest, just in terms of less jiggling, and he did not miss wearing a bra at all, but in fact it didn't seem all that different to him, just maybe a little more convenient to be a guy.

Heather and Jen had decided to throw a quad party, with Jack and Brett, as usual, just going along with it. A lot of people had shown up, and it was hard to even move around the cramped space. Brett wasn't really feeling it, but he couldn't go to sleep with all this noise, so he just hung out at the fringes of the party. It was when he went to get another beer from the pony keg that she came up behind him and said, "Hey, guy."

Brett turned. "Oh, hey," he said, looking down at the face of a gorgeous Asian girl, with the most amazing green eyes. "Um, Charly, right? From that study group?"

"You remember!" She said, obviously pleased, hooking her hair behind her ear.

"I never forget a pretty face," Brett said, instantly kicking himself for the corny old line. But she smiled and seemed to appreciate it. He did remember that pretty face, but also because her parents had named her Charly. It wasn't short for Charlene or anything else. Her name was Charly. "I hated it when I was little," she'd told him back then. "But now I think it's cool." Brett had found that-- fascinating.

Now, back at that party and reunited, they chitted. They chatted. There was some touching, and then some kissing. Brett asked Charly to come to his room.

She came eagerly.

Brett woke spooning Charly, who snored, but in a kind of cute way, like a kitten might snore. His arm was draped across her waist, his face buried in her rose-scented hair. Careful not to wake her, he untangled himself, and eased himself off the bed. She rolled over, hair falling across his eyes, and stretched.

“Shit,” he said. “Sorry.”

“I was awake,” she said. “Coffee?”

“I’ll put some on.”

Brett paused, then took a plunge, going over and giving her a kiss, though it seemed almost like too much after just a hookup. Jack accepted the kiss like they were a couple, but they both pulled away, disgusted. Morning breath. “Let’s try that again after some mouthwash,” Charly said.

Brett laughed. He liked a girl with a sense of humor. Pulling on his thermals and a t-shirt, he headed out to the kitchenette, and stopped dead. Jack was there, and sitting next to him was a tall, athletic girl, her hair pulled back in a ponytail, pretty but not gorgeous. You could almost call her handsome. She was him. Brett. Or, rather, his avatar.

They were eating cereal, not really talking. Seeing Brett standing there, Jack grunted. “Hey.”

“Yeah, hey.”

“Hey,” the girl grunted.

“I’m just gonna get some coffee going.”

“Make a whole pot, bro?”

“Yeah.”

He grabbed the pot and started filling it with water.

“This is Danny,” Jack said, pointing his milk dripping spoon toward the she-Brett. “*She* is a star on our basketball team.”

“A star?”

“I am,” she said in a confident, but not arrogant tone. “Power forward. All Conference.”

Power forward. “Impressive,” Brett said, looking but trying to seem like he wasn’t looking. The likeness was incredible. She could have been his sister- or, he had to keep reminding himself– his avatar’s sister. The whole thing freaked him out. What did it mean? Did Jack want to fuck him? Did he even realize? How could he *not* realize? Brett poured the water into the coffee machine, dumped the grounds and the soggy old filter. It kind of offended him that Jack would go and find a look-a-like. It seemed almost like a betrayal.

And then Charly came out of the bedroom, wearing just a t-shirt that hugged her large, firm breasts. She had her hands buried in her long hair, mussing it. “Coffee, me, bro” she said. “Coffee me, stat.”

Oh, shit, Brett realized. I just fucked Jack.

Chapter Nine

The fact that their girlfriends looked like their female alter-egos, their near kiss, it made for a lot of tension in the quad between Jack and Brett. They continued to avoid each other as much as possible. Meanwhile, Jack continued to be haunted by trace memories of Mei’s body, missing her

hips, the weight of her breasts, even the feeling of being perched on her stilettos. He'd gone online and done some research—found a few articles on what was being called slippage—but they were all from blogs and by people with unverifiable credentials. Saturday rolled around, and all morning he found himself absent-mindedly hooking his thumb under his shirt collar, meaning to adjust his imaginary bra strap. Finally, he'd had enough. *Hair of the dog that bit ya*, he said to himself as he went to his room, locked the door and logged into the system. Maybe, he reasoned, if he spent some time as Kiyō, it would free him of the obsessive thoughts about being her in his real life.

The world of Recon Junction sprang into resistance around him. He sighed with relief to feel the weight of his breasts resting in the cups of his bra, the straps on his shoulders. He brushed his hair back—he'd missed having long hair somehow—and then looked around. He was on the street outside Frenchie's. He remembered Frenchie's question, and of course their mission, but he didn't want to be a dick and finish their mission on his own. Maybe he and Brett would get over whatever was going on between them.

In the meantime, he pulled up the world map. These kinds of games always had a lot of side missions you could—what was this? Blinking someone down in the twisting streets of the Lower Vale was the icon of a house. Jack zoomed in to see Kiyō's Place under the house icon. She had an apartment? Too cool. Crossing his fingers, Jack then tried to Fast Travel to his pad, and pumped his fist when he felt himself jumping. He hated games where you had to spend hours upon hours running here and there for no reason. He always suspected the designers built that shit into their

games just to waste people's time, to make them think there was more actual content than they really offered.

He'd posted about that to reddit more than a few times, but he forgot all about it as he materialized in Kiyo's apartment. Nice, he thought. Nice! Kiyo had good taste— and a fireplace! No way. He rushed over and looked to see the remains of charred logs, ashes. It worked. Man, he always wanted a fireplace. The walls were red brick, weathered as one might expect in the old town part of the city and the room was tastefully feminine, but not overly so with abstract paintings, retro 1950s couches and lamps. It reminded him of a kind of compromised interior, where the woman picked out everything, but knew better than to kill her man's soul. I wish I lived here for real, he thought, looking over the gleaming, stainless-steel appliances in the galley style kitchen. I'd actually have some privacy!

He went into the bedroom— once more, tasteful, with a big bed, and, well, he would have to take down the black and white beefcake photo of a shirtless Chris Hemsworth hanging above her bed.

At least she has good taste in men, he thought, as he went to inspect a table with a mirror and a padded stool— as he approached a dialogue box popped up— Change Your Look? Ah. In almost every game you had the option of changing your look— in Red Dead II you did it at the barber shops in different towns. He'd tried a couple different hairstyles and beards, he thought as he sat down and decided to look over his options. I guess I won't be trying different beards, he thought as Kiyo's smooth, pretty face appeared. She is really pretty, he thought as he looked at her big eyes, little nose, and that mouth. Now, having a chance to really look at Kiyo's face, he was even more struck by how much Brett's girlfriend looked like him— her. He cycled through different hairstyles- messy buns, mohawks,

and space buns. He tried them all before going back to Kiyō's long, flowing hair. Then he switched to makeup. There were a bunch of "looks" to choose from, and Jack cycled through a few, seeing what Kiyō looked like in sultry- hot- cyberzombie- scary- basic- pretty but bland- then he saw Manual.

He clicked on Manual. Jars, tubes, brushes appeared on the tabletop. What the hell. Jack picked up a tube and opened it, finding a lipstick wand inside. Oh, shit, he thought. You can actually do makeup here like in the real world? Why would anyone want to? He went back into the system and clicked on sultry again, turning his head this way and that- the dark, dramatic eyeshadow and thick eyeliner really made Kiyō's eyes pop. He almost switched to a light, natural look called "Coed" but what did it really matter? Then, he added some earrings. Just little silver studs in his lobes. Cute. "Oh, well..." he said, thinking he would take them out, but he was interrupted. He heard the sound of his phone ringing, or rather Kiyō's. Turning off what he'd already branded the "makeover station" he activated his phone from his inventory. The caller ID read "Rebel."

Jack answered. "Hello?"

"Omigod! Kiyō," a smoke ravaged woman's voice answered. "I am in so much trouble! You have to help me!"

His choices appeared: 1) Help your friend 2) Hang up. He clicked "Help Your Friend."

"Me me in the alley behind Club Trance," Rebel said. "Hurry!"

The line went dead. Jack checked his map. The Mission Marker blacked. It was just a couple blocks away. "Cool," he said, heading toward the door, space buns and sultry makeup intact.

It was night, and the streets of Lower Vail teemed with life— locals, sketchy looking thug types, ladies of the evening on every corner, and roving bands of over-dressed uptowners, slumming. As Jack clicked along the sidewalks, he discovered the demeanor of the NPCs was different down here. There were whistles and catcalls. “Show me that pretty smile! Look at your fine self!”

He passed a group of teen-age boys gathered on a stoop. They looked him over, mentally undressing him with their eyes. “Nice tits!” One said. As he passed, one said, “Look at that fine ass!” And the boys all laughed. Jack found himself feeling embattled, and he hurried his step, worried and unsure how to deal with all this— guyness.

“You are a fine ass little bitch!” A gross, fat older man shouted as he walked by Jack.

Bitch?

I’m a fucking assassin! Jack thought. I should go back and kill that asshole. But then, he remembered how fast the police had come when Brett had gotten into it with that guy, and it just wasn’t worth it. Besides, he had a mission. I guess I’ll just have to put up with it, he decided, his whole-body tense as he hurried along, trying to ignore the guys leering at him, yelling at him.

It was actually a relief to turn off the busy street and head down the narrow, dark, trash strewn alley that led back around Club Trance. He felt safer there, ironically enough. Turning the corner, he took in the scene— a car, trunk open, what looked like a dead body on the pavement, and one of the hottest girls he’d ever seen, dressed all in leather, sitting on a Harley.

“Kiyo,” she said, lifting one long leg over the heavy metal of her bike. As Jack approached, she put her arms around him and pulled him in, kissing

him right on the mouth. Shocked, Jack pushed against her chest, but she held him in her kiss, then let him go. “You have to help me,” she said, her scratchy voice super sexy.

“I killed this guy,” Rebel said. “But that’s not the real problem. I left my purse in the club. My ID is in it. If they find it...”

Some kind of stealth mission, Jack thought, sour. He’d felt like some action, but then again, he was a stealth character. “Why don’t you go back in and get it?”

“The security cameras caught me leaving with this guy,” she said. “They might be looking for me.”

Not the best justification ever, Jack thought. But, what the hell. He needed to do something. “Where is it?”

“In the manager’s office on the second floor.”

“Of course.” It was never going to be easy.

“I kinda fucked the manager before I lured this guy out here to kill him.”

Rebel was a wild one. “I’ll get it,” Jack said, as he turned to leave, Rebel goosed him.

“Hey!” Jack squealed, jumping. “Don’t!”

“You love it, dollface.”

Dollface? Is she my girlfriend or something?

Jack headed back around to the front of the club. There was, of course, a long line. Well, Jack thought, I am a hot girl. He walked right past all the people waiting and went right up to the doorman.

“Well, hello, you fine little thing,” the man said. He was huge— 6-3 and maybe 300 pounds. Options appeared: 1. Seduce 2. Bribe 3. Get in line and wait.

Ugh. Jack clicked Seduce.

Cut scene. He watched himself put a hand on his hip, tilt his head to the side and giggle. “Hey, handsome,” he said in a softer, higher, little girl voice. “How about doing a girl a favor?”

SUCCESS.

“You take your fine ass on in there,” the doorman said, opening the door, giving Jack the once over.

The scene shifted back. Jack entered the club feeling like an idiot– a sexy little idiot– but an idiot still. Why did he agree to play a female?

He made his way into the club. Everyone was so tall! He felt like a child weaving in and out among all the grown-up sized bodies. Music thumped. The dance floor was packed. Jack felt hands grab his hips, a guy grinding into him.

“Get off me!” He said, pulling away.

“Bitch,” the guy said.

Fucking asshole. Once more, it took all Jack’s willpower not to pull out his pistol and shoot the guy, but there was security everywhere, and the chances of him getting out of here alive were slim if he initiated a gunfight. Moving quickly, lest some other bro decide to rub his junk against his ass, Jack made it across the floor and took up a position by the stage, where he could get a good view of the room. He activated his Tac Vision, and the guards all glowed red. Shit. There were more than he even realized. But, well, he’d played a few games. He knew they would move about, and once he figured out their pattern, he’d be able to find a way to slip upstairs unnoticed.

Sure enough, he noticed a lone guard on one of the stairwells would walk across the dance floor, stop at the bar, pause, then walk back. Jack would

have just enough time if he timed it right. The guard moved. Jack went into stealth mode, his character crouching. He started toward the stairs.

Shit! His mini-skirt, which had so far not been an issue, crept up his legs, and he could feel cool air against his bare ass. Still moving, he tugged against the back of his skirt, but it just kept climbing back up. Am I even wearing underwear? He wondered. He reached back and, yes, he was wearing panties. Thank God, he thought, not wanting to put on that kind of a show. As for his skirt, he would just have to deal.

Jack reached the top of the stairs. Uh oh! There was a guard halfway down the catwalk. Jack froze. The man, armed with an uzi, faced the dance floor, hadn't noticed him yet. He scurried into an open office door, crouching behind a desk. A second guard approached the first. "You seen Guns?"

"He left with some chick. Said he'd be back in a couple minutes."

The guys chuckled. "That's going to be one disappointed seniorita!"

More laughter. "I'm gonna go look for him."

"Yup."

The second guard left. Jack crept along, staying below the line of windows that ran along the office. He found another room, another door. A locker! Score. A couple guns. One was an upgrade on his pistol. Some ammo. 150 credits. He threw it all into his inventory, switching out his old one for the new one. Jack crept to the second door. It was on the opposite end of the catwalk. The door to the manager's office was down a long stretch of catwalk that would put him right in the sights of the guard hovering outside the office where he hid.

There was also a security camera right above the manager's door.

Shit.

Jack tried to hack into the club's network, planning to sabotage the camera.

Fail.

Well, hell, he thought. It looked like he would have to try and blast his way through. He would take out...

