

DAY ONE



I honestly don't know how you talked me into this. And paying a Portune for it too ...

Look, I'm telling you, after I went last year, I knew you had to see it. Trust me.

But I'm not into any of this! Bodymodding is for people who are jaded with life. Thrill-seekers.



So? I'm not saying you have to get anything done. I'm sure not. I'm here to look. You never saw women like this, Jer. A whole con full of babes who can have any body they want ...

That's a lot of luggage they have for three nights, isn't it?

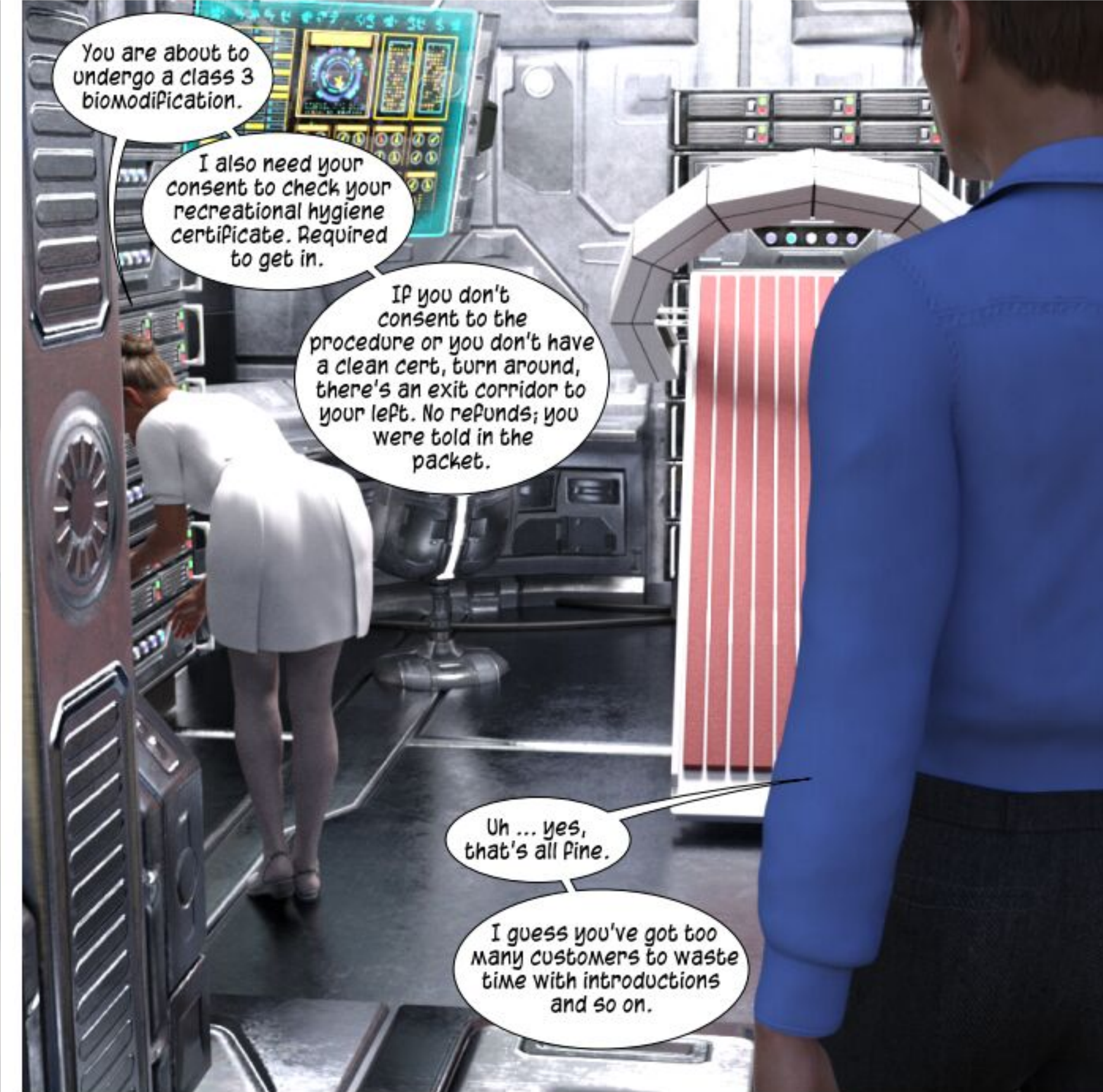
They're probably cosplayers. Lot of those. They'll get their pointy ears or green skin and then run around being elves and orcs the rest of the weekend. Usually in skimpy clothes.



