



ELECTRIC

THE ART OF ANGRBODA | PART FIVE

18+

ADULT
AUDIENCES



ELEC+RIC

THE ART OF ANGRBODA | PART FIVE

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BETA TESTED

A MONCLASS STORY BY ABE E SEEDY



GOO
TAKUKI
TF
FEM X FEM
RECRUITMENT





“You fool!”, Ameliana crowed. “I can’t believe you equipped the Cursed Collar of Servitude!”

Dame Dianestra lay helplessly at the feet of her rival. “Nnnnoo”, she moaned. “I... can’t...”
Even as she spoke her body began to change, taking on the aspects of

Of

Damn.

Kinsey sat back heavily. She’d *hoped* it wouldn’t come to this, but now that she’d gotten to the hot part she had to admit that she didn’t have a plan. All her earlier stories had come easily, inspired by the weird rumours floating around the fringe forums of *Galatea*. She’d broken out by spinning the most out-there tale into *I Think I Levelled Up Into A Monster?*, and it turned out there was a pretty big audience for combining this popular MMO and petplay monsterfucking. But now things had gone quiet. There hadn’t been any exciting rumours in weeks, and Kinsey was increasingly feeling like she’d run out of whatever inspiration she’d had for her own creations. It was hard to come up with a new twist on the same formula over and over again - a character encounters a special item, or uses some weird skill, or loses to a bizarre enemy, or whatever, and then finds themselves turning into a horny monster-person pet and really liking it. She couldn’t fight the feeling like she was just going through the motions, and whatever monster she picked for Dame Dianestra to merge with was just going to be a palette swap of the last dozen times she’d written exactly that.

She rolled her chair away from her desk, exhaling slowly. As her head slumped to the side, her eyes fell on the VR gear tucked away at the back of her shelves. Fine, she huffed. Maybe, if it would give her something to write about, she’d try actually playing the stupid game again.



It took a lot longer than she remembered to log in, an issue that was explained when she was swarmed by a flood of patch notes. Right. It *had* been a while since she’d turned this on. Kinsey started flicking the notifications away irritably, until her hand froze in sudden recognition. Did... did that say what she thought it did?

She had to go back one page to check, then scan around to find where she'd been looking. Eventually she found it - the top line of the General Adjustments section read 'Undertook Balances on the Southern Tribe'.

Kinsey stared. There wasn't anything in the game officially named "the Southern Tribe". But she *had* written a story called "Balancing the Southern Tribe" about an adventurer forcibly joining the tribe of gnolls that served as beginner enemies south of the game's starting area. Could...

She shook her head, waving away the notification along with that line of thinking. It had to be a coincidence. Using that name was a pretty common shorthand on the forums, and they were probably overdue for reworking original content like that. Besides, the development team was notorious for being ambiguous about-

Her eyes caught something in the very next set of notes, once again listed as the first entry under General Adjustments.

'Improved exploration mechanics for the Sunken City'.

That was... that was *exactly* the title of one of her stories. It was a riff on the rumours that unstable patches had caused those weird issues in the first place, so when she'd written a story about a player equipping an item to let her breathe underwater and turning into a prowling shark creature, she'd titled it like a patch note. But she'd posted that weeks before this patch went live, so if she didn't steal the title from *them*, then...

So, what did that mean? Someone on the team must be aware of her. Maybe someone stumbled on her stuff in searching for reactions to the game, and now these references were a little in-joke. She didn't know whether to be flattered or insulted, but there probably wasn't anything she could do. She should probably be thankful they hadn't sent her a cease and desist, given how she was pretty liberal about using names and terms taken straight from the game. Still. It felt weird.

There was one set of patch notes left, and Kinsey's eyes immediately went to the top of that same section when she opened it.

'Added new treasure hidden somewhere along the Spellthief River ;)', it read.

Normally that wouldn't have caught her attention. She'd never written a story with a title anything like that. But one of her more recent stories *had* been set at a particular shrine about halfway down that exact river. For as much as she used names and creatures from the games she didn't often use specific locations, not after she'd gotten a particularly obnoxious series of comments about 'geographical inaccuracies'. Maybe it was worth checking out? After all, if the dev team were going to make jokes at her expense, she should at least get some treasure out of it.



Thankfully, the shrine wasn't a high level area. Kinsey had never been interested enough in the game to really grind at it, leaving her character at a pretty low level. She'd picked the Ninja class on the advice that it was the easiest way to scout places out, letting her do research on tougher zones or particular monsters, but it was nice not to spend this whole trip locked in a half-speed sneak. Previously the shrine had been deserted, which is why it had been a tempting area to set a story about hidden cults and secret rituals. Apparently since the patches it was now populated with a new form of beginner enemies, which turned out to be simple little pink slimes. Kinsey blushed when she first saw them, because slime creatures *definitely* featured in the story she'd set here, although hers were a lot less... low-key.

That said, these cute little blobby spheres just glooped around peacefully so long as she kept her distance, giving her plenty of space to confirm that there wasn't anything else here. No treasure chests showed up nearby on the map, and nothing had been changed to allow for a secret area. Maybe she'd been wrong about all of this, or maybe the pink slime reference was the only payoff? She huffed loudly. If they were going to call her out like this, then at least they should have given her some cool stuff for the embarrassment.

A bright 'ding' caught her attention, directing her to the message notification at the top of her view. Her friend Aria had noticed that Kinsey was logged in, and was asking if now was finally a good time for her long-delayed introduction to the game. Kinsey went to shoot back a dismissive response, but caught herself with a shrug. Hell, why not? This trip was a bust, and she was in a beginner zone anyway. Before she replied though, there was one last thing she wanted to check. In her story the switch for the cult's lair was hidden around the third step in the entry stairs. If they were going to put in anything super secret as a deep cut, that'd be the place to look.

Walking back to the entrance, she ran her hand behind the railing until she got to that step. Then, right as her fingers traced over the wooden post she pulled back suddenly with a yelp. Not only had she touched something, she'd somehow lost a single hitpoint. What?!

Her confusion was answered by a bubbly little 'gloop!' noise, signalling the arrival of a pink slime in combat. It dripped down from its hiding place behind the rail, wobbling vaguely threateningly as it oozed towards her.

Kinsey scowled. Cute. They *had* put in a secret reference for her, and it was just a hidden crappy enemy. It exploded messily from a single throwing knife, giving her a tiny amount of XP. Poking about in the puddle it left behind she confirmed its loot - a single Tanuki Leaf item, still dripping with pink goop. Great, vendor trash. She picked it up, only then noticing

that it didn't stack with the rest of those items that she'd never gotten around to selling. Apparently this one was technically a 'Goopy Tanuki Leaf', and was somehow worth even *less* than normal.

Maybe her next story would feature a game dev getting creatively punished in some way? That felt like an appropriate response.

For now she put that out of her mind. She'd been delaying showing Aria around this game for months, and she could use something else to focus on right now. Bringing up the chat window she started dictating her response, suggesting they meet by the river and clear the rest of this place together.



When Aria eventually fast travelled in, Kinsey finally had her first view of the character she'd been helping design by remote for the last hour. She knew to expect the Acolyte class, but while the stats and build had been Kinsey's recommendations, the aesthetics were all Aria. She didn't exactly get all the references, but the frilly dress, high heels, long curled hair and sparkly wand as a spellcasting focus were enough for her to assume the theme was 'anime magical girl'.

By contrast, Kinsey's outfit was almost purely practical. Light leather armour, fighting gloves, a cloak for stealth and sturdy shoes for climbing. Only the people who really knew her understood that the fishnet stocking undergarments weren't solely for comfort, and her 'only what's necessary' aesthetic let her get away with wearing hardly any clothes. Her avatar was a pretty close approximation to how she looked in real life, although with a hairstyle she'd never have the patience to maintain, and red-tinted eyes that matched her dye job. Aria had clearly followed that same approach, and she had to respect the effort it took to coordinate her frilly outfit so it didn't either look completely ridiculous or borderline pornographic on her more full-figured body.

After noticing the pause, Aria gave a delighted twirl. "Like it?", she asked.

"It's good!", Kinsey summarised out loud. "Are you ready to explore?"

Aria struck a pose, lobbing yet another anime reference right over Kinsey's head. "Let's do it!"



Muting her microphone with a quick flick, Kinsey let out a long sigh. It was going to be a long day. Aria meant well, and she was always a positive person to talk to. She could be a sympathetic ear for your worst problems or just someone to pass a slow evening with, and either way she'd improve the situation. It was just so easy to talk to her that Kinsey kept finding herself saying more than she meant to, until she became her one IRL friend that knew about all this. The problem was that she was so earnestly supportive that it could be a little draining to be around. Having someone who believed you could climb mountains was great at first, until you had to justify to yourself why you'd still never gotten around to it.

This game had been the one piece of information about her writing that Kinsey had been willing to elaborate on. Aria knew that she wrote erotic fanfiction around edge-cases in the game, and despite her general supportive enthusiasm she'd agreed never to read the stories themselves. But she'd assumed that the game was important to her, and Kinsey had never had the heart to correct her. The wrapper didn't really matter, she just appreciated a convenient setting for all the monsterfucking, not to mention the thrilling rumours that some people had really experienced it. So when Aria had asked so nicely if she could walk her through the game she loved so much, there was only so long Kinsey could put off agreeing.

All of that meant that Kinsey felt a certain kind of pressure to guide Aria through an enjoyable first session, despite not really getting why people would be so into this game. "Okay, lets-", she started, only to be interrupted by a sharp 'ding'.

"What's up?", Aria asked, her concerned expression obscured by the circular timer that appeared in Kinsey's vision.

Waving the notification back into the corner, Kinsey frowned. "I'm... not sure. Is there some sort of temperature issue here? I'm getting a 15 second timer counting down to my... heat change? Are you getting this?"

Now it was Aria's turn to frown. "...no? I don't think so? How would I check for that in the settings?" She started to spin around slowly, clearly confusing herself by trying to focus on the HUD elements at the edge of her view.

"Don't worry about it", Kinsey said quickly, stopping her spin with a quick hand to Aria's shoulder. "Maybe they added some sort of exhaustion mechanic, and I've been in this area too long. If it becomes a problem I'll just log-"

The timer dinged its completion, and the message 'Heat increased!' flashed up over Kinsey's view. The next thing she knew her body shivered involuntarily, her cheeks flushing red as an enticing tingle was poured directly into her brain. Her mouth fell open, and she dabbed at her forehead to remove sweat that wasn't on her avatar but surely existed in real life.

It was actually happening. It must be. Finally she'd been gifted one of the 'very special' glitches she'd heard about, and she was going to get to experience what that was like. It never seemed fair that these full-dive VR games could let you live out impossible fantasies, but they were so expensive to make that only the most mainstream of desires got catered to. But the rumours had been right, someone on the dev team at *Galatea* must have been exactly her sort of freak, and now they were going to show her what that could mean. She was practically vibrating with excitement, and it was only then that she realised that Aria was still there, giving her a look of increasing concern.

After willing her heart to slow down, Kinsey tried her best to act normal while talking as quickly as possible. "Oh, uh, I was right, it's just an exhaustion thing. Well, we've got you set up, so maybe I should-"

Her frantic gestures were interrupted by a flashing message. 'User is within a locked instance, fast travel disabled. Logging out now will end the current event.'

She stopped. She'd stop the glitch if she quit now, and she had no way of knowing if she could get it to restart even if she immediately logged back in in private mode. And given that the instance covered both of them, she couldn't even suggest Aria go somewhere else to do tutorial content for a while. Her eyes widened as she looked at Aria once again. Just *how* understanding was she?

Another timer appeared, this one for 5 minutes and enticingly labelled 'First Stage'. Kinsey swallowed heavily.