Wait. Hadn't he seen a computer back in the office. He crept back, staying low, tugging at his skirt. He activated the computer. No security, and a link to the security system right there on the desktop. Yes. One thing about these games, there were always multiple ways to complete a mission if you looked for them. Jack looped them as he'd done on the earlier mission, so anyone looking would see the same feed. He would be invisible and— yes. He found the recordings of Rebel and deleted them. Just to be sure. You never knew what might happen.

Jack got his blow gun out and slipped it between his lips. He crept back to the door, poked his head around the corner and blew. The dart struck the guard in the neck, and he crumbled to the floor.

Jack knew he had to hurry. Another wandering NPC could show at any second. Still crouching, he scurried down the hall to the manager's office. Locked. Oh, for the love of God. Looking around to make sure no one was coming, he activated his lock picking skill, praying as he waited and— click! Yes. He turned the handle, slipped into the office and shut the door.

Tacky, he thought, looking at all the frame pictures of naked girls on the walls, the velvet couch. Probably covered in jizz, he thought, standing, squirming as he pulled down his skirt. He saw a black punk purse on the floor next to the couch. Gross, but he went and picked it up. When he tried to put it in his inventory, though, he got a message: Return Rebel's Purse to Her to Complete Mission.

Oh, come on! He would have to carry it. He felt ridiculous slipping the purse over his shoulder, feeling the bag nuzzle in the space right above his hip. He didn't want to carry a purse! Kind of ridiculous, he thought, for a guy wearing a mini-skirt and stilettos. But, he couldn't help how he felt.

Time was ticking. He was about to sneak back out and make his escape, when he saw another locker. This was a boss' den. There would be some sweet loot. He'd grab what was there and get the hell out. Jack was just about to open the locker, when he heard the door open behind him. He stood, turned.

A tall, bald man in a silk suit stood in the doorway. He smiled, a gold tooth gleaming. "Well, hello little lady," he said. The threat bar above him read, LVL 20. His name was The Hammer.

Jack was dead, unless...

"I got lost," Jack said, imitating the high, little girl voice he'd heard his character use. "Um, where's the john?" John! Damn. Girls didn't call it a john. "I mean, you know the little— the ladies— the room where girls go to piss?" He pulled the purse strap up, hugging the bag protectively to his side. "I'll just be going," he said, heading toward the door. "So sorry. I love your office. So classy!"

The Hammer closed the door and stepped toward Jack, hovering over him. "You aren't going anywhere."

Chapter Ten

Jack backed away, considering his options. Once more, the game's biofeedback impressed him as he found his heart racing. At LVL 20, and Jack playing a stealth character, his chances of beating The Hammer in

direct combat were basically zero. He looked around, hoping there was another exit he'd missed. The Hammer kept advancing, smiling down at him— he was smiling like a wolf about to eat a little lamb.

“What are you doing in my office?” He said, steadily advancing.

Jack circled behind the desk, putting it between him and The Hammer. So, what if I fight him and die? I'll just respawn anyway, though it will probably hurt like hell. Plus, he'd probably lose all progress on his mission. Jack hated restarting missions. The Hammer lunged across the desk. Jack took a chance, racing toward the door.

The Hammer was too fast, and he cut him off, backing Jack once more toward the desk. The Hammer flashed red; he was about to attack.

Options: 1. Seduce and Assassinate 2. Fight.

Oh, shit. Hell. Jack hadn't been expecting options. He clicked on Seduce and Assassinate, bracing himself for another humiliating cut scene. It isn't me, anyway, he told himself, and the XPs for killing a LVL 20 would be tremendous.

Cut scene. Kiyo once more planted her hand on her hip. She plucked at a strand of hair falling along the side of her cheek. “Maybe we can have a little fun?” She said in that seductive, little girl voice. “I'm guessing there's a reason they call you The Hammer.”

Disgusting, Jack thought, getting nervous. They wouldn't? I mean, there were games where you had sex, but it was usually fade to black. Surely, he wouldn't feel what she felt?

FAIL.

What? I don't fail.

“Come on over to the couch,” The Hammer said. It was clear from his tone and the look in his eyes he wanted more than a kiss.

No... no... no.... Jack was trapped in a cut scene. He had no choice but to watch and experience what he'd started. He watched as Kiyoko went over and sat on the couch. Oh, come on. The Hammer sidled up next to him, and he felt his breasts pressing up against the Hammer's body, The Hammer's lips covering his own, a hand on his bare thigh. Fuck off, Jack said, feeling all of it. Gross

Then, Kiyoko pulled out her knife and raised it toward The Hammer's throat. I thought it said my seduction failed? Jack thought, happy to see he was about to get the kill after all...

"Bitch!" The Hammer said, slapping the knife from Jack's hands. He flashed red, punched Jack hard, and the screen faded to black.

The screen stayed black for a minute, and then a new cut scene materializes. Kiyoko was chained to a wall in what looked like a dingy basement, complete with flickering lights. Her gear had all been stripped. She was wearing only her bra and panties. Jack shivered. She was cold, and he was cold. He yanked on the chains. Nothing.

Escape the Basement, the screen read. Recover your gear and complete the mission.

Great, Jack thought. Just great. He'd done a few escape the room missions in his time. They were always puzzles. Move this here, move that there... get the key... Jack yanked on his chains once more, feeling the cold steel of the cuffs on his wrists. They rattled but were solidly anchored to the wall. No breaking them, at least not for him. Like so much in the game, the manacles were rero, looking like something from the Middle Ages, all iron and with bulky padlocks. Looking around, Jack saw a key on the other side of the room, hanging from a hook. There was also a broom that looked like if he could knock it over, he'd be able to reach it with his

foot and pull it over to him. But, how to knock it over? Jack looked. Scanned the room. He saw the red outline of a guard outside the door, so he would have to deal with that when he escaped. Hopefully, he could get a quick assassination.

He looked around— there had to be something he could move, but there was nothing within reach. Nothing. He couldn't see a way to knock over that stupid broom.

With no better ideas, he strained against the chains some more, planting a foot on the wall and gaining some leverage. Not even a tiny movement from where the chain was anchored to the wall. He rattled the chains, pointlessly, looked around the room again, tried to stretch his leg out and kick the broom, even though he could plainly see it was too far.

So annoying.

What am I missing? What am I missing? What can I move?

Maybe I just need more leverage, he decided, now planting both feet on the wall, wrapping one of the chains around his arm and... "aahhhhhhhhh!" He screamed, straining every muscle to try and tear those iron chains from the brick and concrete...

"Keep it down!" The NPC guard yelled from outside the door.

"Shut up!" Jack yelled out of frustration, knowing how pointless it was to yell at an NPC that had no feelings anyway. It just made him feel better to—

Hold on. Jack smiled. Of course. The guard was the thing he could move. Now, what was the best way to do that? He thought. He needed to lure the guard into the room. What was the best way? Well, Kiyo did have a very sexy voice.

"Hello?" He called in that little girl version, trying to sound needy, vulnerable. "Hi?"

Nothing.

“I’m so thirsty,” Jack called out, trying to sound like one of his ex-girlfriends when she’d wanted to sweet talk him into something. “Can you bring me some water? Pretty please?”

“This better not be some kind of trick,” the man grumbled. Jack heard the sound of chair legs scraping across the floor, but when he scanned, he saw the man walking away.

“No!” Jack called, letting his voice rise even higher. ‘Please! I’m dying of thirst!’ He knew he was laying it on a little thick, but it was a game and the AI a lot of times didn’t respond to it subtly.

“Don’t get your panties in a wad!” The man called. “I’m getting you some water!”

Jack smiled. It was working! He totally had that guy wrapped around his little finger.

The guard came back, key rattling in the door, which swung open. He had a bottle of water in his hand and an energy bar. For some reason, Jack had expected someone fat and bald, like a mall cop, but this guy looked like a male model: Tall, broad shouldered with angular features and dark brown eyes...

Not sure if the guy being super-hot made it easier or harder to keep doing what he was doing, Jack smiled and put a hand on his hip as he’d seen Kiyō do in the cut scenes. “Oh. my God! Thank you so much,” he said, still in that flirty voice. He wondered if there would be options, or if he’d just have to keep improvising.

The guard let his eyes wander up and down Jack’s body, giving him creepy chills. He hated having men look him over like that, and now in just his bra and panties, he suddenly felt very vulnerable and very scared. He

wanted to tell the guy to fucking stop drooling, but he couldn't. He needed that bottle to get out of here. So, he smiled and tilted his head to the side.

The man's eyes grew hard. "Turn around," he said in a deep, demanding voice of command that sent a new kind of thrill through Jack's body.

Jack turned around.

"Put your hands on the wall."

Jack put his hands on the wall. He was now facing away from the man, hands pressed against the wall, ass out. He felt his nipples hardening, felt himself getting wet. What the fuck?

"Legs apart."

Jack hesitated. "Now!" The man yelled.

Jack obeyed, getting even more turned on. The scene froze.

Options: 1) Tell him to fuck off 2) Continue to obey

The obvious answer, based on where this scene seemed to be headed, was 1) Fuck off. Had he been thinking clearly, Jack would certainly have chosen that option. But he was getting turned on, his real-life mind swinging in endorphins, and so he bit his lip and chose, "Continue to Obey," thinking I can't believe I am doing this.

Footsteps as the guard moved closer. Jack looked back over his shoulder, hair falling across his eyes.

"Don't fucking look at me!" The man bellowed.

Jack's head snapped back around, and he smiled, putting his forehead against the cold brick. What's he going to do to me? Jack wondered.

What's about to happen? The man moved in close, and he put a hand on

Jack's shoulder, leaning in he whispered, "you're a dirty girl," his breath hot against Jack's neck.

Oh! The whispered words sent a hot flash of need through Jack, made him arch his back, push his ass out.

The man slipped his hand between Jack's thighs, high up near his crotch, and he squeezed the soft flesh of Jack's inner thigh. Jack moaned; he couldn't help himself. He was terrified at where that hand was going, what that man meant to do, but he was also completely and totally under that man's power, and he— liked it?

The hand crept up Jack's thigh, caressing, squeezing, getting closer and closer to what he still thought of as his junk, but what was now a soft pair of lips that were getting wetter and wetter...

A hand snaked around and cupped Jack's breast over his bra, squeezing and lifting. Holy shit, Jack thought as someone else grabbed his tit for the first time. It felt so fucking good and his whole body was lighting up, tingling and burning and so much pleasure as that hand crept up his thigh and now it was pressing against his — lady parts— and that other hand was pushing itself under his bra, and the man whispered, "I'm going to fuck—"

Nope! Too much! Jack recoiled in terror at the thought of going through with it, of following this pleasure to the end of that road which he had no doubt would include all kinds of penetration... which the notion of being penetrated in any way freaked him out...

Spinning, he wrapped the chains of his manacles around the man's neck, locking his thighs around the midsection and pulling hard on those chains...

The man grunted as the thick iron links bit into his neck and cut off his air supply. He grabbed at the chain, trying to pull it free, to suck some air into his panicking lungs. It was a classic mistake, Jack thought, watching the

man's eyes bulge, his skin turn blue. Going for the chains. He probably could have knocked me out if he'd gone after me, but instead he went for the chains. Jack pulled harder, squeezed his thighs against the man's ribcage. The guard was making little grunting sounds, his eyes filling with resignation, regret, as he slowly sank to his knees, then collapsed, dead. Jack found himself laying on top of the man, staring right into those dead eyes. They were still, he noticed, so pretty.

It was a strange thought, curious, but Jack was still not in position to think with the logical side of his brain. He was lit, horny, his head swimming with so much alien female pleasure from this soft little body, plus a whole new world of he didn't even know what getting so horny when that guy had taken charge... struggling to focus and tune out his body's needs— he felt like he had some kind of opening growing in him that needed to be filled, demanded even...

He grabbed the keys off the guard's belt and found one for his manacles. Click, and the chains fell away. Now, Jack needed to find his gear, get out and finish the mission. That, at least, would be one thing he would finish. Grabbing the guard's gun, keeping the ring of keys, Jack crept out of the basement cell. He still wore only a bra and panties, but he didn't feel cold anymore. Now, where to find my stuff? He scanned. There were two guards around the corner.

If either one of them is cute, Jack joked to himself, really having a hard time turning out his body's hunger, I'm going to jump his bones. He snuck up on them, leapt onto the first, wrapping his legs around the man's neck and choking him with his thighs while risking a shot with the pistol, shooting the second NPC right in the face, blood and bone splattering in one of those exaggerated video game kills. The guards out, Jack checked the

locker. Bingo. His gear, Rebel's purse. Jack re-equipped all his gear. Checking Rebel's purse, he found a pack of Virginia Slims. He needed a smoke so bad. He lit one up, took a long drag, and blew the smoke into the air as he stepped over the bodies of his victims.

"Be good," he said to the dead men. "Babe."

Jack made his escape with no further incident, finding his way back to the street and down the alley, where Rebel still waited, like a good NPC. Jack had lit up another cigarette and walked up to Rebel with the smoke dangling from his lips. He slipped the purse from his shoulder and held it out to her.

"Doll," Rebel said. "I knew I could count on you." She kissed him again, as she'd done earlier. Jack accepted the kiss— it was good— but he'd cooled down a lot. Still, he and Rebel stared into each other's eyes, and Rebel reached out and brushed Jack's hair away from his face. "What say we go back to my place and celebrate?"

Options.

Jack knew where going back to her place would lead. He ached with the desire to go with her, to get a sense of what it was like to do it with a girl as a girl. He watched a lot of girl-on-girl porn, and it would almost be a fantasy come true. But he remembered how he'd felt, his body had felt, and he shook his head. No. He didn't have the courage. He wasn't ready.