So that's it? We're here to ogle women all weekend? Greg, you said --

I'm not just here to look. A lot of them are here to party. When was the last time you got laid?

Oh, hey, it's our turn. Don't answer that. You go first. Meet me in concourse A by the noodle stand after you check into your room.



You are about to undergo a class 3 biomodification.

I also need your consent to check your recreational hygiene certificate. Required to get in.

If you don't consent to the procedure or you don't have a clean cert, turn around, there's an exit corridor to your left. No rePonds; you were told in the packet.

Uh ... yes, that's all fine.

I guess you've got too many customers to waste time with introductions and so on.



You have no idea.

The hotel and show floor are a sealed zone for the duration of the con. Like a quarantine. We can't really get a jump on the queue early, and nobody wants to miss too much of the con waiting to get in.

So we have a lot to do and we only have about twelve hours to do it.

Your cert's good, you've given verbal consent ... take off your clothes and lie on the bed. Put your luggage and your clothes in the bin, I need to check them for microbes.

My name is Honni, for what it's worth. And you're Jeremy, your data says. Nice to meet you for five minutes.



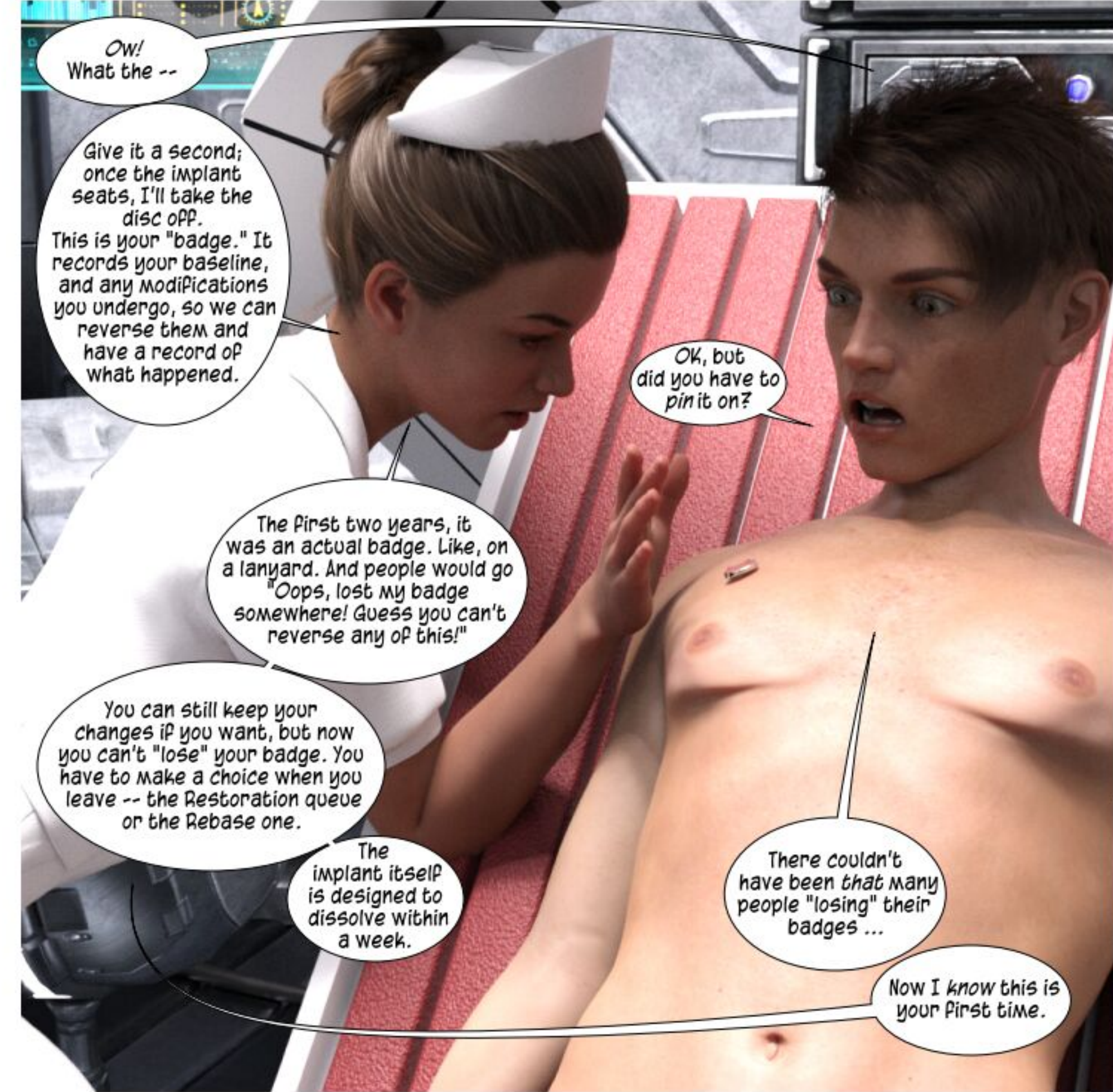
What exactly is this "procedure"?