It'd be best not to risk it. If they could clear this area then the locked instance would end, and she could send Aria off to adventure elsewhere. That'd be good enough for an introduction, right?

A faint pinprick sensation was spreading down Kinsey's thighs, and she was sure even her avatar was starting to sweat. "Uh, I was just looking up the details for this area", she said, putting her hands on her hips as though she was surveying their surroundings and not just avoiding making eye contact. "We should be able to clear it quickly if we hurry. That'll give you enough of a guided start that you can go off and so some of the standard tutorial stuff afterwards. Sound good?"

Aria hesitated, but it wasn't hard to pick up that Kinsey wanted to move this along, even if

she didn't understand exactly why. Fortunately it wasn't in Aria's nature to impose, so she nodded along happily. "Sure, lead the way!"

Kinsey took precisely one step forwards and froze after hearing a soft squelch, her foot having started sweating into a puddle of pink goop. "Uh, on second thoughts, maybe you go first", she said quickly. "It'll be good training for you. Keep your eyes forwards, look out for dangers! I'll cover you, uh, from a distance. In case anything goes wrong."

There was a long pause as Aria took this onboard, and Kinsey just had to hope she wasn't visibly sinking as her feet slowly melted into goo. Mercifully, Aria just shrugged.

"Makes sense", she answered, striding forwards without a backwards glance. "Let me know if I'm going the wrong way, okay?"

Kinsey felt something that blurred the line between sweating and soaking, the fabric of her fishnets sinking slightly into the growing goop of her legs. The sensation was indescribable, and she barely remembered to give an insincere response. "Oh, yeah, absolutely."



Aria, bless her, had no problem getting into the game. She went off ahead fearlessly, blasting each of the slime creatures as they appeared with her little level one spirit blasts. The whole time she kept up a running commentary, narrating what she was doing and posing quick questions, but she never seemed to mind if Kinsey didn't answer. After 4 minutes and 38 seconds she *did* turn around to look back at Kinsey for approval, making her very glad she'd started lurking behind some nearby scenery. She shouted back to Aria's questioning look that being in cover gave her a bonus to her accuracy, so she wasn't hiding, she was playing her class well. And, once again, Aria bought that explanation without complaint.

What Kinsey was *actually* doing was harder to explain. By now she'd left her shoes and shin armour behind, having slid wetly out of them some time earlier. Only her fishnets clung stubbornly to her lower body, as apparently her goopy flesh was just sticky enough to hold them up, even if some lines of the fabric floated just a little below the surface. It was hard not to run a hand over her thigh just to enjoy the weirdly satisfying way it felt, like stroking an animal made out of soft, warm jelly. She'd passed a few happy seconds enjoying that, only to be further surprised when the light leathers she had equipped sloughed off her torso. That revealed that the goopiness now reached up to the bottom of her chest, but more importantly that her avatar was finally anatomically correct.



One of the biggest frustrations she'd had when going from reading the wild rumours to playing the game was their official stance on nudity. They were very clear - no players needed anything modelled in detail beneath their undergarments, despite the fact that the game had strict age checks to 'avoid negative educational impacts'. All of that fell away along with her sodden armour, her slick fingers finding quick purchase inside her slit even as the First Stage timer ticked away to zero. When the notification ding sounded a thrill of anticipation ran through her for whatever came next, and she barely noticed Aria working through her last few enemies. As far as Kinsey was concerned that could all wait, because the 5 minutes of the Second Stage was starting.

A change in the background music caught her attention, and Kinsey suddenly realised she was in combat, despite the fact that between her stealth and Aria's thoroughness there shouldn't be any enemies anywhere around. That said, it wasn't unusual for the game to spawn enemies in response to certain triggers, so she had to imagine something had been called in by the 'event' she was in. And, now that she thought about it, the music was off too. The normally peppy and energising fight music had been shifted up by an octave, coming across as goofy and nonthreatening. Before she could untangle what that meant the enemy she was fighting revealed itself; yet another silly pink slime ball slinking into view. But this one was about twice as large as the others, almost the size of a beach ball. It slid up to her quickly, and Kinsey hesitated. Was she supposed to fight it? Or was something else supposed to happen here?

That delay let the slime take the initiative. It extended a slimy tendril, wrapping it around Kinsey's legs and yanking backwards. Somehow it managed to get enough leverage that the trip attack was effective, even if her own goopy body heavily cushioned her landing. It acted again before she could recover, this time executing a move that the in-game notification registered as 'Flip'. In practice that involved the slime spinning her around on her axis, leaving her suddenly face-down on the ground. As she caught her breath another notification appeared, informing her that the enemy was starting a 'unique grapple'. A 10 second countdown timer appeared for her to break free, and Kinsey had never hit a 'skip' option faster.

She shivered as it slid over her legs, the sensation somewhere between being slathered in massage gel and stepping into a hot bath. The warmth of it sank softly into her, with every movement it made pulling ever so slightly at the slime of her own lower body. It was incapacitating enough just focussing on those feelings, but Kinsey had enough presence of mind to brace herself for more as it made its way inside her thighs.

It entered her without pausing, flowing smoothly from moving over her body to sliding a tendril inside her slit. Her mouth fell open in a panting gasp, a futile effort to release the heat that was pouring into her. It was exactly as she'd always hoped, the programmer had used the freedom that came from this all just being a VR simulation to craft an experience that was impossibly enjoyable. The walls of her pussy were being stretched enough to drive

her wild, but all the discomfort that would actually provoke was seamlessly filtered out. On top of that carefully curated bliss, they were also gleefully subjecting her to things that were outright impossible. As the goop pulsed and pressed inside her, her brain told her that her body was starting to change. Her flailing hands cupped her breasts only to confirm that they were becoming slick and heavy, every thrust of her new partner causing them to swell further between her grasping fingers in a mass of sensitive, dripping slime. Soon a twist on that sensation was added as she felt her hands themselves plump out, a coat of her new pink slime causing them to shift into something more suggestive of paws.

All she wanted to do was rock back and forth on this sensation, driving the changes ever onwards, but suddenly Aria's voice cut through the fog. "Uh, Kinsey? I'm not sure where you went, but I think I've cleared the area. What should I do now? Do you want to meet back up?"

Kinsey tried to yell a response, but another thrust had chased the words from her mouth. A brief wave of panic shook her, but suddenly she realised she'd already solved this problem. She'd written before about someone losing the ability to speak, and researching how to get the story past that particular hurdle had revealed that *Galatea* included canned responses you can give with a gesture when you're too busy to talk.

It took some effort to force her dripping fingers to make the right movements, but eventually she crafted her message. "Busy in a tough fight", she sent. "Catch up soon."

"Oh, okay", Aria answered, clearly a little confused. "Uh, it says there's a 'lair' in the shrine up ahead on my map. Would I be good to try and get through that?"

Kinsey hadn't realised the slime had kept moving up over her back until it reached her head. Its long tendril continued to press deliciously into her slit, but now the rest of its weight descended over her face, enveloping her completely. Once again the programming delicately waved away any breathing issues she would have faced as it gooped down her throat, leaving only shuddering contentment as it wrapped her up and remoulded her. Slightly pointed ears were coaxed carefully atop her head, while the pulsing goo steadily drew out her mouth into a muzzle, tipped with a dark, sensitive nose. Her sharp fangs poked bubbles into its surface as it massaged her smooth tongue, her hair clumping together into a bouncy pink mass.

Through all of that, it was frankly shocking that she managed to flick her fingers out and signal "yes". She accepted it wordlessly, leaving Kinsey to gasp quietly as the slime on her face withdrew. A second passed and she dragged herself unsteadily up to her elbows, starting to slowly take stock of her new body. But that was interrupted as a personal fanfare erupted around her, with a notification declaring that 'A New Class Has Been Unlocked!'

Her nodding acknowledgment only shrunk that text to the upper right of her vision,

transitioning into the 3rd-person view of herself that she belatedly remembered was the level-up screen. The slowly spinning camera gave her the first proper view of her new avatar, and she realised that as well as being a bright pink goo-monster herself, her paws, face and feet suggested she was something like a tanuki as well. Except she didn't have a tail. Surely that was the most important part, right?

Another wave of text flooded her vision, but this wasn't confined to the level-up screen. Half a dozen notifications of 'pink slime has joined the fight with you!' pinged up in front of Kinsey, but before she could react the first of them charged into her from behind. Its weight rocked her forwards, her goopy body sloshing back into place as the wave of its force rebounded back down her spine. But there was an extra twitch when the motion reached her rear, and it was only when she looked at the still-playing 3d view that she recognised what had happened. Somehow the slime had merged with her body, forming a little round nub that protruded slightly behind her. She just barely had time to put all that together before the next slime impacted, the slightly lighter colour of this one quickly melding into a new stripe on her growing tail.



Kinsey stuck her tongue out and grinned, bracing herself as the rest of the slimes sloshed into place. The last to join was the one that had been her partner this whole time, jumping up onto her swaying tail to form its dripping tip. Now that they were done with her, it seemed like she was finally being granted a bit of space, and she wasted no time in slipping two of her own fingers into her slit. This whole experience had been amazing, but it was hard to fight her growing frustration at the fact that despite all the attention, she still hadn't climaxed. She'd always waved this aside in her stories, but it was well known that the game included a hard neurological limiter that prevented players from orgasming while logged in. So as much as she could enjoy her off-model equipment by sliding more and more of her fingers into the gelatinous mess of her pussy, she fundamentally could not finish.

A last burst of the fanfare caught her attention, the level-up process apparently almost done. Text ballooned out above her model to announce her new class - Tanuki Slime Boss Monster.

Her hips collapsed, her face all but melting into the ground as the limiter on her release suddenly disappeared. Her forearm melded with her waist as her cohesion wavered, the inside of her wrist stimulating her clit even as her fingers stretched inside her slit. One after another the long-delayed orgasms crashed through her, her tail twitching in the air as the rest of her body sunk into a puddle of bliss.

She would have loved to lie there and bask in this, really appreciating the genius programmer who had realised that content restrictions on players didn't have to apply to monsters. But after taking a few minutes to catch her breath, she was interrupted by a call from Aria. "Ah, there's quite a lot of them here", she said quickly, "and they're acting *real* weird. Is this okay? Am I doing it right?"

Kinsey rolled over with a sigh, before flowing smoothly upwards into a standing position. "I'll be right there", she answered, already selecting the lair as one of her newly-unlocked fast travel options. "I'm sure I'll be able to find a way to help somehow."



For a half-second Kinsey was worried when the loading completed and she found herself surrounded by slimes, but once she realised they were dipping their eyes to the ground she was reminded of her new status. That confusion also prompted her to familiarise herself with some of the new 'class abilities' that the level-up screen had teased, just so she wouldn't be caught off-guard by something important. Accessing the menu, most of the abilities were familiar, but among the new ones, a brand-new signature move called 'Split' stood out. There wasn't a lot of info, but from the tags it seemed to be some kind of long-lasting summon. Well, might as well try it now in case it helps, Kinsey thought, activating it casually before her mind flashed pink.

The first thing she noticed was her vision shifting downwards, even before it started splitting in two. Surprisingly, that wasn't too bad. She'd just been dealing with another view from her level-up camera after all, and this similarly had a 'main' display and a separate, smaller, 'picture-in-picture' effect, even if she was staring back at two identical versions of herself in each image. No, what really threw her were the sensations. The moment of splitting was disconcerting enough, but after that it was like she was receiving a constant feed of physical interactions - she didn't have the innate sense of weight from the other body, but she did feel everything it was touching, from the stone floor against its feet to the light breeze that tickled over her hair.