"Maybe another time," he said, walking away, halfway hoping Rebel would shout at him, tell him what to do, order him to come back to her place. But she didn't, damn it. She just let him walk off into the crowded, noisy streets of Recon Junction, another face lost in the crowd.

He felt someone grab him, spin him around, and Rebel planted a kiss on his lips, dipping him backward. Jack lifted his leg and rubbed it along her

thigh, kissing her back, surrendering. She took him back to her place, and they tore off each other's clothes, throwing themselves onto Rebel's bed, a tangle of silk sheets and long, smooth limbs... kisses on his breasts and between his legs, touching and kissing and getting intertwined lost in each other's bodies....

A frazzled Jack wandered back to Kiyō's apartment— his apartment. He turned on the gas fireplace and put on an old jazz record: Smooth jazz, Chet Baker singing “there is no greater love, in all the world it's true, than what I feel for you...”

Jack had been through a lot, and as he sat, curled up on the couch, sipping a glass of Chablis and staring into the flickering flames, he twisted his hair, replaying it all in his mind, the hand on his thigh, the fondling of his breast... the look in the man's eyes as he died. That brief moment when the man had touched Jack's vulva. The fear, and yet... the sweet pleasure of his legs sliding along Rebel's, a new, aching need that still haunted him.

He looked at *it*, sitting there on the coffee table, so totally foreign. Jack had found it in Kiyō's bottom drawer: A dildo. Not one of those realistic ones, but sleek and white, with a slight bend. It was easier for Jack to even look at as it looked like an appliance and not a sex toy.

He was curious. He was. What did it feel like— for girls?

He had to know.

He picked up the dildo and turned it on, first rubbing it against his crotch over his panties. He squirmed. “Oh!” Okay, that was... *Wow*.

The sensation lit him up. He wanted it inside him. Wanted to know what it felt like for a woman. But, he was afraid, terrified of how it might change him.

Just do it, he said to himself. Be a man and fucking do it.

He pushed his panties down his long, smooth legs and spread.

The dildo buzzed. Chet Baker sang:

You're the sweetest thing

I have ever known,

And to think that

You are mine alone.

Chapter 11

“Fuck me!” Brett yelled as the defensive back leapt in front of his pass and picked him off for the third time.

“Game over!” Charly sang as her avatar spiked the ball and started dancing. “In your face!”

“Damn.” Brett was not happy. Charly was right. With her team leading by 3 points and less than a minute on the clock, she would be able to end the game just by taking a knee. Despite his outward show of good sportsmanship, Brett was a little pissed at himself. He’d assumed Charly would be a pushover, and she’d caught him off guard. She was really good.

As for Charly, she loved beating guys at “guy” games whether it was Supreme Fighting or Football. They always seemed to think she was this cute little asian girl who would be an easy out, so it made it extra fun when she kicked their asses. Plus, she loved Joe Mulden football, especially now that it was fully immersive- the smell of the turf mingling with the smell of sweat. The crowd roaring so loud she could feel the vibrations in her body. And, most of all, being TALL and physically imposing, smashing into guys and knocking them to the ground.

The game even simulated the post-game handshake sequences, so Charly found and reached out her hand...

“Good game,” Brett said, reaching out to shake...

“Psyche!” Charly said, yanking her hand away. “I kicked your ayus, I kicked your ayus!”

“Okay. Okay.”

“Oh, don’t pout!” Charly was really rubbing it in. She couldn’t help it. Her mother had told her it was always better to let a boy win– especially if she was really interested in him, but fuck that. Charly liked to win. “Let’s go again.”

“Nah,” Brett said. “Gotta log out. Homework.”

“Scaredy cat!” But Brett’s character pixelated and vanished. Charly followed.

They were in Brett’s room laying on his bed, and they both unplugged. A big win like that always made Charly horny, and she immediately climbed onto Brett and kissed him. He kissed her back, but it was a reluctant kiss. She could tell he was off, embarrassed. She kinda liked guys like that sometimes. She kissed him again, and this time, Brett broke it off. “Yeah, I really need to study,” he said.

Charly smiled. “How bad?” She reached down and grabbed his junk, squeezing.

Brett felt himself getting hard in her hand. Fuck. Maybe just a quickie. He grabbed Charly’s wrist and rolled the two of them over, straddling her as she lay on her back, staring up at him, her eyes glassy and wet with desire. Brett reached down and unbuttoned her shorts, then shoved a hand under her t-shirt and squeezed her breast while she shimmied out of her Daisy Dukes.

“I want to ride you cowgirl style,” Charly said, running her fingers along his arm, squeezing his bicep. “Have you ever?”

“No,” Brett admitted. He’d been planning to just do a straight fuck.

“Let’s do it,” Charly said. “You’ll love it.”

The argument didn’t last long, and Brett found himself on his back, staring up at Charly. She was bouncing on him, her hands buried in her

hair, breasts bouncing as she made small, little noises that grew louder and louder... unh.. Unh... UNH! UNH! Yes! Yes!”

Brett grabbed her soft hips and pulled her down, thrusting up, exploding into her.

Charly rolled off, sighing, and whispered, “Oh, god yes.”

Brett, skin sheened with sweat, pulled the sheet up to his waist. “Hell,” he said.

“Yeah,” Charly finished.

Charly left. She had her own studying to do. Brett’s mind turned to Essentiulus and Recon Junction. He was thinking about Kiyō. He hadn’t logged into the game since the last time he and Jack had been in there. He looked at his laptop. His notebooks. He really needed to study. But, well, what were video games other than tools of procrastination? He figured he would just pop into the game, maybe use his credits to buy some better gear. Maybe run a solo mish. The world building was really good, and he felt like he could really benefit from a good fight.

Brett felt himself dropping back into his avatar’s body, immediately feeling a sense of displacement— the shape, her height not right, and yet feeling slightly familiar. He was outside Frenchie’s tailor shop and— you little shit! He thought seeing that Jack was online. *He’s probably ten levels ahead of me now.* The map showed Jack’s location— a little house shaped icon down in Lower Vail.

Brett activated his intercom function. “Dude!”

Jack, eyes rolled back in his head, had worked the dildo deep into the folds of his new body. Toes curled, hair all in his face, he squeezed the

vibrating phallus, lifted it so it teased his clit... Ohmygod... ohmygod... the tension in his body was building, like a ball of fire, and he needed release... but it wasn't happening, that insane pressure just lingering, holding, refusing to explode.... ohmygod come on comeon... he pulled and pushed and ...

"Dude!" He heard Brett shout in his female voice.

Jack screamed and yanked the dildo out of him, throwing it across the room, his whole-body clenching in frustration. Fuck! Jack thought, realizing he had forgotten to go incognito. How much had Brett heard.

Brett had heard the scream, though he'd no idea what Jack had been up to. "Shit. You okay?"

Jack, panting, pulled his hair out of his eyes, heart racing, his whole body lit up. He tried to steady his voice. "Yeah, yeah. You just surprised me." Jack's throbbing nipples were so hard he felt like he could cut glass with them. "Shit."

Brett screwed up his face. Something about Jack seemed very off. "What're you doing?"

"Just, ah, hanging out," Jack said, getting up, trying to figure out how to calm himself. He went to the refrigerator and opened the door, feeling the cold air wash against his bare skin.

"Well, since we're both here, wanna finish that mission? I'm outside Frenchie's."

"I don't know, man," Jack said. "This might not be the best time."

"Come on, bro," Brett said. "Don't leave me hanging."

Hell. Jack had no idea what kind of psychosis he might suffer if he jumped back into his own body feeling like *this*. Maybe some regular

gaming would help him decompress? “Yeah, you know, give me a few minutes. I’ll fast travel over there.”

“Fast travel?”

“Yeah. I figured it out. I’ll show you.”

“Cool.”

Jack turned off the intercom. He thought to put the dildo away, feeling ashamed for some reason to leave it out in the open, but one glance in that direction and he’d felt that clenching inside, and his body’s need. Nope. Don’t even look at it, he decided. He really did need to do something to get his mind off what he was feeling.

And what was he feeling other than horny? He wasn’t sure, but he did know one thing he didn’t know before: if that was how it felt for girls, it was pretty amazing. Better than fucking as a guy? He wasn’t sure. But he did have a few ideas how to blow his girlfriend’s mind back in the real world. That was for sure.

He re-equipped all his gear, tossed his hair and headed out.

Brett leaned against the wall outside Frenchie’s, arms crossed, feeling once more like a big, powerful badass. Watching NPCs walk by, he resisted the urge to just randomly cold cock one. He really needed to kick the hell out of someone.

He saw Jack coming down the sidewalk in his little mini-skirt and high-heeled boots, his hair tossed by the wind. She is fine as fuck, Brett thought. It helped him to think of Kiyoko as a girl and not his buddy Jack. Brett noticed Jack’s shiny earrings— didn’t remember that— and was Jack wearing makeup now? Was that new? Whatever. She looked prettier than ever.

She’s just a character in a game, Brett thought. Of course, I’m going to check her out. It’s not weird.

“Bro!” Jack said, offering Brett a fist bump.

“Dude.”

“So, what now?” Jack said. “The clues didn’t really give us a destination.”

“Let’s check the map.”

Most of the games showed you where to go next. “The mission’s deactivated,” Brett said.

“Oh, shit.” Jack realized that when he’d taken on the mission for Rebel, he’d deactivated the Essentiulus storyline. He reactivated the mission and two things happened. Frenchie’s lit up as their destination, and the same three options they’d seen earlier reappeared:

Options: **1) Tell Frenchie about the secret lab 2) Ask Frenchie why he wants to know? 3) Tell him it’s none of his business.**

“I guess we have to make a decision,” Jack said.

“Let’s just tell him. It’ll point us somewhere.”

“But can we trust him?”

“Who cares? I just want to get to some action.”

“Your call then.”

Brett pulled open the door to Frenchie’s and waited.

“Are you serious?” Jack said.

“Just being a gentleman, little lady.”

“Shut up,” Jack said, walking into the tailor shop with a sassy toss of his hair. “Idiot.”

But they both felt it: a slight shifting in their relationship.

A cut scene as they told Frenchie. He rubbed his chin. “This is serious,” he said.

“So, who do we destroy?” Brett asked.

“We do not know the identity of the organization that has made this switch, nor even their motives,” Frenchie said.

Brett groaned.

“Perhaps there is a way to find out.”

“Yes. Who do we smash?”

“In time, there will be smashing. I suggest another course of action presage the smashing portion of the adventure. Tonight, there is a charity fundraiser. I can arrange an invitation for one of you. However, you must look the part. Everyone there will be glamorous. This is a gathering of the beautiful people.”

Brett looked down at Jack and smiled. “Why me?” Jack said.

“You’re hotter— and you’re a stealth character.”

“We were both supposed to be hot,” Jack said.

Options: 1) Send Brett 2) Send Kiyō

“Kiyō? You know this is your jam.”

“Fine,” Jack huffed. They both chose Kiyō.

“Excellent choice. Now, you will need a gown. You cannot go to the event wearing a skirt that reads “Bitch” across the front,” Frenchie said with a disdainful sniff.

“A little black dress,” Brett said, loving it.

Jack crossed his arms. “Well, nothing too sexy.”

“You must let my friend Holliwell pick out your dress,” Frenchie said.

“She has exquisite taste.” He handed Jack a card. As soon as Jack accepted the card, a new location appeared on his map. “Now, scoot. You have little time.”

“Fine. Let’s go,” Jack said, heading toward the door.

“I think this game hates you,” Brett said as they made their way along the sidewalks.

“In the worst way,” Jack grouched. “I fucking hate formal events. Why would anyone think this is fun?”

“Sneaking into a party uninvited, dressed to kill?” A lot of women probably like that kind of thing. I read they wanted to maximize their audience.”

“Then maybe they shouldn’t have characters wear things like a skirt that says *Bitch* on it.”

A lot of tall buildings crowded together in this part of Recon Junction, crowding out the light, so even though it was late afternoon, the street lamps were already starting to come on, the streets growing murky with shadows.

“I saw a girl walking across campus that read, “Bitch” right across the chest. I think it’s a thing— reclaiming the word.”

“Women.” They made their way to the shop. It was a cool, sophisticated, upscale boutique— pastels, but all angles, like something from the 22nd Century when robots had taken over the fashion industry.

Holliwell approached— a faded flower, Jack could see she’d once been gorgeous, but time had taken its toll. She moved with purpose, and he noticed with surprise she rated as a LVL 29 NPC. “My dear,” Holliwell said, approaching and giving Jack air kisses. “You must be Kiyō.”

What about me? Brett thought, feeling ignored. This was Jack’s deal, he realized, slightly annoyed, but also kind of glad Jack was the girly one.

Options: **1) The full salon experience 2) Just get your wardrobe.**

“Oh, you have to go for the full experience,” Brett said, though he had no idea what that was.

“No,” Jack said, choosing Just Get Your Wardrobe. He wanted some action and didn’t feel like being sucked into some girly makeover montage.

“Spoilsport.”

There was a flash, like a jump cut, and there stood Jack in a little spaghetti string black dress, his hair up, chandelier earrings dangling at his cheeks. He was showing all kinds of cleavage, the dress straining to contain his generous bust. His face had been done in dramatic, evening colors— dark, silver eyeshadow and glossy red lips.

“There!” Holiwell said, as if they’d done the whole makeover scene. “Oh! You will be the envy of all the other girls!”

“And all the guys will be checking you out,” Brett said, unable to pull his eyes from the swell of Jack’s cleavage.

“God.”

“Oh, he is so right!” Holliwell said. “You are divine!”

“Divine is one word for it,” Brett said, still staring.

“Just... fuck off!” Jack said, turning so Brett couldn’t see his tits. Brett was fine with that. Jack looked good coming or going. “Let’s go!”

“Kiyo?” Holliwell said.

“Yeah?”

“Don’t forget your purse.”

