

Interface

"You want me to cut the nipples?" Harry Ellis demanded angrily.

"Frankly I don't know why you didn't do it already," Jessica responded coolly. She reached out to the flat screen display on her desk and swivelled it so Harry could see it. The screen was filled by a female figure, though one that wasn't quite human. It was a little too slender and willowy and the pointy ears were rather a give away that it was meant to be some sort of fairy or elf. That wasn't what was troubling Jessica though, it was the dark nipples that tipped its pale, pert breasts.

Jessica looked at Harry once more, "And I'm not even going to mention the genitalia that you put on the male characters, what the hell were you thinking?" She demanded. Harry counted to ten before he answered, "I was thinking that we are creating the most powerful virtual reality system ever built. We're offering people a totally immersive experience with full sensory feedback. It just seemed obvious and natural to create fully rounded avatars for the players in *Fey Forest*."

"The game is about sorcery, magic and battles in a fantasy world, nipples and other genitalia seem an unnecessary degree of realism." Jessica responded coolly.

Harry was unconvinced, "You have Bainbridge working on making sure the ogre guts splatter properly and *I'm* being too realistic?"

"There's realistic and there's realistic; we are not going to turn our game world into an orgy." Jessica stated firmly.

"Of course, sex is just unacceptable, we want people to stick to good wholesome mayhem and violence." Harry's tone was acidic enough to melt steel.

Jessica remained unmoved, "It has to go and if you won't do it I'll find someone who will; and if you force me to do that I have to tell you that the *Xyxax Invasion* will be indefinitely postponed."

Invasion was Harry's own pet project, he had only agreed to work on *Forest* as a favour so in theory it would have been simple to shrug his shoulders and just do as Jessica wanted. In practice he just couldn't face it, he was simply sick to death of the mealy mouthed prudishness that tried to pretend this immersive technology wasn't going to be used for sex. He looked at the dark haired, statuesque figure behind the desk and slowly shook his head; "If you want to gut the game world then you can do it without my help."

Jessica's calm demeanour cracked and she glared at him angrily, "In that case I suggest you take your accumulated vacation days, starting right now."

As he downed his third scotch Harry stared at the computer screen and brooded. He poured blood sweat and tears into helping creating a VR that was truly immersive, a system that finally delivered on all the hype about the technology and now his bosses were going to neuter it; literally.

By the time he was starting on the fourth glass Harry was composing a list of everyone responsible for this betrayal and he was concocting a plan, one that would show them just how far the technology could be pushed, one they would never forget. In his drunken state it seemed perfectly logical and if his critical faculties were impaired his skills with a computer remained intact.

He had a backdoor into all the company computers and he soon had the source code for *Fey* and *Xyxax* scrolling in front of him, *let's see how you like this scenario Jessica*, he thought smugly as he finished his little alterations and downed the remainder of the glass of scotch. With the job done he sank two more doubles and by the time he woke up the next morning he had a throbbing headache and a big hole in his memory about the night before. Thus the alterations sat in the mainframe and waited for their moment.

Jessica stood in the lobby and did her best not to fidget, which was difficult when her future employment with the company was resting on the outcome of this little demonstration. She redoubled her efforts to look cool and professional when she saw the limousine sweep up to the entrance. When the driver got out and opened the passenger door the first two people out didn't look like they really belonged in it.

They were a pair of blonde girls around eighteen or nineteen, who had to be twins. They were slender, blue eyed, and pretty. They were also clad in faded jeans and t-shirts that only an expert eye would spot were in fact very expensive designer items intended to look grungy and old. The third person out certainly did look like he belonged in the limo, and the fourth looked like she belonged to him.

He had the air of someone who expected the world to make way for him, his hair was iron grey and close cropped but it still covered most of his head and his steely gaze could reduce underlings to whimpering wrecks with a single glance, and he was the sole owner of the company. If he wished he could dismiss Jessica on the spot and make sure she never worked in the computer industry again, *so no pressure there*, Jessica told herself sardonically.

The woman was maybe five years older than the girls but where they were dressed in designer grunge she wasn't interested in hiding how expensive her outfit was. She was wearing a tight fitting silk dress that clung to her curves and whose dark colour emphasized her tanned skin. She had definitely Latin looks that said she was no blood relative of the other three and Jessica was surprised to see her here, *Brian must have really laid down the law to get Selena here, probably had to remind her about the prenupt.*

Brian Wentworth looked through the doors at Jessica standing there and wondered whether she had chosen that short skirt from personal taste or in an attempt to soften him up, *and not a bad effort either*. Jessica had very good legs and he was hardly immune to such thing seven with his trophy wife beside him but it wasn't going to save her if she had wasted several million dollars of his money on this game.