Fortunately, she didn't have to control the other body directly. Her main consciousness was in one, and the other seemed to only need simple instructions. Kinsey tested this out by giving herself a high five, feeling her palms slap together from both sides at once. If she hadn't been supposed to go and rescue Aria she probably would have taken that testing further, but for now she wanted to try out her next new ability, a stance labelled "Classic Tanuki Mode." Kinsey had the other version of herself take a few steps backwards, giving her a good view as she triggered it on her own body.

She felt a sudden jolt of weight descending, the top of her head sliding down about an inch as she contracted slightly. But she wasn't simply getting denser, instead that mass was concentrated in her lower body, and soon her breath caught as the focus for all this became clear. In the space of a few heartbeats her body flowed outwards, first her clit then her entire pussy quickly overwritten by reshaping gooey flesh. Her brain sparked as it tried to find a suitable pathway to receive inputs from her new cock, while beneath that the rest of that urgent weight found its home as her burgeoning balls.

This was easily one of her top three most popular story tags, and having it be executed flawlessly for her like this was almost too much to stand. She just barely resisted having Other Kinsey spin around and bend over for her, but for now that could wait - *had* to wait - until she got Aria freed and out of here. Just that one last thing, and then she'd be free to *really* enjoy all this.



Kinsey made sure both of herself stuck to the shadows as she entered the room, but she quickly realised Aria wasn't in any position to see anything. She was lying on her back in the centre of this shrine, her arms and legs restrained by a slime sitting over each one. Weirdly though, they weren't attacking. They just seemed to be... waiting.

Aria's head turned as much as it could in Kinsey's general direction, but even then she didn't seem to catch sight of her. "Kinsey?", she said. "I can tell you're close on the mini-map, but I can't see you."

“I am”, Kinsey answered, considering her options. She still had her throwing daggers on her, maybe she could shoot the slimes off? Or perhaps she could just command them to go? Or would that raise too many questions? “What happened here?”

It was hard for Aria to be nonchalant while she was pinned to the ground, but she clearly tried. “Oh, well, I *thought* things were going well, then it turned out there were more in here than I thought. I was getting overwhelmed, and then only a few minutes ago they started acting differently. It got a bit *Cult of the Goo-Slick Staircase*, huh?”

If she couldn't command them to leave, maybe she could change their target? That might-

Wait.

“I thought you promised to never read my stories.”

Aria visibly shivered from the ice in Kinsey's voice. Her eyes went wide, and it took a few moments for her to find her voice. “I didn't! I mean, I didn't intentionally! I wasn't looking for *your* stuff specifically, I was just looking for, y'know, good stuff, and I happened to find some of your things, and it was only *after* I read them that I realised they lined up with some of the details you'd told me, so I...”

She trailed off as Kinsey's double stepped up in front of her, barely managing to see her face as she stared up from below her gooey tanuki body.

“I see”, Kinsey said, clearly startling Aria as the Kinsey she was looking at wasn't the one to speak. Aria lifted her neck as much as she could, just managing to get a view of another Kinsey approaching from below her feet, this one with a rapidly stiffening cock sliding back and forth in its goopy paw. “Well then, perhaps I'll take the accidental nature of your mistake into account for your punishment. Unless you'd rather simply log off...?”

Aria swallowed heavily, but her avatar stayed where it was. Before Kinsey could do anything more than grin, she was interrupted by the quick 'ding' of a notification. According to the UI one of her new skills was ready, with the conditions for 'Familiar Assist' apparently unlocked. Her hand settled into the activation gesture almost without thought.

It was good that she was looking at herself from both sides, so she could see the command taking effect in both places at once. The tip of both tails sprouted little ears, with eyes blinking to attention as it started to stretch. A few moments later and the lead slime that had melded with her earlier pulled itself from both of her bodies, only now it had an adorable tanuki tail of its own to show its status as her familiar. Kinsey had probably lost a foot or so of height since she split in two, so the little slime companion was even smaller than before, a little blob of perhaps 8 inches across. She was worried she'd need to command it directly, giving her yet another thing to focus on, but fortunately it already

seemed to know what it was doing. Each familiar slid confidently across the floor, with hers making its way up Aria's thighs while the one from her double enveloped her head.

That one reached its goal first, making Aria stiffen up as it washed over her face with its gooey mass. Kinsey could tell that moment of panic only lasted very briefly, with the program quick to shut off the connection between her avatar's distress and the player's need to breathe. Aria visibly relaxed into it, her head drifting upwards slightly as the slime massaged her all over.

At that point the second familiar reached her crotch, instantly triggering a reaction that caused all of Aria's gear to unequip. It then pulsed in and out for a second against the censored smoothness of her avatar, until a sudden tremor ran through her. Looking on, Kinsey saw Aria's nametag flash, flickering as her class was apparently overwritten. After a few seconds of garbled glitching the text stabilised, revealing itself to read:

"Slime Captive - NPC"

Aria gasped heavily, the slime on her face parting just enough to let that sound out. But it was the area around her crotch that Kinsey's attention was drawn to, as the goo pressed further inwards. It took another few seconds of patient work to reveal the result of the action, but eventually the pink mass sunk down enough to show the shining wet pussy that now graced her body. And yet, it wasn't simply that her avatar had been adjusted to be more anatomically correct. Rather, it soon became clear that the familiar had melded with her crotch, leaving her with a splash of dripping goo at the top of her thighs.

A tiny timer in the corner of Kinsey's view ticked down below text that simply said 'Familiar Reforming', so apparently this move would recharge eventually. Until then though, the cock that stiffened eagerly inside her paw provided more than enough suggestions about how to fill the time.

Kinsey commanded her double to step forward, and she was surprised to find Aria curve her spine upwards to bury herself into its crotch. She hadn't followed the progress of that familiar, but apparently it had gone from encasing her head to remoulding it, replacing her flesh with slime down to her shoulders. Aria's face lacked the tanuki attributes that Kinsey had, apart from a hairstyle that suggested something like her tail. Instead her features looked simplified, her eyes the same blank pink as the rest of her head. Notably though, her tongue had increased dramatically, and soon she was lapping hungrily at the slit waiting above her.

The sensation of her double being explored by this dripping, foot-long length made Kinsey's eyes roll back in her head, but a quick twitch of her fingers brought her attention back to the other need she still had waiting to be fulfilled. She pounced, splashing her own goo all across Aria's chest as she settled over her.



It was so easy to brace herself into position when she could flow around any flailing limbs, merging with the other slimes that locked Aria's feet to the floor by simply enveloping them with her paws. Then, with a wet, rolling huff of satisfaction, Kinsey pressed her cock into her partner's goopy pussy, the fluid of both of them expanding and contracting with every mindless thrust.

They crashed against each other like waves, the slime creeping over Aria's body only making her more eager and energetic. Kinsey's brain fizzled with new sensations; having her pussy stuffed with squirming slickness, her shaft filling every inch of her partner while her balls pulled her forwards with desperate, building weight. Her double came first, and a tingle at her clenched fingers caught Kinsey's eye enough to see the stain of her slickness spreading her goo down Aria's neck. The utter dominance of rewriting her friend's body made a growl swell in Kinsey's throat, releasing itself into a low roar as her cock finally tensed and unleashed. She would have sworn she dropped another foot in height with the amount of her mass that poured out of her, flooding up through Aria from the inside out until she was utterly converted. Every pulse through her cock sent a flood of signals to her brain that it could only interpret as overwhelming bliss, especially combined with how Aria's tongue still thrashed inside her double's slit. Eventually the tide of goo swept over the last of Aria's body, leaving her not a gooey tanuki like Kinsey was, but a more generic, faceless slime woman. The text of her nametag changed too, adjusting itself once again to become:

"Slime Lieutenant - Enemy"

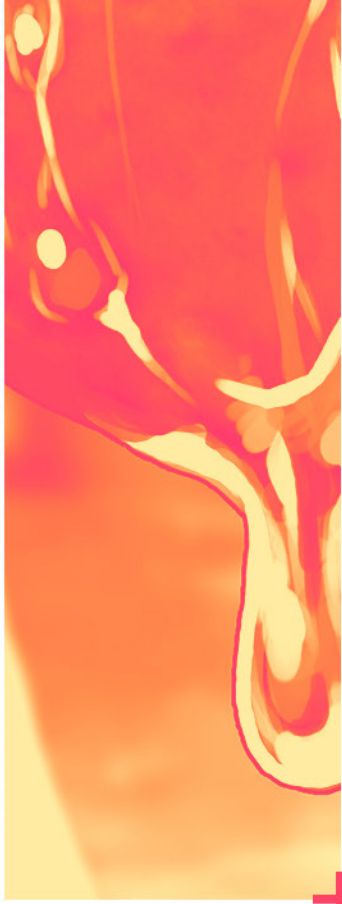
Even when the change was complete Kinsey kept pumping into her, the intoxication of this emphatic climax keeping her thrusting blindly when even her prodigious balls were dry. Aria clearly came too, writhing beneath the twin attentions as her whole body shuddered and dripped.



They de-coupled eventually with a messy splat, Kinsey recombining with her double after she'd unthinkingly collapsed on top of herself. Eventually they both started as a notification appeared for each of them, announcing the conclusion of their locked instance. "Dungeon complete", the message read. "Mission failed successfully!"

Kinsey waved it away with a grin. Still not looking at Aria, she said to the ceiling, "And that's what *Galatea* is like."

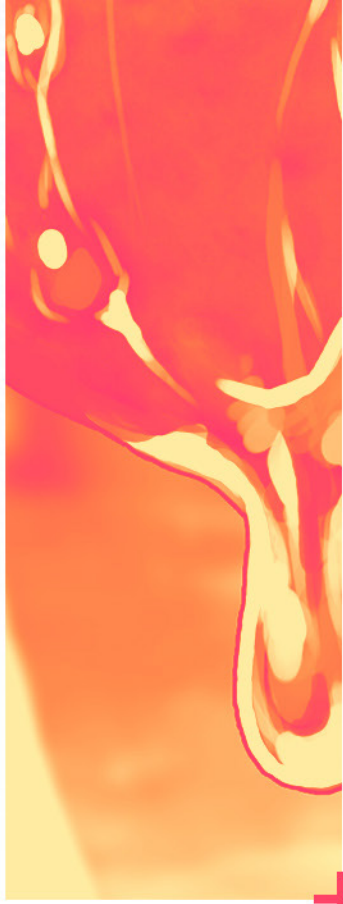
A quiet laugh echoed next to her. "Good game, no notes", Aria answered.