Jack glared at the little clutch purse. What was it with this game and trying to get him to carry a purse all the time? It had been bad enough before, but he hated the idea of Brett seeing him with one. “I don’t need it,” he said, waving Holliwell away.

“But, if your outfit is complete, you get +5 to all abilities and +10 charisma. Are you sure?” Holliwell said, still holding the purse toward Jack.

“Fine,” he said, grabbing the purse and slipping it over his arm.

“You look adorable,” Brett said, chuckling.

“When this is over,” Jack said, “you’re putting on a dress!”

As soon as they stepped out of Holliwell’s, they were greeted by a man in a black suit, standing in front of a black, Mercedes Limo. He was holding a sign, like some guy at an airport. The sign read, “Kiyo.”

“You Kiyo?” He said in a mock, Brooklyn accent. “Frenchie sent me.”

“And your fantasy night continues!” Brett said.

“It beats walking.”

The driver opened the door for Jack, took his arm and helped him slip into the passenger seat, which was much more of a challenge in his little dress, his stilettos. “You coming?” Jack asked, seeing Brett just standing there, watching him. “Or are you just going to perv on me all night?”

“There’s only one invitation,” Brett said. “I figure I’ll hoof it and find a place outside. We can be on intercom in case you get in trouble and need me to save you. Who knows if me showing up with you triggers some kind of problem.”

“That is actually some pretty good thinking.”

“I know,” Brett said, and then he couldn’t resist, “doll face.”

“Idiot.”

The driver closed the door. Jack rolled down the window. “Don’t ever call me *doll face* again.”

“Okay, honey buns.”

“At some point,” Jack yelled as the car pulled away from the curb, “you’re going to be the one in a dress!”

“I don’t have the body for it!” Brett yelled.

The NPCs all around them laughed.

“Hey!” Brett said in mock outrage.

As if he'd ever put on a dress, in game or otherwise.

He watched the limo merge into traffic, vanish into the hustle and bustle of the big city. It was pretty funny seeing Jack have to get all sexy. But, Brett couldn't help but thinking, why was it he thought that on some level, maybe Jack kind of wanted to do it? He sure hadn't put up much of a fight, and one thing about these games was that there was always more than one way to beat a mission.

Jack had to know that.

Chapter 12

The large, passenger cabin in the limousine included a bar, and Jack, careful of his newly long, crimson nails, took the stopper from one of the crystal decanters and immediately sat back as the dark, earthy smell of bourbon assailed his senses. It smelled really strong, but he poured himself a drink, the brown liquor swirling in the rocks glass. He took a sip. Wow! It was strong.

As he set the glass down on the little corner table, he admired the way his diamond bracelet sparkled on his slender wrist. It had come with the outfit, along with how pretty his nails looked. He decided to pose his hand for a picture, placing his hand on the table, fingers outstretched, the glass and his bracelet sparkling. Screen Capture, and the image appeared in his "Photos" folder. Using his phone, he began to frame more pictures, smiling up into the camera, *snap*, a sultry side eye, *snap*. He slipped one of the spaghetti straps off a round shoulder and pretended to look surprised, Snap.

“God Damn I’m hot as hell,” he whispered looking at the photos. Kiyo had a perfect face, but now with smokey eyes and glossy red lipstick, thick, mascaraed lashes, every perfect thing about her was +10. Jack tried out different smiles, tilted his head to the side, slit his eyes in a ‘come on, big boy” seductive look. He felt himself getting a phantom boner, turning himself on, his nipples getting rock hard. This was a new sensation– a double turn-on, as he experienced both the decidedly female biofeedback of his avatar while also the ghost memory of his actual body. The end result was he found himself both craving to fuck and be fucked at the same time.

“Okay,” he said, fanning himself with his little hand. *Better calm down before I show up at the benefit with sopping wet panties.*

He turned his attention to research, scanning the tabloids for articles on his targets, Tommy Grant and Rene Brand. They had first appeared in public as a couple only a few weeks ago, and the gossip pages had been full of breathy articles about their whirlwind romance. Grant came across as a bit of a stock character– a *work hard play hard* CEBro who’d taken his father’s sleepy software company, Essentilus, and turned it into a world dominating behemoth. Rene Brand was also kind of stock. Small town girl who’d made it big in Hollywood, but in more than one article she’d complained about people not taking her acting seriously because they thought she was just another pretty face.

Hmmm. Could that be part of her motive in the body swap? Frenchie had hinted at some dark, secret organization, and Jack looked through the Rene Brand materials for anything that might suggest a connection to such a group, but–

“Here we are,” the driver said as he pulled to the curb.

“Oh, boy,” Jack thought, pulling his dress strap back up, smoothing his skirt. The fundraiser was not a subtle affair, at least on the outside. There was a red carpet, roped off, crowded on either side by fans and photographers. In another one of those anachronistic moments, the photographers, men and women, all wore fedoras with press cards stuffed into the brims, and they had large, cartoon cameras with old fashioned flashbulbs.

The driver came around and opened the limo door. Jack felt himself flush with anxiety. As a boy, he'd gotten off more than a few times to a picture of Lindsay Lohan getting awkwardly out of a limo, giving everyone a look at her panties. He gave the driver his arm and, keeping his legs locked together, let the man practically lift him from the car and settle him onto his heels. Flash bulbs popped. Jack let his purse dangle from his wrist, tossed his hair, plastered a smile on his face and made his walk down the catwalk. He was practically blinded by all the flashes, only capturing glimpses of smiling, awestruck faces. He kept his head up, despite the fact he wanted to look down, both to see where his feet were going and to shield his eyes from the flashing lights, but it wouldn't do. He saw a reporter ahead, stationed at the end of the red carpet and near the doors, and he focused on her, trusting he wouldn't veer off the path and make a fool of himself.

Even in the midst of his stress and suffering, though, Jack felt a full body blush. He was the center of attention, and heard people murmuring—pretty... gorgeous... who is she? He was pretty, and pretty was power. He decided to put a little extra sway in his step and then, giggling to himself at the idea, he lifted one foot and reached back to adjust one of his pumps, throwing a “oops! Silly me” Smile.

The crowd actually applauded, and Jack beamed with pride as he made his way to the TV reporter and her cameraman. “We’re here now with the heiress Kiyo Fawn. Who are you wearing tonight? You look gorgeous!”

“Who—” Jack started to say, but then he realized what she was asking and smiled, brushing a strand of hair away from his cheek. “I’m wearing Halliwell,” he said. “And thanks so much.”

I’m on TV! Jack thought, looking right at the camera and waving.

There was a sudden noise of excitement from the crowd, and Jack turned to see another limo had pulled up. A tall, leggy blonde emerged, somehow sliding and standing with total grace. All eyes, including the reporter’s, went to her, and Jack thought *Bitch!* As she stole all the attention, and he suddenly found himself ignored, one burly security man opening the door for him while another guided Jack into the ballroom.

Humph. He glanced back over his shoulder, annoyed his moment had been so brief. *Of course*, he thought, *the blonde gets all the attention!*

Inside, Jack refocused on the mission at hand. He wanted to get Rene Brand, who he believed to be Tommy, alone. Making his way into the ballroom, where all the beautiful people, and they were all beautiful, had gathered in small circles, chatting, seeing and being seen. He spotted Rene and Tommy toward the front, surrounded by people, Rene clinging to Tommy’s arm, smiling vacantly while he held court.

“What’s your status, honey buns?” Bretts voice crackled over the intercom.

“I have eyes on the target,” Jack said, ignoring the taunt. “I’m waiting for an opportunity to get her alone.”

“Roger that.”

Jack found a spot off near one of the exits. It was easier to be a little incognito than he'd expected in this room full of beautiful women, but even still he was conscious of the roving eyes of men settling on him and drinking him in. He pretended not to notice, fishing a little vanity mirror out of his purse as if he were checking his makeup, but keeping his eyes on Rene. Jack had never felt so exposed, so vulnerable. As a man he would've been wearing a suit that covered everything up to his neck, but in his little dress he was showing a lot of skin— his legs, breasts, shoulders and arms were all bare, and he was on display for the pleasure of the men. Also, he was *cold*.

He wished he could put on a suit.

He met a guy's eyes. The guy smiled.

Oh, shit, Jack thought. He looked away, but when he glanced back, he saw the man making his way across the room, right for him. *Not now! Is he coming over to hit on me?* Jack's heart started to race, and he looked over just in time to see Rene whisper something to Tommy, then slip her arm free and start toward a side door.

Jack turned to follow and felt a hand wrap around his soft little forearm.

"Helllooo," the guy purred.

"I have to go," Jack said, smiling. "Little girl's room?"

"You want company?"

Jack shook his head no. "Maybe later?"

"Yeah. I'll find you," the guy said, letting go of Jack's arm.

"And so, the game begins!" Brett laughed.

"As if," Jack said. He didn't want to be too obvious as he stalked Rene, so he moved slowly toward the side door, not wanting to look like he was following Rene. Once he'd let a little time pass, he pushed through the side

door just in time to see Rene entering the ladies' room. Two women came out as Jack made his way down the hall, and they checked out Jack's outfit, offering him smiles of approval. Jack smiled back, pleased he'd passed the test with these beautiful women.

When he entered the ladies' room, he panicked for a second. It was empty! But then he saw Rene's legs in the stall, and he went to the mirror and pretended to fuss with his hair, though it was perfect. Once more, he was struck by just how gorgeous he was.

He heard the toilet flush. The door swung open, and Rene emerged, joining him at the mirror, washing her hands. There was a look in her eyes—pain, humiliation. Jack was sure she was Tommy, feeling ashamed that he'd had to sit to pee. He broke the silence, "You're so pretty,"

"What?" Oh, yeah. Okay. Thanks," she said, and her inflections were the flat, emotionless tones of a man.

"I'm here to help," Jack burst out. "I know you're really Tommy Grant."

The woman flinched. She plastered a smile on her face. "What a strange thing to say," she said, but the words sounded rehearsed. She started to step around Jack, heading toward the door, and now she looked afraid.

"I saw the film," Jack said, cutting her off, getting between her and the door. "I know the truth."

"That?" Rene said. "It was an old movie I made years ago. You are mistaken." Once more, she tried to get around Jack, and Jack once more blocked her.

"I— I'll scream," Rene said.

"Tommy," Jack said. "I can help you. I can help you get your body back, but this is your one chance. Walk out that door, and you have no hope. Come with me, and you will get out of this."

Rene paused, calculating. "Who are you?"

"I'm working with Frenchie," Jack said, deciding to take a chance.

"Frenchie? He knows?"

"Yes. We're running out of time. You must decide now."

"Let's go," Tommy said. "Get me the hell out of here."

"Yahtzee!" Brett said.

"Come on!" Jack said, leading the way, Tommy following close behind.

"Navigator?"

Brett had pulled up the mission map and saw Jack's location on a schematic of the hotel. End of the hall. Take a right. There's a door. I'm heading that way right now."

Jack and Tommy were moving away from the ballroom, and there were no people. When he came to the turn, he put his back flat against the wall, then peered around the corner. No one. This was too easy, and it made him nervous. Had they hit on the right plan, or was this a set up.

Tommy continued to follow. Jack was grateful he wasn't one of those talky NPCs who kept dumping backstory while you tried to focus on a quest.

The two of them crept down the hall, Jack listening, looking, sure a guard would pop up any minute. Or he'd trip some kind of alarm. Or— something would happen. He got to the exit. A sign read Emergency Only. Alarm will sound.

"What now?" Tommy asked.

"I can defuse it."

"Come on. There's a security guard down at the end of the alley looking at me suspiciously."

Jack tried "disarm trap."

FAIL.

“Shit.”

Outside, Brett was leaning against the wall, trying to look like some casual pedestrian just hanging out, wishing he'd opted to equip some everyday street clothes. He didn't know how smart the game's AI was, but a tall, muscular woman in battle armor probably looked out of place pretty much anywhere.

A light appeared above the guard, blinking green and red. “Hey, you,” he said, starting down the alley toward Brett.

“Shit,” Brett said. “Hold on. We have company.”

“Damn it,” Jack whispered, trying to disarm the fire alarm a second time.

FAIL.

“What is it?”

“Guard outside. My partner is going to try and get rid of him.”

“Hurry.”

Just then, they heard a distant voice. “She said she was just going to the ladies' room.”

“Rene!” Tommy gasped. “She must be getting nervous. I've been gone so long.”

“I'll check on her for you,” a woman answered.

“We're running out of time,” Jack said over the intercom.

“Yup,” Brett answered.

The guard was now close. “Move on,” he said. “No loitering.”

“Sure,” Brett said, walking back in the direction the guard had come from— the main street in front of the ballroom. “I'm going to lead him away,” Brett said over the intercom. “As soon as the coast is clear, sneak out.”

“That could be a problem,” Jack said. “There's an alarm on the door.”

Back down the hall, they heard a door creak open. Then, a moment later: “There’s no one in there.”

“Shit,” Rene said. “Alert all security. Find her! Now!”

Jack glanced back and now he spotted it— a security camera at the other end of the hall, pointing right at him.

Outside, Brett walked by the guard, expecting to be followed, but the man moved toward the door, pulling out a security card. *Fuck it*, Brett decided. He’d been wanting some action. He kidney punched the man, locked an arm around his throat and started to choke him.

“What’s going on?” Jack said, hearing the sounds of struggle over the intercom.

“Tommy!” They heard a man shout. It was Rene. She’d come to the end of the hall and spotted them. “You stupid bitch!”

“Run!” Jack said, shoving the door open. Whoop. Whoop. The alarm sounded.

Jack plunged into the alley and saw Brett struggling with the guard. “Go!” Brett shouted. “I’ll hold them off.”

“Come on!” Jack said, and then he saw a new problem. While the game, mercifully, did not impose the limits of his heels on him, it was not the same for an NPC, evidently. Tommy was mincing along, arms waving as he struggled to maintain his balance, tottering precariously on his stilettos. “Lose the shoes!” Jack said.