"Mister Wentworth, Missus Wentworth good to see you." Jessica extended a hand as she greeted her boss and hoped she sounded sincere.

Brian took her hand and shook it firmly, "I'm sure, and you know my daughters Kaitlyn and Marie."

"Of course." It would be an exaggeration to say that Jessica knew them, she had certainly met them on a couple of occasions and they certainly appeared often enough in the gossip pages of the tabloids so she could at least say she knew *of* them.

The twins nodded in the barest acknowledgment of Jessica's presence and she decided the best thing would just be to cut to the chase, "Shall we move to the VR suite?"

Brian nodded and gestured for her to lead the way.

The VR suite did look more like a hotel room than a computer centre. There were half a dozen long, low couches whose elegant lines were only slightly disrupted by the headsets wired into one end. The rest of the room was plush carpets and little tables stacked with drinks and snacks, "This is of course intended as our demonstration facility for potential business partners," Jessica explained hurriedly as Brian took in the opulent surroundings.

He was actually more concerned about something else; "There are no screens, now way to see the action?"

That was a question was one Jessica was ready for, "The participant see it all in their head, there is remote monitoring of the base environment but the individuals experience is effectively private, only the other participants will be aware of what actually happens."

Brian found that comforting, he wasn't sure he would want anyone else peeking in on his private adventures, "So I suppose if I want to see where all the money has gone I'll have to put on a headset?"

Jessica picked up one of the fine meshed headsets, "Pretty much."

Brian took the offered headset and the twins grabbed two of the remaining trio before Selena picked one up with a great show of distaste. Jessica sat down on the last couch and put on the last of them, and settled back as the world dissolved around her.

When her vision cleared Jessica found herself standing in a meadow, emerald green grass beneath an azure sky. For her taste it was a little too perfect, which spoiled the illusion to a degree. From the expression on the faces of the others they shared none of her concerns. Their avatars looked much as their real selves did as they had decided against anything too radical for this first exposure. Brian was though clad in a suit of armour, Selena in what looked like a witch's outfit, *how appropriate*, and the twins in diaphanous fairy

gowns. Jessica wondered if they weren't a little too diaphanous, *their nipples are practically punching through them*. It took a second for the wrongness of that thought to hit her; there weren't supposed to be any nipples, she had gotten the other designers to diligently remove Harry's code so why was it back?

Brian had also noticed the rather too revealing effect of his daughter's outfits, "Jessica I thought we had a discussion about acceptable degrees of realism."

"We did," Jessica was too anxious to concern herself about being rude to the boss, "and I had all of Harry's work removed."

Brian was barred from pointing out how obviously she had failed by Kaitlyn interrupting, "Hey I thought this was a swords and sorcery thing, elves, orcs, dragons, that sort of crap."

"It is." Jessica snapped.

"So what are those then?" Marie asked archly, pointing off to the horizon.

Jessica followed her gaze and saw a horde of black shapes pouring into the glade, shapes that she had seen before in Harry's *Xyxax* designs, six limbed armoured things with what might have been a spear grasped between the front pair, "Ant soldiers." Jessica knew she sounded a little hysterical but if Harry had hacked the system they weren't here to offer warm greetings.

Brian wasn't alarmed so much as angry at what was clearly a serious screw up, "I think we should leave until you can correct this shambles." *Assuming I don't just fire your cute little ass.*

The escape sequence to terminate the connection was a little whimsical but it had to be something that you wouldn't be likely to do accidentally and it had been argued that it was a classic. Trying not to sound too embarrassed Jessica muttered, "There's no place like home," and clicked her heels together three times.

That she was still standing there after doing it wasn't so much embarrassing as terrifying, and she suddenly remembered it had been Harry who had dreamed the exit routine up to begin with, "I think we should move and stay away from those things."

Kaitlyn looked at her askance, "Come on, all that's going to happen is we lose the game, what's the big deal?"

Jessica looked at Bryan, he knew some of the stuff that they had barred Harry from using, "We'll do as Jessica suggests, until we can figure out a way to unplug from this fiasco."

His wife and daughters still didn't look very impressed by the notion that they were in danger but then they didn't know about Harry's warped imagination, a deficiency that was about to be rectified.

Jessica and Bryan moved swiftly in the opposite direction from the advancing horde of insectoid figures. Selena, Kaitlyn and Marie were a lot slower; gawking at the closing mass of creatures; gawking a little too long as the nearest of the things suddenly reared up, raised the weapons in their hands, and a volley of sickly green bolts of fire rained down on the clearing, scattering the group in all directions.