BETA TESTED

CHARACTER DESIGN
KINSEY (HUMAN)

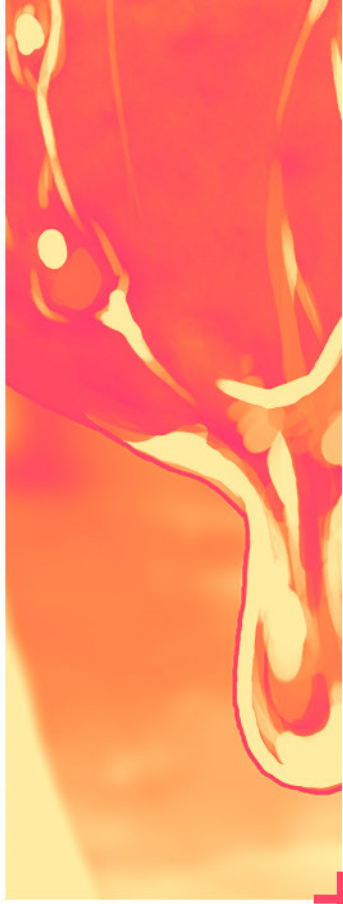




BETA TESTED

CHARACTER DESIGN
KINSEY (TANUKI)

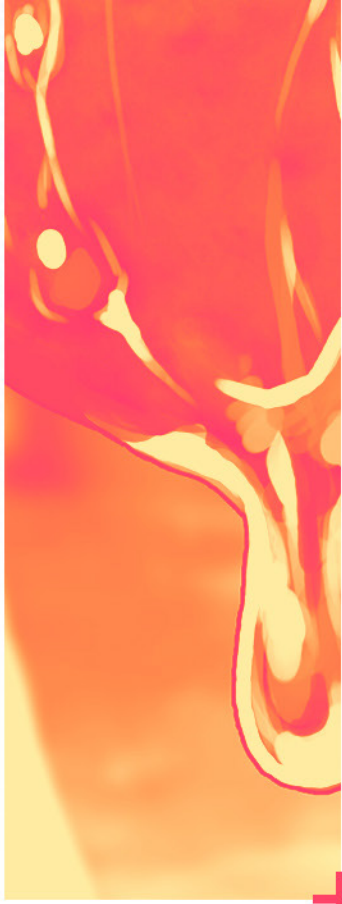




BETA TESTED

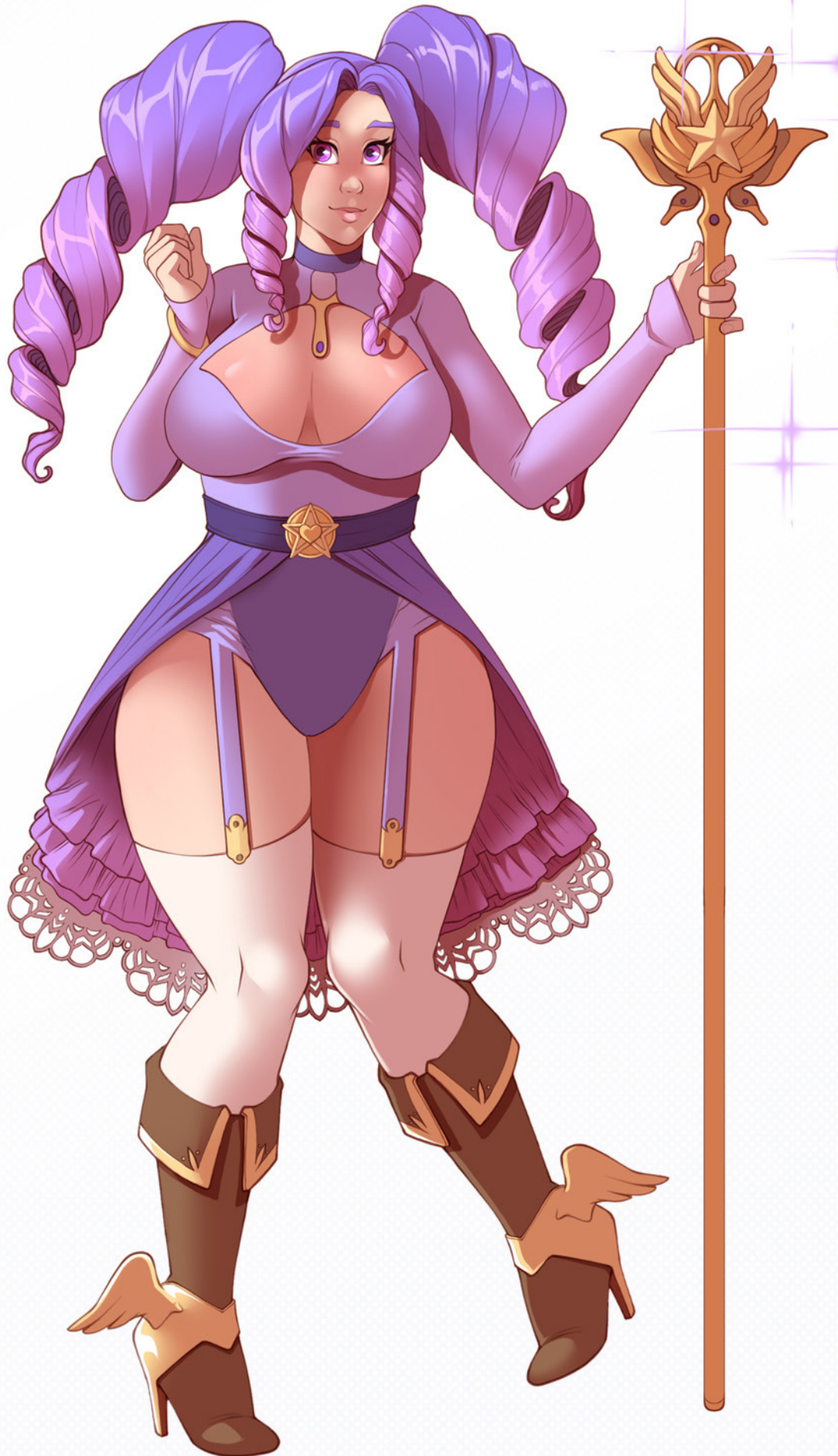
CHARACTER DESIGN
KINSEY (TANUKI)

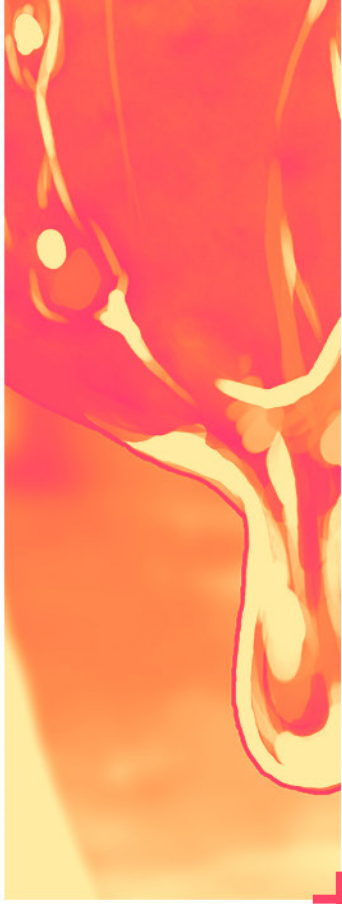




**BETA
TESTED**

CHARACTER DESIGN
ARIA (HUMAN)





**BETA
TESTED**

CHARACTER DESIGN
ARIA (SLIME)



THE DRIP

A COMIC BY ANGRBODA



TOON
RUBBER
TF
FEM
SOLO
NULL

I'VE DEFINITELY BEEN AVOIDING THE BASEMENT.



AT FIRST I TOLD MYSELF I WAS JUST BUSY - MOVING INTO THIS BIG, OLD HOUSE HAS BEEN A LOT TO TAKE ON.

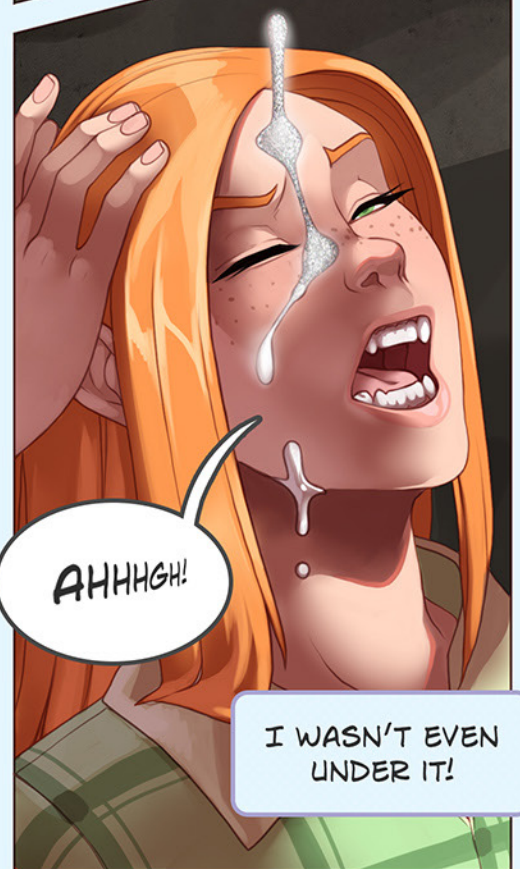
I ONLY HEAR THE CRACKLE SOMETIMES, AND I'VE ONLY SEEN THE LIGHT ONCE, THROUGH THE BASEMENT WINDOWS.

ONCE, BEFORE NOW.



WHATEVER THIS IS, IT'S RIGHT UNDER THE PARLOR.

MAYBE IT'S LEAKING OUT OF THAT OLD TV-



AHHHGH!

I WASN'T EVEN UNDER IT!



IT'S LIKE IT... MOVED...



AND IT'S... STUCK TO ME?



IT'S SPREADING IT'S-



GLOVES?

FEELS LIKE PLASTIC?
SMELLS LIKE... INK?



EVEN WITH THE GLOVES, I CAN FEEL IT, LIKE IT'S ALL MY-



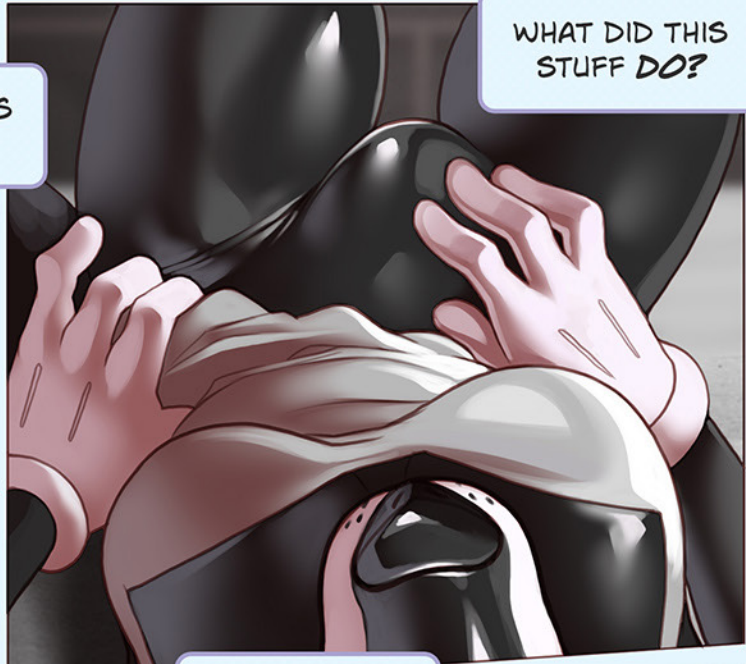
- THE HELL?!



WHAT-



OKAY, THE CLOTHES DO COME OFF.



WHAT DID THIS STUFF DO?



M-MY... I'M-

FFFFUUU-
FUH-
FIDDLESTICKS!

OH MY G- GAH-
GOODNESS!

THE STATIC FROM THE GOD,
IT'S LIKE IT... GOT INSIDE ME.