Tommy nodded, kicking off his heels. “Yes!” He said, now running along with Jack. Thankfully, the game didn’t account for tender feet, and the two women bolted from the alley and out onto the main drag.

Brett finished off the guard he’d been fighting, but just as he turned to run as well, the door to the ballroom slammed open and blue clad security

poured out. "Yes!" Brett shouted, equipping his assault rifle and shooting as he backed away. Pop. Pop. Pop. He caught one in the shoulder and sent him spinning to the ground, hit another in the head.

"You okay?" Jack said, seeing the flashes from the alley, hearing the gunfire.

"Great," Brett said. "Get out of here."

Jack saw a Ferrari on the street. *Sweet*. He ran to the car door and initiated a hijack, watching as his character grabbed the man behind the wheel and dragged him out of the car. "Get in!"

Tommy jumped in the passenger side, and Jack floored it, the car peeling out in a cloud of black smoke.

POLICE HAVE BEEN ALERTED! The game informed him. Come on! Jack said. In most of these games, you just had to clear the zone where a crime was committed and you were free, so he just drove, weaving in and out of traffic, accidentally clipping a motorcycle and sending the driver crashing into a row of trash cans.

Brett, meanwhile, felt something slam into his chest. His armor held, but he lost two hit points, and the security guys were now firing away, bullets whizzing all around him. They'd take him down eventually, so he grabbed a smoke grenade from his inventory and lobbed it, the canister exploding and flooding the alley with a gray cloud. Brett blasted into the cloud, then turned and ran.

Like Jack, he knew he only needed to put some distance between he and any pursuers, and he would be free. He sprinted to the main street, turned and ran down the sidewalk away from the ballroom, bumping into and knocking over pedestrians, turning down the first side street he saw, zig zagging. His character was marked red, so he wasn't in the clear.

He ran as hard and as fast as he could before he turned green, and then he ducked behind a truck and sank to the ground, his character's endurance nearly at zero.

Jack, meanwhile, cursed his luck as he blasted past a police cruiser, which immediately hit the lights and was now in pursuit. If they'd been on a straight away, he could have easily outrun the cops, but in traffic he couldn't get anywhere near top speed. There were cars in front of him now, blocking the road, so he rammed one in the rear. With a loud crunch, the hood of his car buckled, and black smoke started to pour from the engine, a rattling noise filling the cabin, but the car he'd rammed fishtailed and spun out of his way.

"Rene stole my body," Tommy said. "She wanted my power."

Oh, great, Jack thought. *Here comes the lore dump.* He jerked the wheel right, left, dodging cars, the cops right behind.

"She belongs to a group called The Foremost. They want to take over the world!"

Of course they do, Jack thought. *Doesn't every evil group?*

He saw a side street and decided to take a chance. Waiting until almost the last possible second, he slammed the brakes and spun the wheel, his car jackknifing, slamming against a streetlamp and careening down the side road. The cops weren't so lucky, as their car, nowhere near the performance level of a ferrari, rolled and crashed into a store front, exploding in flames.

"Yes!" Jack said, glancing back on the carnage. In another moment, they crossed into a new zone, and they were free.

Jack felt Tommy place his hand on Jack's bare knee. Squeeze. He glanced over at Tommy, who raised a slender eyebrow. "You saved me,"

Tommy said, and his eyes promised a world of rewards that made Jack's heart race.

"Let's go back to my place."

"Let's," Tommy said.

Chapter 13

Back in the real world, the boys' quad mates Hannah and Jen had spread out in the living room, books, laptops and highlighters scattered all around them as they crammed. Hannah, prepping for her biochem class, found herself trying to differentiate between multiple carbon clusters, wishing just once there was something a little different to set them apart.

There was a knock on the door.

Hannah looked at Jen. Jen looked at Hannah. "Let's pretend we're not home," Jen whispered. Whoever it was— guy or girl— that person would only distract them from their studies. They waited, not moving for fear they would tip off their interloper.

"Hey. Guys?" It was Danny. Jack's girlfriend. They both actually liked her, which had not been the case with the past bitches he'd brought around.

Hannah looked at Jen. Jen looked at Hannah. They both shrugged. "I could use a break anyway," Jen said, getting up to answer the door.

"Hey, Jen, Hannah," Danny said, looking past Jen. "Brett around?"

"Yes," Jen said, "but he's playing that stupid game again."

"They both are," Hannah said, pointing toward the doors to their rooms.

Danny saw signs hanging from both doorknobs: Do Not Disturb. Gaming.

“Ugh,” Danny said. She was not opposed to video games and liked to jack in herself. But, she was opposed to being ignored by a guy. “Can I come in?”

“Sure. We were just about to take a break.”

Danny was slightly over 6’ tall and broad shouldered for a girl, which served her well as power forward on the women’s basketball team. Both Hannah and Jen couldn’t help but admire those long legs of hers, and she had a very pretty face, her hair tied back in the ponytail style that seemed so ubiquitous with female athletes.

“I guess that’s why he’s been so distant,” Danny said, nodding toward Jack’s door.

“Guys are all little boys,” Hannah said, paraphrasing an old country song. “The only thing that changes are the types of their toys.”

“If you want more attention, you should jump into VR with him,” Jen said.

The girls talked for a little while. Danny counted on the notion that anything she said to Jack’s quad mates would be repeated back to him, so she mostly just talked about how great he was and how she missed him the last few days. It turned out he’d been obsessed, apparently, with some new game— Mindstrike. Danny had heard of it.

Heading back to her off campus apartment— one of the perks of being a basketball star— she got an idea. She would pop into Mindstrike and surprise Jack. Back in her room, she logged in and started to make her character. Sex: Male. She thought it would be fun to pretend to be a dude, friend Jack and then surprise him at some point.

She really liked him, though he was way more into eating her pussy than most guys. He loved to kiss cuddle, too, which altogether had made her

wonder sometimes about him. It almost seemed like she was with a girl when she was with him.

But, no. He was a guy. He was just very— attentive to her needs.

Back inside the world of Mindstrike, Jack and Tommy had made it back to his apartment. As soon as the door had closed, Tommy had plucked at the shoulder straps on his dress, slipped them off and let his dress fall to his feet. He stood there in just a bra and panties, one hand on his hip.

“You’re gorgeous,” Jack said, letting his own dress fall to the floor and taking Tommy in his arms, reaching around to find the back of his bra, twisting and undoing the hooks, pulling Tommy’s bra off and tossing it away. Tommy’s breasts were almost as big as Jack’s. They pressed their bodies together, their soft breasts, Jack still in his bra, and Tommy reached down and pushed Jack’s panties down as they kissed.

“Where are you—” Brett cut in on the Intercom. Jack turned the intercom off. “We don’t have much time,” he whispered, as Tommy guided him back toward the couch.

“I want you so bad,” Tommy said. “You’re so fucking beautiful.”

The compliment made Jack’s heart flutter, as he found himself sitting back on the couch, his panties now wrapped around one ankle. He spread his legs, and lay back, while Tommy positioned himself between Jack’s soft thighs. Looking up at Jack, hair falling across his eyes, Tommy smiled and licked his lips. “It’s been so long since I’ve been with a woman.” With that, he dove in, planting his mouth on Jack’s sex, licking, teasing with his tongue.

Jack, on the receiving end of oral sex as a woman for the first time, gasped and moaned as pleasure shook him from head to curled toes. He

shoved one hand under his bra and squeezed his breast as Tommy worked, and he put the other hand on Tommy's head, pulling him in, urging him on. Tommy put his hands on the inside of Jack's soft thighs, squeezing, pushing them apart. He found Jack's clit and nibbled on it with his teeth.

Jack screamed. "Omigod! Omigod!"

His orgasm came in a flash bang of pleasure, so fast and powerful he almost passed out from the intensity. As it was, as Tommy finished and rose up from between Jack's legs, his head swam, and he felt dizzy and faint. He leaned forward to kiss Tommy, his face slick with vaginal juice, but Tommy turned his head. "I've got you all over my face," he said.

Jack didn't care. He needed to kiss this amazing woman, to thank her for— he had no words. He lunged forward, grabbed Tommy by the shoulders and kissed him, hard, thrusting his tongue into Tommy's mouth. Tommy made a small sound of pleasure— so sexy— and after a moment of surprise found Jack's tongue with his. He was just about to push Tommy onto his back on the floor and return the favor, when there was a knock on the door.

"Shit!" Jack said. "Brett."

"We can pick this up later," Tommy said, putting his fingers to Jack's soft cheek.

"Count on it," Jack said, pulling himself away with all his willpower.

Knock. Knock. Getting more insistent.

The two men quickly yanked on their panties, shimmied into their dresses. Jack went to the door, fussing with his hair, opened it and— "Who are you?"

A tall, muscular man in battle armor stood there. It was Danny, and she stepped back, eyebrows rising as she looked down into the face of this gorgeous little Asian girl in a little black dress, with her flush cheeks and glassy eyes, looking for all the world like she'd just had sex. The game had a feature where you could FIND participants, and she'd locked onto Jack, but she went back to check, again, to make sure it was him, and his gamer profile left no doubt.

This pretty little woman with huge tits was her boyfriend.

Behind Jack, Danny saw a leggy blonde, tugging at the hem of her little dress, wiping her mouth with a tissue.

Danny almost logged out. She'd never expected this. But, at the same time, there was something intriguing, even exciting to meet this version of Jack. "I'm, uh, Dexter," she said, using the name she'd chosen for her avatar.

"Yeah? What do you want?" Jack was super annoyed to have his fun interrupted by this random. He'd been so horny, and he could feel the moment passing. Jack could see Dexter was a Level One Sniper and another live player, not an NPC. He didn't even think to check the Gamer Profile.

"I thought maybe we could team up," Brett said. "On your next mission."

Jack rolled his eyes and brushed a strand of hair away from his cheek with a slender finger. He's just like a girl, Danny thought. "We don't need help from a level one newbie," Jack said, as he started to slam the door.

Seeing that her little plan might come to an end before it even began, Danny was about to relent and tell Jack who she really was— the look on his face would no doubt be priceless, but—

"Wait," Tommy said. "Maybe we do."

“What? Why?” Jack said. He knew it was wise to listen to NPCs.

“The next mission is a ball buster.”

Just then, Brett came around the corner, looking pissed. “What the hell?” He said. “What’s the idea turning the intercom off?”

Danny checked out the tall woman, whose name clearly showed as Brett. No way, she thought, immediately noticing the similarity between this avatar and her in real life. She went to the Find feature and couldn’t help but chuckle. They were both pretending to be women?

“What?” Jack said, raising his voice to little girl cute. “The intercom is off?”

“You know it is,” Brett said, taking in the scene, Jack’s flushed face and piecing it together. “Oh,” he said, shaking his head. “I should’ve known.”

“What?” Jack said again, not realizing how obvious it was.

Brett pushed past Jack and into his apartment. As soon as they were both there, they heard the bell ring. “Mission Complete: Rescue Tommy.”

LVL UP! LVL UP! LVL UP!

Three more levels. Sweet.

Then, NEW MISSION: Storm Essentiulus Tower.

“We’re going to need more guns,” Tommy said, stepping up to Brett and putting his hand on the back of Brett’s neck, pulling him in for a kiss.

“Thanks for saving me,” he said in a breathy voice. Then, he shrugged his little round shoulders. “Rene has been brainwashing me. She’s turned me into something of a little slut?” He giggled then and tossed his hair. “I can’t help myself!”

“Oh, boy,” Jack said, a little disappointed. He’d thought it was all because he was so pretty.

“I don’t see a problem with that,” Brett said. “But right now, we need to come up with a plan.”

It was decided that Dex was in. They could likely use a sniper, even a LVL One, and as they looked at the schematics and floor plan for Essentiulus Tower, they realized they would likely need another gun or two. The mission was LVL 22, a bit above them.

The mission gave them two choices: Attack from Above, or Attack from Below. Attack from Above involved rappelling from a helicopter and blasting their way in, while below involved sneaking into the basement and trying to stealth their way to the top.

As Brett and Jack threw ideas back and forth, Danny found herself just checking everyone out. Jack was so feminine! He sat with his legs crossed at the knees, hands in his lap, as did the woman they kept calling Tommy. Brett man-spread, arms stretched across the back of the couch, taking up space. He was pretty butch, and Danny copied him, spreading her legs wide. She’d been told since she’d been a little girl to keep her legs together, and it felt awkward but also powerful to just open them right up like a dude.

“We have a better chance of surviving if we sneak in,” Jack said, and Danny couldn’t help but think his high pitched, buzzy voice was so sexy—for a girl.

“Yeah, but what’s more fun? I say we come down guns blazing from a chopper, blast our way into the place.”

“It’s risky.”

“It’s a game. It’s about fun.”

“Stealth can be fun, too.”

“Oh! What? Did Mr. *I’m always a Brick* say he thinks stealth is fun now?”

“I’m learning to like it,” Jack said, plucking at a strand of his hair.

“You,” Brett said. “Are such a girl.”

“Fuck you. It was your idea for me to play a spy.”

“Well, looks like you get to make the deciding vote,” Brett said to Danny.

“What’s it going to be? Fun or lame?”

As the newbie, Danny was not expecting to be asked to vote. She hadn’t really even planned on doing a mission with them. She’d expected to come in, talk to Jack for a bit, then surprise him with her big reveal: Hey, I’m actually not a dude. I’m your girlfriend! Still, the idea interested her, as did spending more time with this pretty little version of Jack. What would it be like for them to do it inside this game? She wondered, glancing at Jack’s hourglass figure.

“Fun,” she said. “Let’s shoot some people!”

Brett and Jack both needed to spend some time in real life. As usual, they had played far longer than they had intended. They all agreed they would meet up again on Friday night. “In the meantime,” Brett said, pointing at Danny. “You need to do some solo missions and level up.”