We're softening you up. That's not the approved medical term.

The procedure makes your tissue more -- malleable, I suppose. Able to accept rapid changes, like the ones you'll probably undergo multiple times here.

When you leave, we'll harden you up again -- set your body back into a stable configuration.

That's why there's no reentry, by the way. We can't soften you again that soon after having done it the first time. Your body won't be happy. So if you leave the controlled zone, you don't get to come back in.



OW! What the --

Give it a second; once the implant seats, I'll take the disc off. This is your "badge." It records your baseline, and any modifications you undergo, so we can reverse them and have a record of what happened.

OK, but did you have to pin it on?

The first two years, it was an actual badge. Like, on a lanyard. And people would go "Oops, lost my badge somewhere! Guess you can't reverse any of this!"

You can still keep your changes if you want, but now you can't "lose" your badge. You have to make a choice when you leave -- the Restoration queue or the Rebase one.

The implant itself is designed to dissolve within a week.

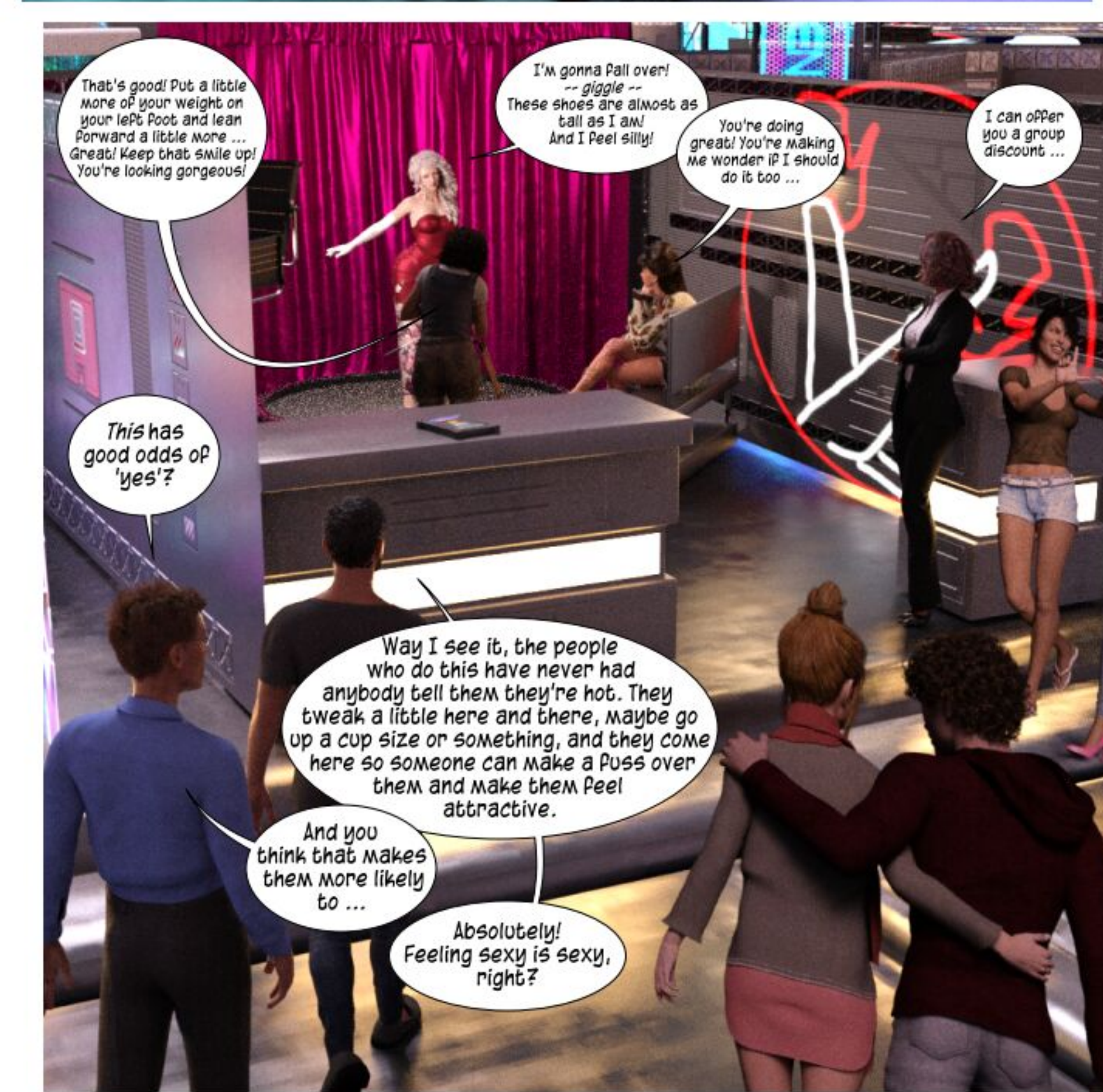
There couldn't have been that many people "losing" their badges ...

Now I know this is your first time.



-- sigh --

story and images by trilby



REGULAR (AND EVEN IRREGULAR) READERS MAY HAVE SEEN AN ISSUE OF "THE WOMANIZER" FLOATING AROUND THE ARCHIVES SOMEWHERE. - T



You can't?

Whoever this woman was, she used an unauthorized device ... it didn't leave a record on your badges, so we don't know what it did.