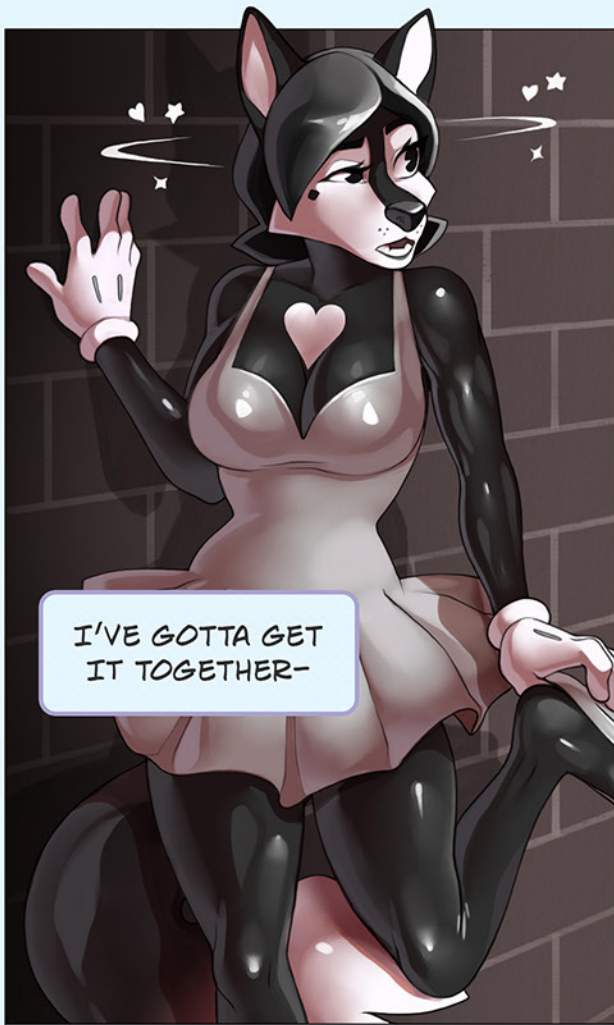
LIKE ALL I CAN
FEEL IS... FUZZY.

MY HEAD IS...
I GOTTA-

GOTTA...

OH
GG-GOSH





I'VE GOTTA GET IT TOGETHER-



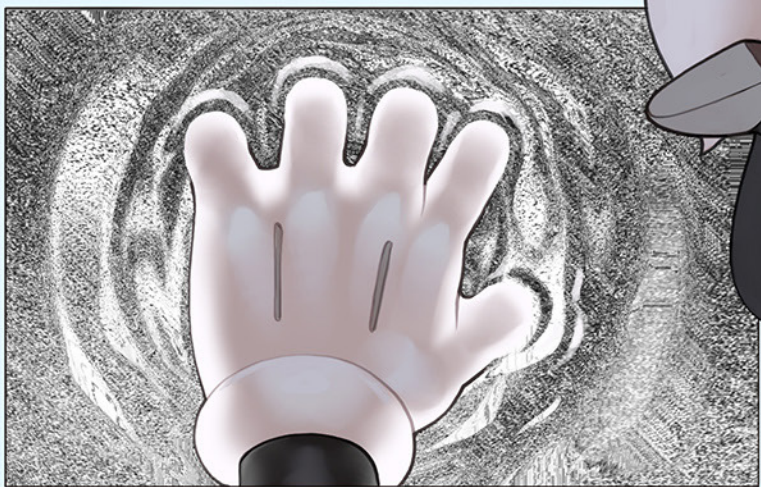
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?



...MUSIC?



IT'S SO...



FAMILIAR.

OH, HOW SILLY!



I'VE GOTTA GET READY OR
I'LL BE LATE FOR MY OWN
GOSH-DARN DEBUT!

THE END



THE DRIP

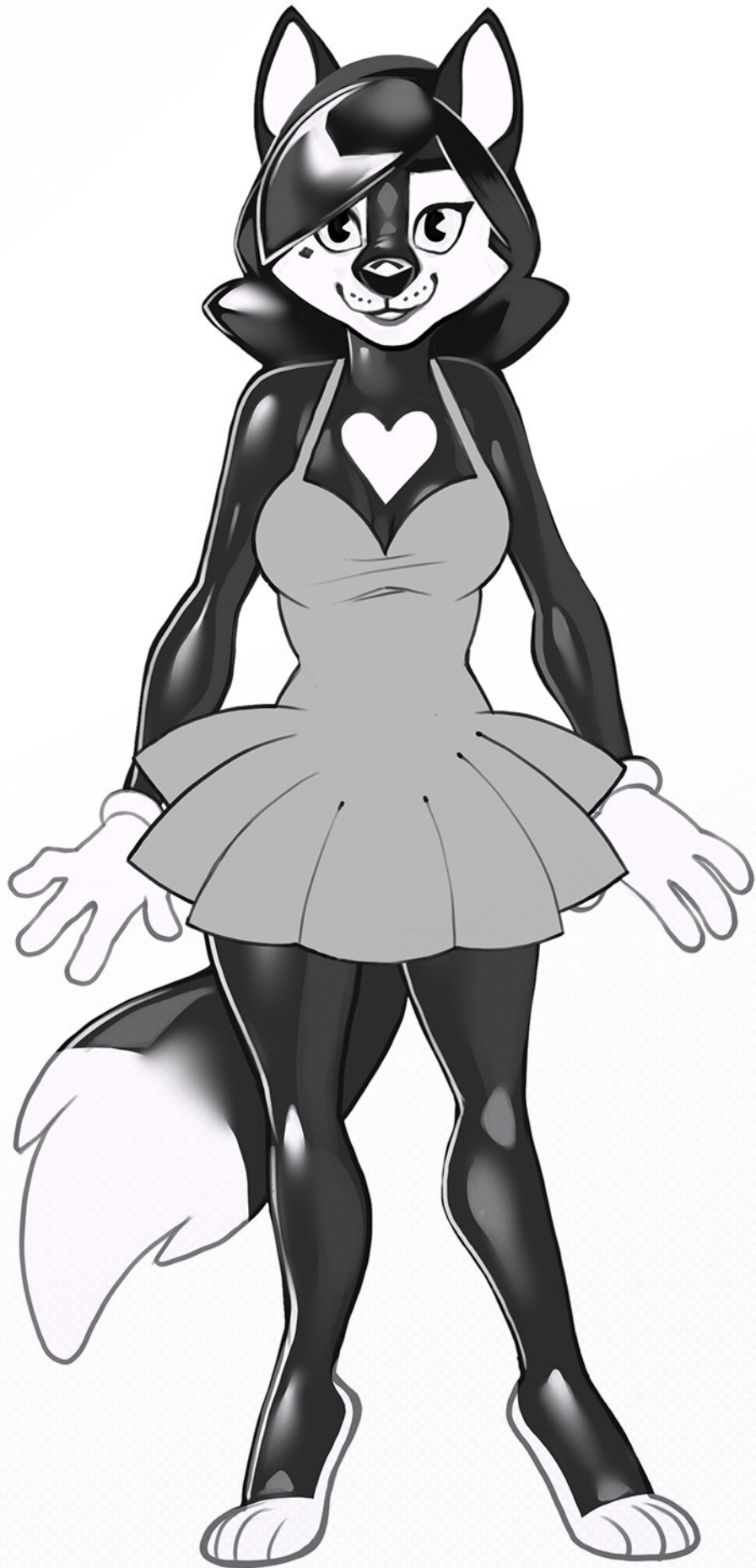
CHARACTER DESIGN
FELICITY (HUMAN)





THE DRIP

CHARACTER DESIGN
FELICITY (TOON)





/// CONSTRUCT ///

OVER LOAD

A STORY BY ANGRBODA

DRAGON
SYNTH
TF
M/F & F/F
ID MERGING



A millisecond before blacking out, I see the shape of it melt through my last security barrier, its clawed black fingers puncturing the field like a knife through cellophane. My cheek burns deep-space cold before its fingertips can even come close, and as my last breath shudders out in a crystalline cloud and my eyes roll back at least I know things could never have ended any other way: this run was fucked long before the jump.



The cogni-stim starts as a gentle nudge on the edge of my awareness, arms enfolding me and ushering me towards consciousness almost apologetically. The input transitions smoothly through soothing lavenders and dawn purples to crisp mountain air and notes of cedar. I'd be shocked at the subtlety, the luxury, if I didn't know who must have apprehended me, but even half conscious, that's no mystery.

What I am surprised about is the soft hand at play here - let alone that they didn't just DFE and wipe and dump me...

The room around me extends the vibe of expensive comfort; I'm laid out on a microsuede chaise lounge with an elegantly sculpted side table of synthetic hardwood. Only the edges of the room are lit yet, synching perfectly with the caress of the wake-up program against my implant.

They clearly want me on side, which is maybe scarier than if they had gone tactical. I had just perpetrated the most omega level incursion into their systems that a single user could conceivably manage. Even though the run itself was a failure, the attempt should have been enough to merit lethal countermeasures, without even taking into account what I'd encountered before the system crash. Their last line of defense against incursion was so illegal that it never should have manifested, never should have risked showing itself to any intruder. But it did.

As hazy as my view of it had been, all glitch and aberration and halfway to shutdown, I immediately understood why. It was there for me. Only for me. At least, whatever happens now, I know that much.

The intercom on the table next to me interrupts my thoughts with a polite chime.

“Your presence is requested in the adjoining meeting chamber,” the synthassistant informs me in buttery smooth tones, as if I hadn’t been apprehended and stashed here and was just passing through on business. I let go of the breath I’ve been unconsciously holding. Whatever happens, I’m the closest I’ve been after almost a year of intense recon and planning - I’ll see it through to the end.



“I’m sure you are aware of the... nature of the being you encountered,” the suit across from me spreads his manicured hands, all business now that we’ve dispensed with what little pleasantries could be managed, under the circumstances. “Your file was very specific about your qualifications in the area, and your most recent incursion put to rest any possible doubts about your bona fides.”

Most recent. So they knew about the others. Now that I understood what I’d been up against, it made sense that even at my most subtle, I was really an ox in a china shop.

“I’m aware of the theoretical possibility of what I encountered,” I return, “as my background is in theory only. Any practical applications are at the very least *legally problematic*, as you know.”

He has barely any tells - as with all corporate interface men, personal idiosyncrasy is his enemy - but he slides a thumb along the wrist of his obsidian crisp suit jacket. His eyes shade distant for the briefest instant.

“I’ve received authorization to take you to her.”

It’s... very low on the list of what I expect to hear. I had so many canned lines prepared, expecting this to draw out like bleeding a stone. I almost fumble into ‘take me to who?’, but abort the response at the last instant. They know I know. And if they know that... any leverage I have is gone.

“What disclosure agreements does that entail?” I ask weakly, knowing the asking is a farce.

“The kind where you don’t leave this building again,” he replies, as if there was never any question at all.



The clearance for the room he takes me to doesn't even allow him to enter. He departs without another word and I place my palm on the hand scanner (the fact that they grabbed my biometrics while I was out barely registers as a violation given... everything). I'm greeted by a wave of precise cold from the chamber beyond as soon as I step over the threshold.

The space is larger than I expected but the accessible area is small - two chambers dominate the room, surrounded by thick layers of glass even where they meet the walls. Each one is full of a bright liquid, one blue shading to a clean, antiseptic green and the other, the empty one, to soft violet. I can't think about the empty one right now.

I had thought the glimpse I got before shutdown, when my failsafes triggered and severed the connection before my heart fully stopped, must have been an avatar, a metaphor, some kind of cloak. But no - here she is, in physical space, exactly as she'd appeared while I was under. I walk over, my usually discrete boots ringing against the pressure-plated floor, and place a hand on the glass.

When Skylark had disappeared, I knew it had been a corporate job. I knew what contracts she was on, where and how to follow up, because that knowing was what I did for her. What I was to her. She was always the deflection and I was always the answering attack, and in tandem we were a beautiful, singing, sinuous thing, as close to airtight as humanly possible.

This past year without her was painful, wretched. An ache like a lost limb. It had left me bitter. And it had left her...

The thing in the tank was inky dark. Its head was bowed, floating in seeming repose, or... *system stasis*, I realize. A single thick wire runs from the top of the chamber, connecting somewhere at the top of the spinal column. A series of lights along the housing of the wire pulses infrequently. Its body - *her* body, I correct myself.

Because as much as I know her skill, her heart, her intellect, I know her body. But now it is clearly also something else. Her and not her, intertwined.