“Oh. Okay. I think I can do that.”

“Don’t think about it. Do it.”

“I will, and—” Danny had a thought, decided to go with it. “I have a friend. Very good gamer. Maybe he could join us?”

“We need more people,” Brett said. “Sure.”

“Yes,” Jack added, though he noticed Brett had not asked for his opinion.

Danny smiled. She was going to ask Brett’s girlfriend Charly to play. She was pretty sure Charly would find all this— interesting. “He’s a good Bro,” Danny said, over-selling it. “A regular dude.”

“Cool.” Brett said. “Invite him.”

Chapter 14

Jack found himself on his hands and knees, nipples hard as diamonds. Charly held his head with both hands, and she had her dick in his mouth. Jack probably would have been totally focused on the fact that he was sucking her dick, except for the fact that his girlfriend, Danny, was holding his hips and fucking him doggy style, her dick deep inside him. Both girls had gone big on the junk when they'd made their avatars, thinking it would be funny to have a big, swinging dick.

Neither one expected to use her Johnson to fuck Jack silly, but hey.

Truly, Jack probably did need to take some time for self-reflection, but this was not the time. Even had he been interested in putting some thought as to how he found himself getting fucked by two girls, he could not. Jack had gone to a place beyond thought, a place of pure pleasure where his mind and body had merged into a single entity with a singular focus: getting off.

An equally disorientated Brett watched the three of them. Seeing his bud on his hands and knees, breasts swaying, getting Eiffel Towered by two girls had sent him into a similar place of mind blown delight, and as he watched, he had shoved his fingers down the front of his pants and between the lips of his vagina, and was now furiously pumping as an impossible tension built up inside him and demanded, scream, for some kind of release.

Danny and Charly, meanwhile, were really getting into being men. Fucking a girl as a dude was totally different from what either had ever imagined; they felt aggressive, powerful, kind of grunty and having a big,

hard, raging boner was intense. Jack was so soft and wet inside, and Danny could feel him pulling in, grabbing at her dick with his pussy, and it was so hot that she'd made him want it, need it from her.

Charly, short and petite in real life loved feeling so big and powerful. She'd wondered for years what it felt like to get a blow job— guys were so obsessed with them— She didn't really like giving them, but she did it to please the guys, and she had already concluded that getting a blow job was a lot better than giving one. Jack's mouth was hot and dripping saliva his thick lips so soft, and she loved the way his tongue felt as it slid against the veins of her dick. Then, she felt a sudden tenseness in her groin and— oh, shit! She'd promised Jack she would pull out before she came, but her dick had a mind of its own, and she felt herself shooting her load into his mouth.

Jack's eyes went wide as he felt the hot jizz shoot into his mouth, and then wider still as Danny thrust into him, the deepest thrust yet, and he felt her explode as well... and then, impossibly, his eyes went even wider as his whole body shook and a lightning bolt of pleasure seemed to blast through his whole body, and another and another as he triple orgasmed...

Charly pulled out, her head swimming. Danny did as well, falling back into a sitting position. Both girls were rapidly losing their boners. Jack pushed himself back onto his knees, his hair falling across his face. There was cum dripping from the corner of his mouth, and Charly was about to apologize for unloading into his mouth. Jack looked so fucking hot, with his nipples erect, a sheen of sweat on his skin, that hair across his face. He put a little hand to his mouth, looking confused, and then— he swallowed.

Charly felt her dick twitch. It was so fucking erotic to see the man behind that pretty face swallow her jizz.

No one felt finished. Brett was still finger fucking himself, making little bird noises, and Danny got up, put her hand under his chin and tilted his head back. "Your turn," she said. She took his free hand and pulled him off the couch, and Brett just obeyed as she positioned him on his hands and knees. "Let's switch ends," Charly said, her deep voice gruff and sexy.

Tommy, who'd watched it all while playing with his tits, now went over to Jack and pulled his hair from his face. Jack leaned forward, wanting to kiss him, but Tommy blocked him. "Wash out your mouth, first," he said.

Jack giggled. He got up and went to the bathroom, swishing some mouthwash, then hurried back to the living room. Charly and Danny were now working Brett, and seeing his friend getting banged was just as much of a turn on for Jack as it had been for Brett. He joined Tommy, kneeling on the floor, and they kissed and fondled each other's soft bodies, moaning as Charly and Danny grunted and growled, both more confident about just what to do with their new cocks.

As they both once again came at the same time, it's a video game, remember? --they heard a bell ring. LVL UP!

Danny and Charly exchanged smirks. They felt a very male satisfaction. They'd scored with these hot girls. Victory. If they'd been closer, they would have high fived.

After, the room filled with the snores of the two girls, while Jack, Tommy and Brett, wearing little silk robes, sat at the dining room table, dazed in the afterglow. No one knew what to say. Jack was toying with his hair. Brett was staring at a bottle of water. Both boys had emerged from their fucking thirsty as hell.

Tommy, an NPC, broke the silence. "Should we get back to the mission now?" He asked.

Jack and Brett looked at him, at each other. The mission? Neither had given any thought to the mission.

“I need a shower,” Jack said, getting up.

“Mind if I join you?” Tommy said, raising a slender brow.

Jack hesitated. Shit. “Why not?” He said in a soft voice.

The two boys headed off to the shower together.

A minute later, Brett followed.

He looked at his girlfriend, Charly, snoring away. “Just like a guy,” he thought. “Just like a guy.” Brett had endured an insanely female desire to cuddle with his man after sex, and he’d been mildly annoyed when she’d just gone and dozed off. Now, decided, maybe it was for the best. He was looking forward to a little time with just the girls.

How had we come to this? The chain of events had begun with Danny. Having infiltrated the game in the guise of a dude, she’d found herself fascinated with the fact her boyfriend was playing a girl. It had struck as funny and interesting, and she’d immediately decided to try and recruit Charly into the game. How fun would it be for them to be the guys and the guys to be the girls? It would be some super fun role-playing, role reversal... So, she’d texted Charly and arranged for her to come over.

Danny had answered the door in her usual sweatpants and long sleeved, flouncy t-shirt, her hair up in a ponytail. “Hey,” she’d said. “Come in.”

Dating two guys who were friends, the girls had naturally bonded and become friends themselves. It was too early for booze, so they sat down with bottles of green tea, and after the usual opening chit chat, Danny had smiled and said, “I have some interesting news. It’s about our guys.”

Charly leaned forward. She was always interested in anything having to do with her boyfriend. “Oh?”

Danny leaned forward. “You know how they’re always playing that videogame?”

“Yes,” Charly said, sourly. She hated how much time Brett spent on that stupid game.

“Well, and I know it was kinda a little wrong, but I decided to sneak into the game and see what the big deal was,” Danny said.

“Well, that’s not really all that bad.”

“No. I went and found the boys and pretended I didn’t know them.”

“That’s probably a little wrong.” Charly, in fact, thought it was totally wrong, and part of her felt she should end the conversation, but there was this amused look on Danny’s face. She obviously had a secret to share, and Charly’s curiosity got the best of her. Still, she didn’t want to ask. It would make her feel better if Danny just happened to “let it slip.” She tilted her head to the side and said it with her eyes, instead: dish! As she thought about it, she couldn’t help but wonder if maybe she was about to find out Brett had been cheating on her with some VR slut.

The smile on Danny’s face grew wider. “The thing is, they’re playing as girls.”

“Girls?” Charly said, sitting back. “My Brett?”

“Yeah. Both of them.”

“A lot of guys do,” Charly said, immediately rationalizing, and yet, she hadn’t thought of Brett as being one of *those* guys.

“I know,” Danny said. “It’s just— I mean, I just found it a little different is all.”

“What’s Brett like?” She asked, her mind already considering the calculus of what this could do to their reputation around campus if people found out her guy was pretending to be a girl online. It was something, she felt, that would make them weird, and she’d always been about fitting in.

“He’s— like a beach volleyball player,” Danny said, not wanting to say, he looks like me. “That kind of tall, athletic girl.”

“I guess that’s not so bad.”

Danny shrugged. “Jack on the other hand....”

“What?”

“He’s a little hottie. Tits out to here,” she cupped her hands in front of her own modest chest.

“Jack?”

“I mean, he’s a ten.”

“Doesn’t that bother you?”

Danny tilted her head side to side, shrugged. “I don’t know. I think it’s almost kind of sweet, in a way. I mean, that he’s curious about what it’s like to be a hot girl, and not just a girl.”

“Is he gay?”

“I don’t think so,” Danny said, wondering if she was giving away too much of herself. She decided to change the subject. “Anyway,” she’d said, “I have an idea.”

It took Charly a day to commit. She’d tossed and turned that night. The struggle had not been about Brett so much as her and the thought of entering the game as a dude. Charly, as much as she’d always tried her best to fit in, had always been curious about what it would be like to be a guy. But, like many people, she’d kept her secret kinks to herself, had

never had the courage to act on them. She'd spent the night wondering what it would be like to have a dick, balls... to be tall and strong...

The next morning, she'd gotten up and gone for her morning run, ponytail bouncing. She felt she did her best thinking while running, and it was a beautiful day, with a high, powder blue sky and the rising sun a blazing ball of orange and reds. A guy had passed her, checked her out, lifted his chin and said, "Hey." She'd smiled back, and right then she'd wondered what it was like to be him, checking out a pretty girl. She imitated him, pretending she was checking out some skinny little coed, lifted her chin and said, "Hey."

What the hello? She decided. *As long as no one ever finds out...* She would have a condition, though. She didn't feel right about tricking Brett. They would have to tell the boys who they were— eventually.

Thursday, she and Danny logged in, planning to run a mission or two, level, get used to the game. Charly logged in to design her character, cycling through different faces, not really looking at any of them before settling on a lantern-jawed man with stubble and a scar that ran from her forehead to the corner of her mouth. In real life she was pretty, so why not be a scared-up badass, she decided, choosing to keep him bald as well, though she couldn't resist putting pretty little gold studs in his ears.

Next, she expanded his size until he was 6'4, and then she scaled up the muscle, giving herself bulging biceps and thick, sinewy shoulders. She was giggling the whole time, amused at herself and her male fantasy self. Finally, to her surprise, that game prompted her to choose her genitals, displaying what looked like a hundred sets of cocks and balls in all different shapes and sizes. Looking at all the choices, she laughed.

“What’s so funny?” Danny, who waited inside the game said, having heard the giggles and laughter over the intercom.

“I’m choosing my Johnson,” Charly said, still giggling.

“Oh, that is fun,” Danny said, remembering how funny she’d found it to get dick shopping.

Charly looked over the selections. There were little pink ones, little black ones, yellow ones, there were long, skinny penises... little ball sacks that looked like robin eggs... She scrolled down and down until she found a big, thick cock and she chose it. I mean, what’s the point, she decided, unless I am going all the way? She could only imagine how big it would get if she got a boner.

“Can we get boners?” She asked.

“Oh, yeah,” Danny said.

“Good. I want to know what it feels like to have a boner.”

“It’s interesting.”

“You already had one?”

“Hurry up and get into the game,” Danny said. “We can talk about our dicks later.”

Charly laughed. “I’ll bet mine is bigger than yours.”

“Don’t be so sure.”

She finished creating her character. She’d chosen soldier. She wanted to be tough and physical. As she materialized into the game, she found herself facing another big, muscular man that had to be Danny. Her eyes immediately dropped to the bulge in her pants. “You went big, too,” Charly said, the girl in her excited by the promise of that package.

Danny grabbed her junk. “Hell, yes.”

Charly grabbed her junk. “We’re just two bad ass dudes with huge dicks!” She said.

“Yeah, I can pee while standing up, so that makes me awesome!”

“I want to write my name in the snow!” Charly said.

“If you boys are done playing with your cocks, you have work to do!” The NPC for the training mission barked.

“He called us *boys*,” Charly said, giggling, though the giggle sounded a little ridiculous in her deep, whisky-hardened voice.

“Come over here for your briefing,” the NPC said.

“This’ll just take a minute,” Danny said, having run through the opening sequence before. “Then we can kick some ass.”

“Because that’s what bros do,” Charly said, getting used to her deep voice. “We kick ass, eat red meat and chase girls.”

“Bro,” Danny said, reaching out for a fist bump.

“Bro!” Charly said, bumping him, and then both girls laughed, deep manly laughs, as they fell into their new roles.

Chapter 15

Violence. Charly never knew just how— thrilling— it could be, but as soon as they got into the game, proper, she and Danny went wilding, fists flying, guns blazing. Charly had always been one of the smallest girls in the class as she’d grown up. There were girls who got status by being athletic, and girls who leaned into brains. Charly, though, was tiny and pretty, and she’d hung her hat on cute. As she’d older and developed curves, what had started as a choice became her reality— she was cute, she was pretty, she was sweet. She loved going to football games and watching the guys

shove and hit and tackle— to her, it was all just a bunch of bucks, butting heads, fighting to impress her and the other females. But— omigod— her? Violent? No, she would have told you. Not her. She would always have a boyfriend to protect her if she needed it. She didn't even like violent movies!

In her whole life, Charly had never even chased a boy, since she thought it was too aggressive. She just made herself as pretty and attractive as she could, and the boys all came to her, like bees to a rose.

That all changed as soon as they started the game. Having chosen to play two men, the girls were sent on a very different mission to start the game than their boyfriends, who had unwittingly put themselves into the “girl” storyline. Alas, game designers were still mostly men, and still mostly not very – modern.

Their first mission was a straight up raid. Danny, as a sniper, had taken up a position outside what looked like a repair shop, parking lot crowded with old, junk cars, a handful of NPCs milling around. Their plan was for Charly to attack, fall back, and then let Danny pick off the NPCs who chased her. There was one man at the gate, lounging. Deciding on the direct approach, Charly had walked right up to him.