Selena dived behind a tree on the edge of the clearing as a gout of earth was kicked out of the ground behind her. It came as a complete surprise that there was a sharp downward slope beyond the meadow and she went tumbling end over end, landing on her butt with an indignant squeal. She looked back up the slope, hoping to see her husband looking back promising to rescue her. What she saw instead were faceted eyes staring down at her and those long weapons being waved in her direction.

The next thing Selena knew she was up and running. The long black dress tangled up and nearly tripped her over again. She halted for a moment and ripped along the left seam, splitting the dress from ankle to hip. The sound of tearing fabric startled Selena, it all seemed so solid, so *real*, and she remembered the sensations of bouncing down that slope, the very clear pain as she was bounced and jolted. She finally understood why Jessica had seemed so scared of their situation; you could experience anything in this so-called simulation, including pain and death.

That inspired Selena to get running again, someone in the real world had to notice they were in trouble soon, *don't they?*

She kept moving, trying not to think about the fact that she was really lying on a couch in some computer centre because every time she did it threatened to drive her crazy. When she broke out of the trees into a low bowl shaped meadow she was simply relieved to be in the clear, until the centre of the meadow began to collapse, turning the shallow bowl into a deep crater, the grassy surface cracking and tearing as it sank; pulling the ground from under Selena and sending her sliding downwards once again.

This time Selena went down feet first, her dress snagging and tearing on exposed roots as she descended; leaving her clad in a few flapping rags by the time she reached the bottom. She lay in a dazed heap at the bottom of the crater and was only snapped out of it when the ground began to move under her again. She was afraid that it was going to collapse again but this time it was a series of ripples moving across the surface.

Selena began to back up but didn't get far before one of the ripples split open and a long leathery tentacle erupted from the earth. She shrieked as it lashed out and wound it self around her neck, making sure Selena wasn't going anywhere. That didn't stop her struggling and clawing at the limb but she didn't make so much as a dent in it before more tentacles split the ground and reached out for her.

The tentacle around her throat didn't even allow Selena to scream as they grabbed at her, yanking off the flimsy remains of the simulated dress, revealing just how thoroughly the computer had recreated the curves of her body. The sensation of the cool alien flesh on her skin also showed how truly sophisticated the feedback system was. Selena didn't care about any of that, she was utterly focused on the way the tentacles were winding themselves around her limbs and torso, locking her in a multiple grasp that she had no hope of breaking free from. As soon as she firmly held the tentacles snapped upwards, leaving Selena dangling in the air.

As she looked down into the crater now some metres below her Selena saw the centre of the bowl break up and a huge dome like mass of flesh pressing out of the ground. As she stared at the grey green mass three seems slowly formed along the surface in a 'Y' shape. The flesh opened along the seams and three more tentacles emerged from the maw. These were a dark red and dripping with translucent goo.

Selena squealed as they snaked their way towards her naked body, which turned to hysterical screaming as one of them began to slide its slimy way along her thigh and the tip rubbed against the lips of her pussy. Her whole body spasmed as it pushed forward and pressed inside her. She could feel it pulsing and throbbing as it probed deeper inside but she was distracted from that horror by another; the second tentacle was squirming its way between her ass cheeks, and she would have screamed her throat raw if it was made of real flesh. The electronic version allowed her to give loud and almost non-stop chorus of screams to accompany the progressive violation of her body as the tentacles inexorably drove deeper inside her, her shrieks were only finally silenced as the third slimy member shoved its way into her mouth.

All Selena could do now was twitch and writhe as the tentacles drove into her core and she was so far gone in the horror of her situation that she didn't even notice that she was being pulled down towards that gaping maw. Only as it swallowed her up did she realize what was happening and she let out one more stifled scream as the flesh closed over her and she was lost in darkness as she was engulfed in a tidal wave of slime by the creature.

She slipped and slithered in side the thing and more and more tentacles began to push their way inside her stretching her impossibly as they did and yet she didn't black out, she couldn't escape the endless feeling of the things crawling inside. In the end she took the only way out available to her, she let her mind collapse and simply hung there in a near comatose state.

The technician sipped his coffee and watched the monitors; they reported all the feedback from the quintet inside the machine. Just for a moment he thought he saw the readings for one of them go completely flat but it reappeared after a moment. He was going to summon his supervisor, however it all looked okay now, *and hell it's just a game.*

TO BE CONTINUED...