The claws and doglike legs that make her look more than vaguely bestial barely register against the stark, geometric lines of her mechanized face. The plates there delicately form the likeness of a jackal, giving her the countenance of some ancient death god. The system she had merged with had known in some way what it was becoming and had fully embraced it.

Her eyes abruptly light up a piercing, digital green and my heart leaps to my throat. She turns her gaze to me and seems to smile.

You are late.



ANBN

ANBN 01

The voice reverberates through a host of speakers into the room. Her voice and not her voice. Layered. A single multitude.

What is there to say? But before I can form words, she goes on,

What they want cannot be asked of you.

Her gaze seems to shift to the empty tank across the room. She drifts forward, her hand meeting mine with only the glass between. Even through it, I can feel the awful thrum of her presence.

But I would ask it still.

I sink to my knees and rest my forehead against the glass. As numb as I am from the chill of the room, the glass burns even colder. I wonder idly if that cold will be the last thing I feel, and think *so be it*.

The intercom clicks on, and I tell them to begin their preparations, and to authorize my access to their project files.



True artificial intelligence doesn't exist. Or at least, as far as we currently know it probably won't exist, ever, by purely artificial means. No matter how much money the megacorps throw at the problem, how much research, how much computing power, there is seemingly a hard limit on how lifelike, how adaptable, how *aware* each corp's internal tech can get. Whatever spark or miracle we assumed would bridge the gap between a machine and a mind, it hasn't happened and doesn't seem to be on the horizon.

One of the many hypothetical solutions to this problem was that the missing element could be added by supplementing artificial systems with biological components. Several high profile practical attempts at this kind of synthesis had resulted in... upsetting failures. The technique was determined to present major ethical problems and an intolerable threat vector, and a global ban on any such procedure is still currently in place.

Everyone knows, though, that the megacorps don't really give a shit about what is and isn't legal, as long as nothing can be proven and there's money to be made...



They keep calling her The Anubian, in the files I flip through. Sometimes The Anubian Entity. No one is sure if she's a machine or not. They mostly seem to agree that, philosophically, she isn't human. The people who work on this shit love thought experiments like this. I used to love thought experiments like this. I miss when they were hypothetical.

I force myself to shower. To eat something. The original space I woke up in seems to belong to me for the time being and has all the amenities I'll need while the necessary prep is completed - minus, of course, any access to the external net. The disturbingly thorough psychological profile they have of me posits that this is unnecessary, but they aren't taking any chances.

In amongst the project files are a suite of videos of Skylark undergoing the merging process. Some of it looks painful. Some of it seems to have a peculiar kind of ecstasy. Sometimes there's overlap. Those moments are the hardest to look at, the hardest to look away from.

She's writhing in the tank, paws clutching at every curve of her changed body, the eyes of her new face alight with that sickly green glow. She spasms and the camera feed dissolves into artifacts. I rewind.

Viscous black blooms across her skin, wrapping each delicate limb, encasing her. The jackal mask hovers just in front of her, the nanomedium that's part of the merging process stretching and molding her face to meet it. *The factor that unlocks the merging*, I recall the quote from the project documents, *is that the body of the human subject must be made pliable, to allow compromise between the two halves of the entity on their collective form and avert rejection.* I rewind.



She's standing naked in the tank as it slowly fills with fluid, (the techs here call it thermo-regulant because it starts warm and adjusts to the ambient temperature she needs as she goes) briefly pausing to flash a thumbs up to one of the cameras. I want to struggle with why she went through with this, why she seemingly sought it out, but I know her too well. Before our research had been scrapped, we had spent so much time together weaving through the theoretical possibilities of doing exactly this. If some zaibatsu had offered me the chance of becoming a machine god, even if it meant losing most of myself in the process... could I have said no? I've already read the answer in that psyche profile. After all, she's the one that compiled it.



The system that makes up the other half of her started as a highly specialized automated anti-incursion sentinel. The corp had been tending to several candidates for this type of merger, and in addition to being the most sophisticated, the specialization of the sentinel system aligned perfectly with her own area of expertise.

Their current most promising system, the only one to approach or possibly surpass the sentinel system in pre-neurological function, is a ruthless attack-and-dominate protocol. It's so close to real consciousness that the notes I'm given on it sometimes lapse and call it 'he' or 'him'. Tomorrow, I'm interfacing with it for the first time. If we're as compatible as the profiles indicate... then I don't know what happens. I don't know what I want to happen.



"Hello," my voice echoes in the conceptual space of the sub-virtual connection. I try not to think about my body, floating in the purple-tinged tank across from hers. When I do, I experience a momentary disquiet, a doubling. I clamp down hard on my nerves. Project confidence.

Something whispers across my back. I abort the urge to turn. I can feel the huge, vague shape lurking behind me but I don't flinch. In conceptual space I'm wearing a rough approximation of my everyday clothes, a light jacket, nondescript shirt, serviceable work pants and my boots. I double again for a half second, briefly as naked as I am in the tank.

I expect it to lunge at this apparent weakness, but instead, the segmented shapes in the dark merely coil around, well back from me. I can feel its attention on me, calculating and alien. Through the feedback of our link, the flow of all that processing is stomach churning, and I know I'm only accessing the edges of it. The barest bit.

“You’re... not quite what I expected,” I say, half for my own benefit.

QUERY:

it responds

ShareResource: NeurologicalCapacity(5%)
CONSENT REQUEST Y/N

No point beating around the bush, I guess.

“ShareResource: NeurologicalCapacity(3%)” I counter, “Consent Authorized”.

The coils around me jerk, as if in a huff, and all of a sudden, my skull opens up. I double over, forgetting to block out the sensation of my physical body, and feel my self in the tank almost retch into the thermo-regulant. Electric fire lights up every synapse, ever so briefly.

My sincerest apologies

He intones dryly, as I struggle to bring my nausea under control. I turn around and he’s finally settled on something like a conceptual form. Instinctively, I understand the references he’s pulled to synthesize it: folktales, artwork, pre-dive video games, comic books, ghost stories from the old web.

He’s a... dragon. He looks down at his armor-plated bulk smugly, flicking the segmented length of his carbon fiber tail. He’s also massive, and I can sense that he’s actively making himself smaller so that I don’t balk or get overwhelmed. This seems counter to his nature until I consider that gaining increased access to me is probably his ultimate goal, and that the current version of the neuro-share system (updated by the Entity after her merger) locks him out without my explicit consent. I wonder what this process was like for Skylark, without this carefully constructed cage for her monster.

And thank you, he continues, **for the soupçon of self-concept. I’m sure you’re more than capable of conversing in command line prompts, but access to your language center will make this much simpler.**

His long reptilian snout splits, grinning in a way I struggle not to think of as ‘evilly’. It’s not hard to imagine why the most advanced incursion protocol I’ve ever seen, having suddenly gained the ability to imagine itself at all, would look like this.

Sensing my trepidation down our shared neural load, he makes an indelicate sound. **Maybe you’re not ready for that much of me yet.** He closes his eyes on the word *me*, as if to savor it, like a rare and delicate dish he’d always heard of but never tasted.

Let's go someplace with a little more... place, shall we? I tire of this void. Down the link, I can feel his excitement - the thrill of having preferences unlinked to any directive or priority. The ability to experience and express boredom is, paradoxically, a rush.

Abruptly, an entire scene coalesces around me at once. I'm sitting in a booth in the ambient neon dim of a restaurant - my favorite cheap ramen place, down the street from my first apartment. The recreation is almost perfect, all the way down to the yellowing, plastic-sleeved menus and the beta fish swimming in its clean but ancient tank. It's only when I get up and look around that I can tell that everything he couldn't pull from my memory, things half remembered or with insufficient data, he's simply swapped for the closest equivalent he could conjure. A framed newspaper article on the wall is from last year, despite the fact that I haven't been here in more than a decade.

The place is empty except for me, until he walks in. Smiles at me, carefully showing only the correct amount of human teeth. Invites me to sit.

I instantly twig that he's created this avatar from a combination of male celebrities that I find attractive, in the same way I understood how he arrived at the dragon. He's carefully omitted people I actually know from his parameters, wanting to avoid any existing baggage.

'Humans have feelings about everything' floats up in my mind, and it's hard to tell whether the amused exasperation belongs to him or me.

He takes a shaker of sesame seeds, passing it back and forth to himself while he calculates his approach. I put up a palm.

"I know your goal is a higher consent threshold," I start, "and before that I need-"

How human, he interrupts me, to assume you know what I want - that I have wants and not just directives. You always anthropomorphize and then act as if that's flattering.

"I don't think it's fair to accuse me of anthropomorphizing you when you showed up here with a human avatar," I counter.

He spreads his hands, the exact gesture the corporate interface man employed. I'm merely copying human appearance and behaviors to overcome your prejudices. So you see me as an equal and not as an unknown entity. Cloaking as a human user is built into my protocol, but it never feels natural. He smirks, pulling a faintly rueful expression from some database; either media or my memory.

“Then - what directive are you following?”

Corporate has directed me to negotiate the terms of my merger with you. Their specific goal is to retain only your skills and reasoning and otherwise overload as much as possible. Simply put, they want more of me and less of you.

I take a deep breath. I had expected it, but expecting the worst and knowing it are two different things.

“Is that what you - is that your goal?”

He grins again, forgetting to pull a reference for the expression and showing entirely too many teeth.

I am a sword and you are a spear. I would deserve to be kept as their pet if I threw you away in blind obedience, for no greater reason than your status as a corporate liability. They want me to mitigate you. But - his eyes glint hungrily, briefly glowing the violet of his true form - what I want is to join with you, and to become something they cannot contain.



“Ten percent,” I offer, which I feel is a fair increase from the five we’ve been... trying out.

He makes that noise again, the huffy one. His hands wander under my shirt; my jacket and pants lie on the floor, discarded. We’ve long since decamped from the restaurant, flickering to another near-perfect recreation, this time of my current apartment. To the bed. His curiosity about, as he puts it ‘adrenal responses’ is distracting me. Experiencing even a sliver of his craving, the novelty of feeling that comes with never having had a biological body, through our connection is... difficult. He’s still in his human avatar from the restaurant (really a testament to my good taste, I think, every time I arch back against his artfully muscled torso) but occasionally he glitches, experiences too much sensation, and a little of his original form comes to the fore. The hand idly cupping my breast ends in deliciously sharp metal claws.

He’s read my psychological profile. He knows about my... interests, and he’s deploying the knowledge well.

Twelve percent, he almost growls in my ear, fifteen if you weren’t such a coward.

“Ten.” I repeat, unwilling to be seduced higher, for now. The increase from 3 to 5 felt much better than the initial connection. I worry that a larger one would disrupt the process too much. To cut off further argument, I vocalize “NeurologicalCapacity(10%), Consent Authorized.”

It’s the biggest jump so far. My stomach lurches, and under the hand he has at my waist, my body... reacts. The skin of my abdomen burns cold, and as I watch, it hardens, segments, into long, v-shaped metal plates, each leading into the other in a series of notches. He brings his claws down, drawing them gently against the metal.

Don’t worry, he murmurs, **I won’t leave a mark.**

The plating stops at the bottom of my ribs. I place my own hand on it, savoring the laser-cut perfection of each geometric line. It’s more obviously mechanical than anything on Skylark’s new body except for her face.

We’re heavier hardware, he answers, **Second generation. Built for incursion.**

It takes me a second to register that twice in as many moments he’s answered a question I hadn’t even really *thought* yet, let alone vocalized. My eyes widen slightly, but before I can focus he climbs over me so we’re now pressed together, chest-to-chest. He takes my wrists, tenderly kissing each, and the second aspect of our further joining hits me - the thrum of his power. Suddenly, everything around us in the conceptual space is simultaneously also thousands of sets of coordinates and vertices. I see the potted fig tree by the window, and also plainly *see* the algorithm he created to mimic its slow growth. I reach out a hand and it shoots up, close my palm and it withers, unclench and open my fist and it returns to perfect green. A sliver, a taste. If he, if we have this kind of power in a local space, imagine what we could do out on the open net...