“Hey,” the guy said.

“Hey, bro,” Charly said, trying not to giggle at the rumble of her manly voice. She was supposed to knock the guy out, but in her whole life, Charly had never even thrown a punch. She kind of shifted about awkwardly, raising her fists like a cartoon character and making what she thought was an angry frowny face.

A yellow, caution light flashed above the man at the gate. He stepped back. “Hey, what’s this?”

“What are you doing?” Danny said, watching Charly do what looked like some sort of spastic dance.

“I’m– um– getting ready to, you know? Hit him or something?”

“Just knock him on his ass before he codes red.”

“I don’t know how!” Charly admitted.

“Take your first and throw it at his face.”

“He’s so big!”

“You’re bigger. Now, hit that asshole!”

“Okay. Okay,” Charley said, then to the man, “sorry?” She swung toward him, palm open, and slapped him across the face, but even that she had hesitated right before striking, feeling bad about it.

“Motherfucker!” The man roared, reaching for his gun. The NPCs in the parking lot all flashed yellow.

“I thought you took kickboxing?” Danny said, appalled at the little girly slap Charly had unleashed.

“I do!” Charly said, putting her hands to her cheeks as the man pulled his gun.

“Hit him like he was the punishing bag! Now!”

“Oh, shit!” Seeing the gun rising up, Charly did exactly what Danny had told her, using her legs, swinging as if she were going to swing through his face and not at it. Her fist connected, she felt a jolt in her arm, and the man’s head bucked backward, his whole body spinning as he fell to the ground, stunned.

“Fuck!” Charly said.

The NPCs were now all red, and all heading toward the gate. Danny put one in her sights, pop! His head exploded. “Finish him and retreat. Lead them out!”

Stunned, the man was trying to get to his feet. Charly used another KickBoxing move, bringing her knee up to smash into his chin, and collapsed, unconscious. Charly retreated, but she was lit up like she hadn't been in years. "I'm a badass!" She shouted, feeling so big, so powerful. Beating that man down had been—empowering.

The NPCs began to move forward, now taking cover, but just as Danny had hoped, they followed Charly out into the open street, heedless of the sniper fire that was taking them down one by one by one. NPCs are stupid. Usually.

Charly, seeing what was happening, had paused halfway across the street instead of ducking behind a car across the way as planned. Consumed with bloodlust, she wanted more. One of the NPCs, a bald, tattooed looking freak with a pipe wrench, was closing on her. "Let me take him," she growled.

"O-Kay!" Danny said, loving it.

The man lunged, swinging the pipe wrench in a wide arc. Charly raised her arm and blocked, then spun, delivering a roundhouse kick to the man's head. He fell, and Charly pounced, climbing on top of him and unleashing a flurry of fists into his face, reducing it to a bloody pulp.

Danny's eyes went wide as she watched Charly go savage. Yikes! It seems little miss cute has an angry side after all. "I think you got him," she said.

The comment broke Charly's violent fever, and she stopped, looking down at the pulverized face, then at her own bloody hands and clothes. "Yuck," she said, shocked with embarrassment at what she'd just done and feeling a need to revert to girly. "There's blood all over me! Gross!"

Danny climbed down from her sniper position. “It’s fun, right?” Danny said.

“It was, um,” Charly reached up to brush back the long hair she no longer had. “Interesting?”

“You loved it.”

“I’ve never been bigger?” Charly said. “I don’t know what came over me!”

“You don’t know your own strength yet,” Danny said. “And don’t worry about it. It’s a game. We get to do things in here we would never do in the real world. It’s part of the fun.”

Things we never do in the real world, Charly mused, looking at Danny’s handsome face. She really wanted to kiss her. What would it be like to kiss a guy who was actually a girl, as a guy? She wasn’t sure how Danny would take it, and she’d already crossed what she felt was some kind of line in terms of how she presented herself to the world.

“What next?”

“We get the car we were sent for and then kick some more ass.”

“Bro!”

“Bro!”

The girls fist-bumped and **LVL UP!**

Charly pulled the trigger on her Glock— the recoil was not as intense as she expected. The muzzle flashed, and blood blossomed from the gut of the old school mafia thug in the three-piece suit who’d come at her with a broken bottle. She and Danny had picked up a side mission to bust up a gambling den. Charly could see the man wasn’t dead, so she fired three more times, missing twice as she swung the gun wildly, then hitting him for the kill shot.

Hmmmmn, she thought, Not as much fun as beating them down with my fists. The gamblers were screaming, running, as guns went off, flash! Flash! It was like they were under a strobe light, Danny unleashing hell on a group of thugs in the corner, while Charly un-equipped her gun and closed in on a scrawny looking runt. His face filled with fear as Charly lumbered towards him, and seeing the look of fear in his eyes, knowing *he* was scared of *her*, Charly thought, “Oh! Fun!” She punched him in the gut—no longer tentative, and when the man doubled-over she put him in a head lock and choked him until he collapsed.

Charly tossed him aside like a rag doll, reveling in her strength, her ability to dominate, then her world shuddered as someone smashed a chair over her head. She lost 2 hit points. That’s probably not good, she thought, her head aching with pain as she turned to face a big, burly looking man with a tattoo across his face. He was almost as big as her, but she thought— I can take him.

“Bring it!” The man, who the game indicated was called, Gino said, fists raised.

“I’m going to fuck you up!” Charly said, thinking it was probably the kind of thing a dude might say.

She hadn’t even looked at his level. If she had, she would have been a little more cautious. He was three levels higher, and the boss of this level.

Charly swung her fist, and then she didn’t even know what happened as Gino easily ducked under her punch and then unleashed a flurry of lightning-fast blows that sent Charly to the floor, lip bloody, head swimming. “Ow! It hurts for real!”

“You bet it does,” Gino said, picking up one of the broken chair legs. “Stay down, bitch!”

“Bitch?” Charly struggled to her feet. There was no way she was letting this asshole beat her. “You’re the bitch!”

“I gave you a chance,” Gino said. “Now, you die!”

Charly sneered, got into a fighter’s stance, ready to try and—

Pop!

Gino’s head exploded and his lifeless body sank to its knees, then fell to the floor.

Danny stood behind him and blew the smoke from the muzzle of her gun.

“I had him!” Charly bellowed, kicking the corpse, furious that she’d been denied what she’d thought was going to be her kill.

“Um, let me explain to you about levels.”

They say in the now empty illegal casino. Danny explained, then asked, “You okay? He hit you pretty hard.”

“Yeah,” Charly said, confused at her own reaction, because she had always avoided pain. “It was actually, kind of...? I don’t know how to put it, but it was...?”

“Fun? Intense?” Danny said, having had the same experience herself.

“I felt alive,” Charly admitted. “When he knocked me down, I wasn’t afraid. I just wanted to get up and beat his ass. I just— I’ve never felt this way before.”

“I know. I went through the same thing.”

Jacked up on violence, the girls stared into each other’s eyes. They both wanted it, and Danny made the first move, putting her hand on the back of Charly’s head and pulling her in for a kiss. As soon as it was over, they both giggled and looked away from each other.

“Sorry,” Danny said. “It’s just something I wanted to do.”

“I was curious, too,” Charly said. “I kissed a girl in high school once. At a party.”

“Didn’t we all?” Danny said, getting to her feet. She offered Charly her hand, but Charly shook her off and got to her feet on her own.

“I never kissed anyone as a guy before,” Charly said.

“How was it for you?”

“Kind of the same,” giggling again, covering her eyes. “Except my dick kind of started to get hard!”

“Mine, too. How do guys put up with these things?”

The casino turned out to be an exceedingly lucrative mission, as they scored over 2000 credits, the usual weapons and gear. Unlike the “girls,” and Jack in particular, they didn’t find themselves scoring high heels and mini-skirts, but true to life tactical gear. They also Leveled Up! Twice. “You ready to log out?” Danny said once they’d finished gathering their winnings.

“Maybe one more mission?” Charly said.

“I was hoping you would say that. One more level or so, and we’ll be fit to help the ladies with their little mission.”

“The ladies,” Charly said, kinda loving the idea of seeing girl Brett soon. “We should totally treat them like girls.”

“I agree. It’ll be fun to be the guys for a while. Now, let’s go kick some ass.”

“Bro!”

They’d both gotten addicted to Mindstrike.

Chapter 16

Charly and Danny had stayed up way too late playing, and they both struggled to class, half asleep, exhausted. They both looked forward to logging back into the game, and Charly was super excited to meet “the girls.” She didn’t want to be a low energy bore, so she hit the gym and got a good workout in. As she trained, she found herself sizing up the guys. There were only two in the room she didn’t figure she could beat the shit out of— as her character, Ram, of course.

A can of Beast Mode energy drink finished her prep, and she logged into the game, meeting Danny outside Jack’s apartment building. “You ready?”

“I am. I can’t wait to meet girl Brett!”

“Let’s go.”

Brett, Jack and Tommy were all upstairs. They couldn’t get rid of Tommy until they’d completed the mission, which was only a problem in that Tommy was always horny and looking for sex. They heard a knock. Jack got up and opened the door, and the two men swaggered into the room. “Ladies,” Charly said, looking over the three pretty girls, her eyes going right to the tall, leggy girl who could have been Danny’s sister. *Well, well,* she thought, checking out Brett’s long, smooth legs. *My boyfriend makes one sexy bitch.*

“Hey,” the guys answered. Brett had a rich, mature woman’s voice, and Charly felt a little disappointed. She had imagined him sounding like a tea kettle.

Jack scanned the two men. “Wow. You gained five levels,” he said.

“And got no sleep,” Danny said. “But we should be good to go now.”

Brett was checking out the new guy, Ram. Who picks a name like Ram? He thought, feeling actually a little threatened by the big, rock jawed male. A guy who likes to fuck. And yet, Ram’s walk was decidedly feminine, so

Brett was pretty sure there was a girl under that rugged skin. He felt his cheeks flush. There was just something about the masculine/feminine blur that excited him.

Jack sat. He, Brett and Tommy were spread out, leaving space next to each, a decision the boys regretted as Danny and Charly plopped right down next to Jack and Brett, sitting very close. “You’re really pretty,” Charly said to Brett, excited for the chance to treat him like the girl.

“Okay,” Brett said, unnerved. “Let’s just focus on the mission.”

Danny let her leg press against Jack’s. He felt uncomfortable, but he was sitting in the corner of the couch and had no place to go. Besides, it was a good kind of uncomfortable, as he felt his nipples tingle.

Blueprints of the Essentiulus Building floated in the air above the table, and then zoomed in on the rooftop, “Eight guards protect the roof, along with three, fifty caliber, automated machine guns. We’ll need—”

“Four guns,” Charly said, pointing. “You missed one.”

“I don’t see...”

“It’s hidden by a trapdoor,” Charly said, getting up, pointing to the square in the middle of the rooftop. “It’ll pop up at some point and catch us by surprise. Or, it would have if I hadn’t noticed it, honey.” She loved the freedom to be assertive, and she looked at Brett, smug. A shadow passed across Brett’s pretty face.

“You are correct,” Brett said, annoyed and thinking he was not going to like this chick/dude if he decided he was going to be the leader of the group and run things. He needed to make it clear he was running the show.

“We’ll have four guns to deal with, and don’t *honey* me.”

“Hey, no offense,” Charly said, remembering how guys always reacted when a girl got defensive. “It’s hard for me not to drop a compliment when I see such a pretty girl.”

“Well,” Brett said, standing, “just remember this pretty girl can kick your ass.”

“Okay, okay,” Charly said. “No reason to get your panties in a wad.”

The others watched it all, not sure whether to say anything.

“You know, I thought you said this guy was cool?” Brett said, turning to Danny, who was actually feeling a little annoyed that Charly was flirting with *her* girlfriend.

“Charly, chill,” she said.

All eyes locked on Danny. “Charly?” Brett asked. It wasn’t that common of a name, and he had instantly put two and two together. He looked back at *Ram*. “Charly? Is that you?”

Charly giggled. “Okay. Yes. It’s me.”

“We were curious,” Danny said.

Brett and Jack instantly felt exposed. Brett wrapped his arms around his breasts and backed away from Charly. “It’s not what it looks like.”

“We’re not gay or anything,” Jack said, getting up and putting distance between he and the “boys.” He was wearing his mission gear— a mini-skirt and high-heeled boots, and he felt like an ass for his girlfriend to see him not just in a female skin but dressed like that.

“We’re dudes,” Charly said. “What’s the big deal?”

The big deal, for Brett, was that as far as he was concerned it was totally normal for girls to wish they were guys sometimes. Guys were better. Hadn’t Freud called it when he’d identified penis envy?

But for a guy to have any kind of curiosity about being a girl? That made him a sissy. "I'm gonna log out," he said, retreating toward the kitchenette.

"I don't want you to see me like this."

"Hold on," Charly said, following him.

"Nah, it's too weird," Brett said, super conscious of his voice, his body.

Charly grabbed his slender wrist. "Just hear me out."

"I don't know," Brett said, dropping his eyes.

"I think it's so cool you had the courage to play a girl in this game," Charly said.

"You what?"

Jack and Danny were having a similar conversation in the bedroom. Danny had gotten Jack to sit on the bed. He was sitting there, knees together, arms across his massive breasts in a futile effort to hide his busty shame from his girlfriend. Danny had her massive arms crossed over her own big, but hard, muscular chest. "Lots of guys play girls in these games," she said. "I'm cool with it."

"I just don't want you to get the wrong idea," Jack said, his little tea kettle voice as shameful to him as his figure. "I don't want to be a girl."

"I don't want to be a guy!"

The conversations went on, the girls doing the best to convince the pretty little men it was no big deal. Finally, Jack and Danny emerged from the bedroom. Both Jack and Brett looked sheepish, catching each other's eyes.

"We're going to keep playing," Charly announced. "You?"