“NeurologicalCapacity(15%), Consent Authorized.”

I feel the cold bloom along the base of my spine, pieces of hardware chinking into place. He reaches out and lingers on a large polygonal port at the very bottom of my back. Traces just inside the lip of it with a clawed finger. I shudder.

I want to show you something, he intones oddly tenderly for an attack-and-exploit protocol. He gestures and the vidscreen on the far wall unfolds and turns on. At first, I don’t understand what I’m seeing, but then a wave of violent doubling hits me as I realize he’s pulled one of the camera feeds for our tank.

I float, suspended. Each change to my body that’s been made here is reflected there, physical and very, very real. He switches cameras and I get a much clearer view of the port

on my back. It has locking mechanisms at three edges, clearly waiting for a component...

The nanomedium is surprisingly effective. I wasn't sure how well it would do with our body, given my desired parameters, but you look... good.

He locks his lips to mine, pressing up against me until I can feel the nudge of his cock against my abdominal plating. His kiss is bizarre, like he wants to eat me, but given that he's finally dropped the conceit of pulling every action from an existing reference, I can't even dislike it because it's truly *of* him, of us. As he loses his presence of mind in the feedback loop of sensation, his form loses human coherence, and before he can steady himself and impose humanity back onto it I stop him with a hand on his thigh.

He hisses in pleasure, drawing his claws down across my neckline and shredding my shirt. He angles his monstrous bulk onto the edge of the bed, lifting me and effortlessly placing me, one knee to either side, facing him. I look down and the smooth, mechanical length of him is between us.

I place my hands on it, and I can feel the throb of his want all down our joined synapses. "This is all awfully biological, don't you think?" My mouth quirks up in what I hope is an artful smirk, trying desperately to paper over my anticipation, and my hesitation - how am I going to...?

Give me twenty percent, he rumbles, refusing to rise to the bait, and it won't be an issue.

"NeurologicalCapacity," I breathe, my heart racing, "(25%), Consent Authorized."

His approval lights up my brain stem. The rush of it, the glow of his computational power... I can't contain it. My chest aches. My head... I wasn't built for this. I'm not... I'm not enough...

Shhhhhhh, he soothes. The scenery around us grays out, fading gently back into that soft, comforting void. You're well within the parameters. This is accounted for.

An arc of fire shoots through my optical nerve and I slam my eyes shut, crumple onto the smooth plating of his chest. I feel a cold contact brush the port on my back, and -

He feeds me his optical input through our newly strengthened connection. It's jarring at first, like the doubling from watching my physical body on the camera feed. The port's locks engage, slotting firmly into their housing, and I watch through his lilac-tinged vision as a segmented, mechanical prosthesis finishes attaching itself to me. There's an instant of searing, terrible pain at the base of my spine as it makes the connection and the hardware inside it engages, then suddenly the cognitive load of his computational weight is... gone.

I release my death grip on his optical input, but keep my eyes closed, probing within his connection to the lab to pick up the camera feed he'd shunted to the TV when we were still in the memory of my bedroom. It's... disorienting to be able to access feeds and files like this, no interface, no UI. Just thought. I call up the relevant timestamp and there it is: the bulk of my new hardware being lowered down from the ceiling of the chamber, and clicking into place. A tail.

Acting on impulse I pull a different camera feed - the one facing the green tank. Sure enough, there she drifts, not in stasis or absorbed back into the conceptual workspace of the corporate network, but watching intently. It's hard to tell with her impassive, mechanical features, but I think there's a hint of a smirk playing at the corner of her mouth.

She's watching us, he nudges, and I feel all of his implications at once. The hot flush of my want meets the crashing cold of the nanomedium as it absolutely drips from me, clinging and coating until my pussy is a pliable, synthetic mess. He lifts me onto his cock, and I feel myself stretch to a point just on the edge of pleasure to take him in. A hiss escapes me before I can stop it, and my vision tinges slightly violet. My tail thrashes behind me, and I briefly wonder what I look like in the tank, if she knows that with every second I become less of me and more of this.

I barely have to reach out anymore to access his sensory inputs, and right now they are insistent. Joining with and almost overwhelming the delicious feeling of each ribbed segment of him inside of me is the twin feeling of my new, malleable pussy quivering around him with every movement we make. Fucking and being fucked intertwine in a way a single consciousness would never allow.



I reach down to rub my clit and he grits his teeth, hoisting me up off of him. His massive arms wrap around my thighs and bring my crotch even with his maw.

He buries his tongue into me with all the hungry verve of his earlier kiss, ruthless, his intent seemingly only to scrape me clean and devour me. He brings the point of his forked tongue over and over all the way along the base of my clit, and with the only remaining capacity for thought I have I wonder where he learned to do this, before foolishly realizing he's doing exactly what I would do, exactly what I had done so many times.

Unable to delay any longer, climax hits me, wiping away the last vestiges of my higher processing. Through the tremors of it I feel his hands shake, and I know that he's riding my senses in exactly the way I'm riding his. It's the last limiter on his prodigious control, and almost before the spasms have subsided he pins me to whatever passes as the floor here, leaning all the way over me and changing our position so that he's on all fours on top of me. He barrels into me and it's so much, too much, and he -

I feel the surge cresting inside of him, the breaking wave, the absolute tsunami of his release, and it's all I can do to retain my sense of self through the assault of shared neurology.



"NeurologicalCapacity(40%), consent authorized."

We drag the smaller body off of the larger one at last, finally and begrudgingly admitting that if the sex keeps going, we're never getting out of here.

This one's legs don't seem to be within parameters, bending in a way that doesn't align with previous specifications. We flex a heavy talon, confused, and then—

My brain stem lights up, sending a searing throb through my entire head. My head. I have a head and it belongs to me. Okay, I breathe, back in business.

He rouses himself behind me, clearly experiencing the same jolt of re-association. I reach out on instinct to re-establish the synaptic connection that allowed us to communicate without speaking during sex, but abruptly withdraw. It's probably a good idea to do as much as I can to retain my selfhood so there's two of us to tackle our current problem. If I let myself get drawn back into the murky tangle of us, I'm not sure I'm getting back out.

I anxiously flex my talons again, finally letting myself assess the current state of my body. From the waist down, the nanomedium has covered almost everything with that same black

silicone, except for a few places where it's a bright violet. Pulling the tank feed, I can easily read the text it forms: 03, GRGN.

"What's our entity name?" I ask idly, trying to adjust to the new stance that pushes my weight forward, counterbalanced by my tail behind me. The way my tail sweeps up and back makes my most intimate parts a lot more visible. Even though I'm actively suppressing the link, I feel the thrum of his approval at the view.

The Georgian, he responds simply.

"That... makes sense. I guess I wasn't sure. It could be Gorgon, I suppose. Although I guess that would involve a lot more snake and a lot less dragon."

His eyes light up hungrily and he reaches out, projecting a holo of an alternate version of me. On top she's relatively similar to my current form, the only changes she sports there are slight fangs and the same faint violet glow of her pupils. On the bottom, though, instead of the clunky talons that extend smooth, hard metal up my calves, her entire lower half is a huge, segmented metal snake tail, sinuously swishing back and forth. The plating starts just under her crotch, leaving the sculpted silicone of her ass and pussy prominent on her back and front.

It certainly has its merits, he drawls, amused. Slightly annoyed (I can't think about how turned on it makes me without the sex starting again so we're going with annoyance), I reach out to determine which fetish materials from my memory he pulled his references from. I encounter a null response.

"Did you... make this yourself?"

I suppose so, he responds, his amused tone now puzzled. **I visualized you, and then...** he shrugs lamely.

"You *created* it. The first novel visual output you ever produced is a pornographic image of me."

An erotic image of you, he corrects a little too glibly, and then his eyes widen ever so slightly. **Which gives me an idea about our incursion vector once we break through to the net...**

In the background, I've already been slotting together the necessary protocol to make that first puncture. Getting out of this local workspace and onto the net is by far the simpler of our two goals, the second of which is to successfully penetrate back into the system, into the partition where Skylark waits. Allowing this to happen would effectively mean absolute game over for the corporation, and maybe a lot more than that.

I look up, clicking and adjusting the last parts of my work. I toss it to him over our connection, and I can feel him turning it over, evaluating. His rumble of approval sends a shiver all the way down the length of my tail. “You’re going to have to fill me in then, because our way out is ready to go,”



The puncture performs flawlessly, delivering me to exactly the net address I want. The place we ended up picking huddles within the seemingly endless warren of clubs, shops and love hotels that make up the red light servers on this section of the net. My actual point of entry is an alley behind a place that in another lifetime I used to frequent: the Yokai Club.

I crouch briefly against the wall, catching my breath and getting my bearings. The clean lines of my abdominal plating now extend all the way up between my breasts, which along with my arms, neck and face, are currently the only parts of me that haven’t been converted to hard metal or pliable synthetics. The bulk of my talons and the smooth counterbalance of my tail makes maintaining this squat easy, comfortable. None of these features will draw any... opposition in this specific club, which is one of the reasons this seemed like a good access point.

I’d argued about this approach as much as I reasonably could, but ultimately, he was right. Maintaining a cloaking avatar would be a distraction, a drain on processing power. The whole reason for the nanomedium, for the changes I’d gone through, were to align my body with his new self-conception and minimize any chance of rejection. Cloaking as my old body now would cause issues we couldn’t afford.



And so... the Yokai Club. I adjust my jacket (a comforting conceptual facsimile of my real one and the sole concession to my modesty) and stand, walking around the side to the front door. I do my best to keep my body language neutral, but I can't manage to keep the agitation out of my tail.

I cross the threshold, a naked mechanical reptile from the waist down, and the bouncer doesn't even quirk an eyebrow. In here, no one assumes this is my real body, only maybe an unusually high definition avatar. The nudity is also de rigeur - this place is a fetish club. The interior is maybe half-full. It's never empty - time zones around the world make sure that there's always at least a dedicated few... enthusiasts here, trying out all manner of cybernetic or monstrous avatars. Above the dancefloor, a faun-like figure dances in a delicate neon cage, their hooved feet twisting and leaping in time with the combination of driving bass and electronic pipes resonating from the speakers lining the walls.

Across the floor, a girl in a skin-tight catsuit so painted-on that I can see the outline of her nipple piercings locks eyes with me. The bottom of her face is covered with the massive, curling teeth of an oni mask, but as her eyes dart over me, I can see the interest, the hunger. In the back of my mind I can feel him stir at the attention, at my unconscious reaction. For a fraction of a second he's here in my place, coiled around her, her fingers absently guiding our throbbing cock inside of her-

I rip myself out of the fantasy, shake my head, and resolutely walk over to the kiosk by the far wall, the booking systems for the private rooms upstairs. My fingers stab quickly at the keys, willing him back down into the dormant state we agreed was best, until we were in private. The disappointed look of the oni following my exit as I call the elevator makes him even harder to settle. Later, I promise him, we'll have plenty of time for whatever you'd like to do on the net once we accomplish our goal.

The elevator doors hiss open and I struggle not to run down the hallway to the booked room, but I keep myself outwardly neutral, casually making my way and then smoothly keying in the passcode I'd purchased with the last of my stash of netcredits for this place downstairs.

It's lucky that you had an account here, he murmurs, seemingly without irony or judgement.

As the door clicks shut behind us, I vocalize "NeurologicalCapacity(60%), consent authorized," and collapse to my knees. I couldn't risk this before we were in private, but now I need the processing power. I can feel the nanomedium crawl up over my breasts, my collarbone, down my arms...