"Us, too," Danny said.

“Cool,” Tommy chimed in. “Have any of you ever tried Cloud?” The NPC, registering none of the players had tried Cloud, explained. “It’s a really mellow high. It’ll help us all relax.”

They all four shrugged at the same time. “Why not?” Charly said.

Tommy had not mentioned that Cloud was also a very powerful aphrodisiac. They all huffed on Tommy’s vape pipe. The room became hazy, dream-like. The boys were both feeling emotionally insecure, in need of assurances.

Danny snuggled up to Jack. His body tingled, and he looked away, blushing. Danny cupped his cheek and turned his head to face her. “You’re super pretty,” she said. “I like you like this.”

“Really?” Jack said, loving the way she’d cupped his smooth cheek, taken control, moving his body.

“Your eyes,” Charly said to Brett. “I could get lost in them. They’re like diamonds.”

A strained giggle escaped Brett. “Are you serious?”

Charly took Brett’s chin in her hand and tilted his head back, the same way her boyfriends had always done to her. “Very serious,” she said. “You’re beautiful.”

Brett couldn’t help himself. He needed to feel those bulging biceps, and he put his hand on Charly’s huge arm, squeezed. “Your body is so— hard?”

The four of them stared into each other’s eyes, the girls pressing their hard bodies into the soft, curvy shapes of the boys. They all wanted the same thing, but they were all afraid.

Tommy, watching it all, waited... waited... letting the tension build, and then he whispered, “kiss.”

Brett and Jack passively accepted the kisses from the girls- at first, tentatively, but once their lips had touched, their passions ignited, and Charly and Danny diving in, kissing harder, helping themselves to the boys' soft bodies... Jack and Brett felt hands on their breasts, squeezing. Neither had ever had a man play with his breasts before, and they moaned softly as strange and wonderful new pleasures assaulted their minds. Soon all four were lost to animal lust, desperately unequipping their gear, naked flesh to naked flesh, tangles of writhing limbs, the girls' deep, animal grunts in contrast to the boys' soft, pretty moans and sighs.

It was Jack who first found himself on his hands and knees, breasts swaying as Danny took up position behind him. I can't believe I'm going to let her do this! He thought. Years of dude raged against what he was about to let happen, but he felt Danny's hard member brush against his soft ass, and his mind reeled, all resistance melting away as he needed her inside him, and he whispered, "hurry."

She's really a girl. None of this is real. None of- "Hurry!" He cried out again, pulling his hair away from his face and tossing it over his shoulder. *None of this is real... None of this is...*

Danny grabbed Jack's soft hips and positioned herself. She couldn't believe what she was about to do, but her cock was throbbing, demanding, and she wanted to know what it was like for a guy... Jack looked so cute from this angle... She thrust into him... and started to find her rhythm... Jack made a little squeaking noise with each thrust... Omigod, he thought as his whole body flamed with pleasure... Omigod...

Each little squeak shook Charly to the core. Not thinking or even knowing what she was doing, she got up and positioned herself in front of Jack, grabbing his hair. Jack saw her dick right there in his face, hard and rigid

with veins, and he opened his mouth, eager, wanting more pleasure....more ... more... He was scared, yes, even terrified, as Charly slipped her hard cock into his mouth, but it was... “mmmmmm” he moaned as his mind exploded, overwhelmed with female pleasure... He felt like he was rising out of the room, floating on a cloud... tension was building inside him, a ball of fire in his belly... he needed release... he needed to cum... so bad and then...

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! It was like dirty heaven.

Which, my dear friends, brings us back to the present. The three boys were in the shower, kissing, enjoying the feeling of their smooth, soft skin... their thighs intertwined.... It was so much more gentle with just the girls, and yet just as fun... or almost just as fun... “What the fuck did we just do?” Brett said between kisses, as he teased his own hard, erect nipple.

Tommy was behind Jack, fondling his breasts, nibbling on his ear. “I don’t know about you,” Jack said. “But I just had the best sex of my life.”

Chapter 17

The chopper circled Essentiulus Tower. The pilot, for now, kept them outside the threat zone that would trigger the security systems. All five of them, geared up, stared down at the building through binoculars. What had looked easy in blueprints from the safety of Jack’s living room didn’t look so easy now as they eyed the turreted machine guns.

“Those guns will tear us to shreds,” Jack said. “I really think this is a mistake.”

“Can your chopper take a hit from one of those?”

“I’m armored up pretty well,” the pilot said, his voice crackling over their headphones. “I can absorb some fire, but you’ll need to take out those guns in a hurry or I’ll be a ball of flame before I can get clear.”

“Okay, here’s what we do,” Danny said, taking charge. “Jack, you see if you can hack at least one of the guns and disable it. Brett and I will see if we can take out two of the others with our sniper rifles. Once we fire our weapons, things will get hot, so everyone be ready.”

“Who put you in charge?” Brett asked, though he couldn’t disagree with her strategy.

“Don’t be a bitch,” Danny said. “Let’s just do this.”

“Who are you calling a bitch?”

“Um, didn’t you just have my dick inside you?” Danny said.

“Yeah, and I’ve had my duck in you in the real world, so what?”

Jack and Charly groaned. They were both tired of the pissing contest.

“I’m hacking in,” Jack said.

“Wait!” Brett said.

“No. I’m sick of you two fighting all the time.”

“I’m taking us in,” the pilot said.

“Just don’t miss your shot, honey buns,” Danny said, shouldering her rifle and taking aim.

“Warning! You have entered restricted air space,” a metallic voice called out. “Change course or be destroyed.”

“Pulling out,” the pilot lied.

“That’s what he said,” Danny mumbled.

Jack locked onto the closest turret and initiated breach protocol. A red bar appeared, filling, filling. “Come on. Come on,” he urged.

Danny and Brett lined up their shots in the crosshairs, locating the weak points of each gun.

“Breached!” Jack shouted. A menu appeared, and he had two choices. Disable. Or, take control. “I can take control of the gun,” he said.

“Do it,” Danny said.

Charly had her weapons ready and was ready to leap from the chopper when they got close enough.

Jack took control of the gun, which popped and sparked. He was now seeing the roof from the perspective of the gun, and he swung it around, letting loose a spray of bullets that tore into one of the guards and ripped his body apart.

“We are under attack! Repeat! We are under attack!”

Danny and Brett both fired, each one shouting as their bullets hit home and the guns exploded into flames. With Jack sweeping the roof with machine gun fire, the guards all dove for cover, flattening themselves, trying to avoid getting destroyed. The fourth turret popped up, took aim at the chopper, and then exploded into shrapnel as Jack blasted it to pieces.

“You go, girl!” Charly shouted.

“Ladies and gentleman,” the pilot said as he brought the chopper swooping sideways across the roof. “We hope you have enjoyed your flight. Now get the hell off my chopper!”

Charly leapt, rolled, spotted a target and pop pop pop took him out.

Jack disabled the turret, disconnected and followed, Danny and Brett right behind him. They tossed their sniper rifles, which were useless in close combat, and equipped their machine guns. Soon, the roof was alive with flashes and bangs, smoke trailing across the scene as the team butchered the over-matched NPCs.

“Suckers,” Jack said, planting a hand on his hip and tossing his hair.

“Watch out!” Brett yelled, even as one of the NPCs, who’d been stunned and not killed, rose up and grabbed Jack around the waist, lifting him off his feet.

“Let go of me!” Jack squealed, struggling, kicking.

“Let’s see if you can survive a fall from fifty stories!” The man yelled as he spun and hurled Jack over the edge.

“Motherfucker!” Charly screamed, diving at the man, knocking him on his back and then beating him senseless. “Shit. Shit. Jack! He’s dead!” Charly yelled.

“Um, not?” Jack said.

They all looked to see two tiny hands with long, red nails clinging to the edge of the rooftop. “A little help?”

Jack could have used the Climb skill to pop up, but he wanted to be rescued. Danny came over and grabbed his hand, easily pulling him to the roof and wrapping her arms around his little body. “You okay?”

“Yeah,” Jack said. He was really starting to enjoy the feeling of being small, held in a man’s big strong arms, his soft body pressed against hard muscle. “Thanks to you.”

Danny kissed him. Jack sank into the kiss.

“Oh, how sweet!” Charly said. She was a sucker for romance, even as a dude.

That’s when they heard it. A loud grinding sound– the elevator rising.

“Playtime’s over,” Brett said. “Here comes trouble. I knew it was too easy.”

The group instinctively formed a semi-circle, guns ready.

“Whatever comes out of there, blast the hell out of it,” Danny said.

“No shit,” Brett added.

The doors clanged open to reveal a huge, gleaming robot bristling with weapons. The game identified it as Warbot3000. Everyone fired, but some sort of force field rose around the Warbot, and their bullets seemed to dissolve.

“Oh, shit,” Charly said.

“You are trespassing,” Warbot announced. “And you will die.” The guns on its shoulders began to spit lead, while it also raised an arm and unleashed a stream of fire. Everyone went into evasion mode, dodging and running for cover.

A bullet caught Brett in the leg, and he stumbled and fell. Charly grabbed his arm and pulled him to a spot behind an air condition vent.

Jack got singed before he could roll to safety, and a bullet smashed into Danny’s back, but her armor held. She tumbled forward and rolled to a spot behind an electronics panel. Warbot locked in and Brett and Charly, then advanced, blasting away at their position. All they could do was hide while a storm of deadly bullets blasted all around them.

Jack and Danny fired away to no avail. Jack scanned the bot. The force field showed having 834 points out of 1000 remaining. They’d be out of bullets before they destroyed it. He tried to hack into the bot’s brain, and as he expected failed.

“A little help!” Brett shouted as the Warbot grew closer. In another couple of seconds, it would be able to look over their shelter and fire right down on them.

“The gun!” Danny shouted. “The gun!”

Oh, shit. Jack had forgotten about the gun. He hacked back and took control, blasting away at Warbot. 834. &34. 634. The 50 caliber was doing

serious damage! Warbot spun around and annihilated the gun. Brett and Charly seized the opportunity to scatter, running to new points of cover.

Brett fired a volley into the force field and then checked and saw what Jack had already seen. It would take all their ammo to take it down. "The elevator!" He shouted. "Run!"

But as he ran towards the elevator, bullets cut across his path, sending chunks of the rooftop flying. He retreated.

"There is no escape for you!" Warbot announced.

"You love to state the obvious, don't you?" Charly said, firing her gun, knowing it was pointless, but needing to do something.

"You just stated the obvious," Warbot answered. The programmers thought they were funny.

"We're fucked," Danny said. "Anyone die in this game before?"

"Nope," Brett said. "But I bet it's gonna hurt like hell."

The mission level was too high. They were all doomed, and they lowered their weapons, waiting for the end. It was all part of playing one of these games.

Which is when Jack giggled. He ran out from behind his shelter, directly at the bot.

The other three watched, thinking Jack had decided to go down in a blaze of glory. Jack dove inside the force field, rolled and ran, ducking under a pillar of flame as the Warbot struggled to fix on the small, quick little target.

Brett was about to tell him to stop fucking around. The sooner they died the sooner they could all start over, but then he saw it: Jack had left a grenade at Warbot's feet. It sputtered and shook. Warbot looked down.

"Oh, shit," he said, and then the grenade exploded.

Warbot began to smoke and shake, and then he seemed to just fall apart, raining down onto the roof as a pile of components.

“Motherfucker!” Brett yelled. “Kick ass!”

“Fuck, yes!” Danny shouted.

“How did you know to do that??” Charly asked, wishing she’d thought of it.

“Oh, you know,” Jack said, hooking his hair behind his ear. “Feminine intuition?”

Everyone laughed.

Tommy, who’d cowered during the whole thing, walked up to Jack and kissed him. “You’re my hero,” he said softly. “Let’s do it right here, right now.”

“Not now,” Jack said. “We need to get you back in your real body.”

“Pooh!” Tommy said. “You’re no fun.”

They took the elevator down to the penthouse office. Rene Brand, in Tommy’s body, waited for them. She looked handsome in her pinstripe suit, her stubbled face. “Hey, babe,” she said to Tommy. “I knew you’d come back to me.”

“I missed you,” Tommy said, walking up to Rene and accepting a kiss.

“Okay, what the hell?” Brett said.

“Tommy is completely under my control when he is in my proximity,” Rene said. “He’s my puppet. Aren’t you, honey?”

“I’m whatever you want me to be,” Tommy cooed. “I love being a girl, and I want to stay a woman!”

“You see, my sisters and I can’t be stopped. We are turning men like Tommy Grant into helpless women and taking all their power. We will reshape the world in...”

“Monologuing? Can we just finish this already?” Danny said, raising her rifle and talking aim at Rene’s skull.

“Let me explain my plan, and when I am done, if you still want to try and stop me...”

Once more, Jack’s feminine intuition kicked in. He checked his hacking system. “She’s trying to hack our brains!” He said. “And turn us into her servants!”

“Damn it!” Rene yelled, shoving Tommy away, reaching for the pistol on her desk. Charly’s fist sent her to the ground, unconscious.

Tommy shook his head. “Thank God,” he said. “Let’s get this done. Now.”

There was a body swap machine in the office, but whereas the other one they’d discovered had looked like something from a 1950s B movie, this one looked like futuristic cyberpunk.

It didn’t really make sense to anyone that there would be one in the office, but this was a computer game. Stranger things had been observed. Charly picked Rene up and dumped her in the chair. Tommy sat. Danny through the switch, and they watched as ghostly images of Tommy and Rene changed places.

Tommy immediately grabbed his junk. “Hey, guys,” he said, speaking to his crotch. “I missed you.”

Mission Complete.

It was a big one. They each gained FIVE levels.

Mission complete.

They couldn't help it. Brett and Jack found themselves in the arms of their men, celebrating their success with warm kisses full of longing and desire.

End Part One