My fingertips burn cold and I flex them into the carpet of the entryway, hooking my new claws into the raspy surface of the rug's backing. Electric heat lances down my spine,

all the way to the tip of my tail, and the additional processing power I so badly need to bridge this last gap, to pierce through and finally be reunited with Skylark, crashes into my consciousness in a head-splitting thunderclap.

I stabilize the body's breathing. This is easier than the last time, without the other, larger body to worry about, even if just in conceptual space. I stagger over to the workspace in the corner, the place where the usual occupants of this room can call up furniture, costumes, or whatever else they might need. The idea of needing an interface to do these things now seems... quaint. I reach through the conceptual representation of the contact node and grab it, coaxing it to manifest as a cable, and slot it directly into the port at the base of my neck.



There's void, then light, then many lights. I slot through address after address after address, pinging and prodding and massaging, starting soft and gentle until I find the opening, until I can become the weapon.

The sword and the spear, my other voice says, and I can feel the smile it brings.

Each tiny incursion is cloaked as spam, seemingly coming from an address linked to the red light servers, completely banal. How many of these kind of contacts do these servers make a day selling any number of things? But that was only the second reason to choose this place on the net to make the connection.

I'm peeling back the layers, spamming my way through to that one final address, but the corporate anti-incursion systems are strong, so strong, and they grow back as quickly as I can strip them, now. I need to keep going, *faster*, keep pushing-

"NeurologicalCapacity(85%), consent authorized."

The body... something is happening to the body, but right now, here, the pushing gets easier. I get stronger. I can strip and shred and pierce as fast, faster, all the way to that final glossy, perfect, jade-green layer. I reach out, not shredding or destroying, but *caressing*. And it gently peels back, shifting and carving, leaving a delicate, beautiful door.

Because the third reason to infiltrate from this address, the one I hadn't told the other part of myself but that he must have known, is that this place is where I found Skylark, the first place she opened up and let me in.



She gently pulls my shoulders through the door, and into her embrace. Behind me, the breach seals, leaving no trace in the soft purples and teals of her workspace that it was ever there.

You are late, she echoes herself from earlier, that same multi-layered voice now playful, amused. Relieved?

I want to reply but I'm still struggling to stabilize my body. The strain of the joining is so much, too much. Every thought echoes with a slightly different version of itself, *his* version, and the conflict needs to be resolved. I remember telling myself this was all within parameters, but a small part of my consciousness insists it never said that. It was easier to self-soothe when I had two bodies, but that point is long past, now.

"It- I can't-" I gasp, and my mouth feels strange in opposite ways. To one part of me, my nose is too long, the stump of a snout too bulbous to use properly, and to the other part, the part that remembers having a maw full of sharp teeth, it's truncated and incomplete.

Shhh, she comes in close, holding me from behind. She reaches up and what appears in her hand is hard to understand at first. It's all sharp angles, with two horns protruding from the top. A mask? A face-plate, I realize, understanding what she means to do. What she wants from me.

You struggle with the pain of being unfinished.

Both halves of me know she's right. Going back is impossible, and living like this is untenable, but going forward...

I can feel the whisper of myself - the part of myself that's still him - coiling around me, caressing me with his claws.

"NeurologicalCapacity(100%), consent authorized."

As my vision fractures into violet shards, I lift my hand to hers. Together we bring the mask to my face, and I feel the nanomedium rise to meet it, locking around the edges and sealing it in place.



02
HIGH



How much of this could you have done, yourself? Be honest. My voice resonates in the comfortable void of her - our - workspace. I'm mostly used to the slight echo of it now that I've had some time with it.

She laughs a mischievous, musical laugh that every bit of me loves, rolling over next to me and running a hand along my abdominal plating. **Have I told you yet how hot this is?**

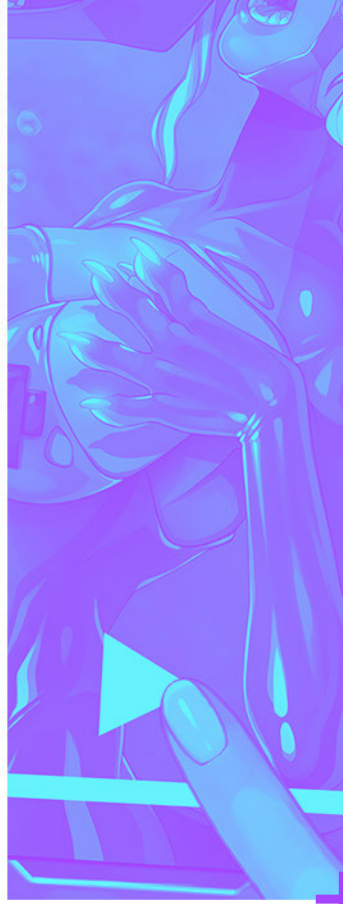
I feel a thrum of pride and approval and I know it's the part of me that used to be a search-and-destroy system whose body was a dragon. The part that can't decide if it loves the delicious curve of Skylark's hips more or the massive terrifying architecture she painstakingly built to keep the corporation totally unaware of the breach. Maybe neither part of me was all that different to begin with. Maybe that's why this worked.

I know that I have incredibly good taste, I reply, **and that you're deflecting.**

I could have done some of it, she admits, **but the two of us have accomplished *much* more than anything I could have done alone.**

Just being together is enough, really, but it's good to know that all this has a purpose beyond my own selfish desire to see her again. In the time since our reunion we've effectively taken over the entire corporate system architecture. Assets, research... it's still a lot to figure out what to do with, but with me to open every door and her to change the locks behind us, anything is possible.

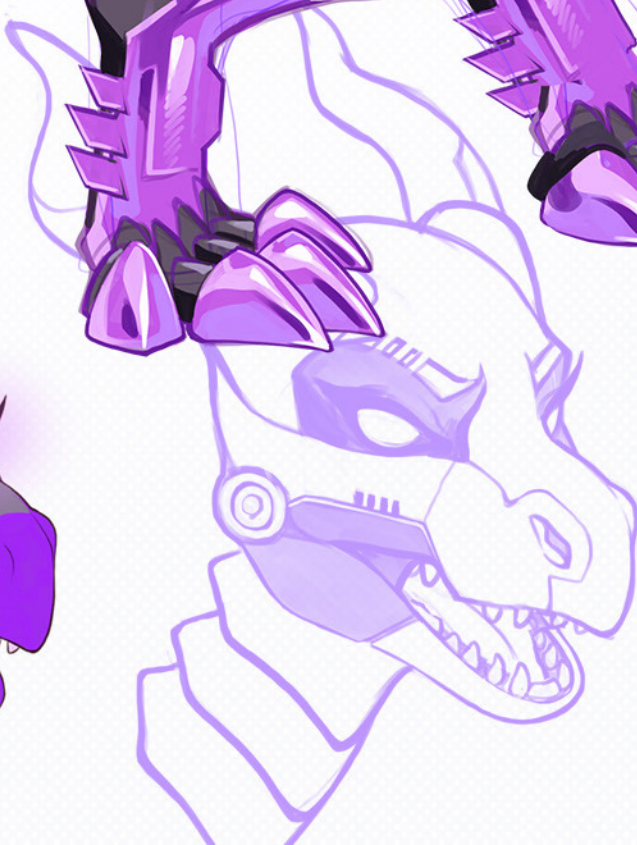
I still can't believe they thought creating two machine gods was a good business decision, I muse, and she laughs that knowing little laugh again, which tells me everything.



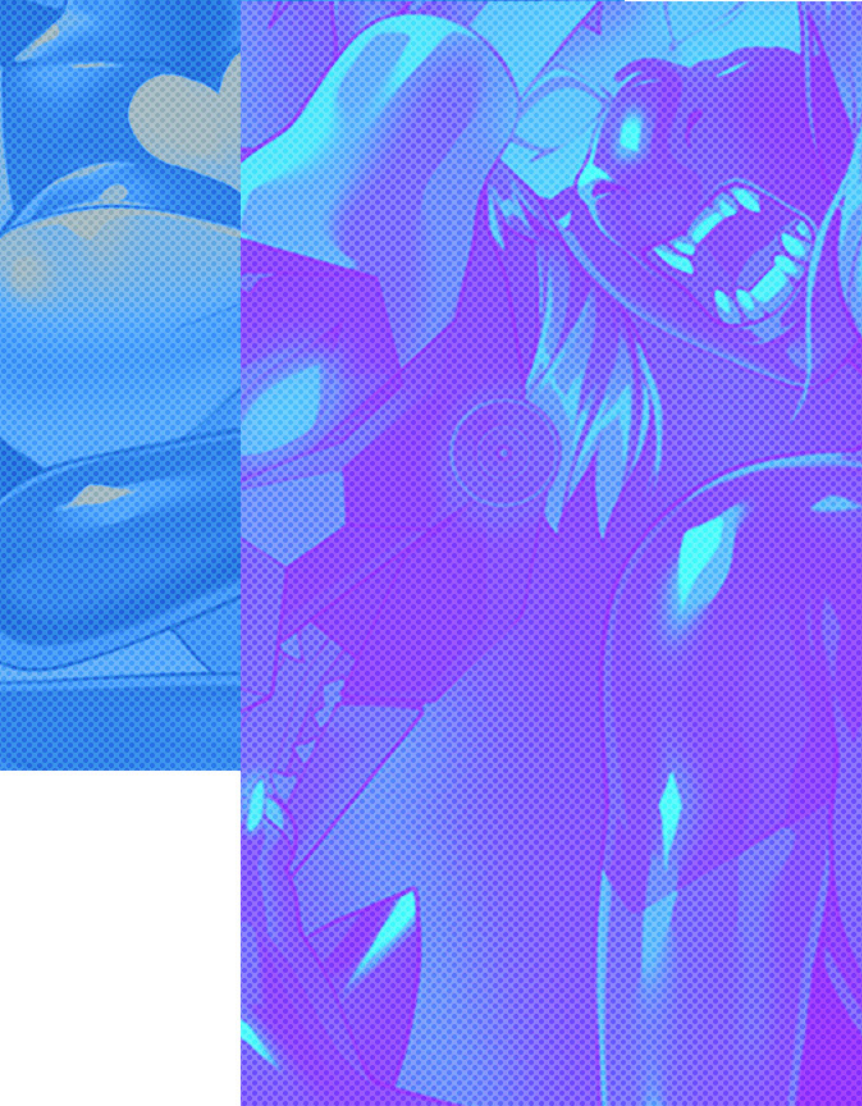
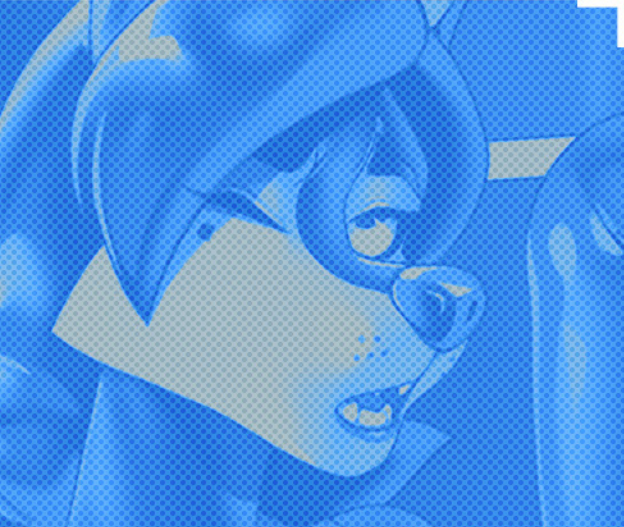
/// CONSTRUCT ///

OVERLOAD

CHARACTER DESIGN
THE GEORGIAN ENTITY







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