Don't you think it's pretty damned obvious what it did?



Of course, but that's not the way this works. We need the specific information to do a specific reversal.

So we're stuck like this?

Well, not Forever, if that's what you mean. You can leave the complex and get restored to your baseline, and everything that's been done to you at the con will be reversed.

But assuming you don't want to leave the con early, yes, not only are you stuck with it, but any further changes that you get done are also not specifically reversible. The unlisted alteration has thrown all your records out of step, you see. We wouldn't be sure what we were reversing.

You're flying without a net. Do what you like, but at the end, you'll either have to accept it all as it stands, or reverse it all at once.

I'm sorry. If you get any more information about this woman, let the staff know. We obviously don't want someone walking around doing this to people.



Well, I guess if you want to punt, you're entitled.

Actually, I think I'll stick it out. I feel kind of like it's a challenge, or something.

I assume you're staying.

Hell, yes! This is my chance to get some action with some Polks that wouldn't go near me otherwise.

-- Sigh -- You amaze me, you know that? You think you'll manage to pool the actual lesbians?

Who said anything about pooling them? I'm going to see if they'll take me in hand and teach me.

Shameless. Go on, I'll catch you later.



Of course, now that I've made that bold decision, I have to figure out what I'm actually going to do ...

No, I love them, it's not that ...



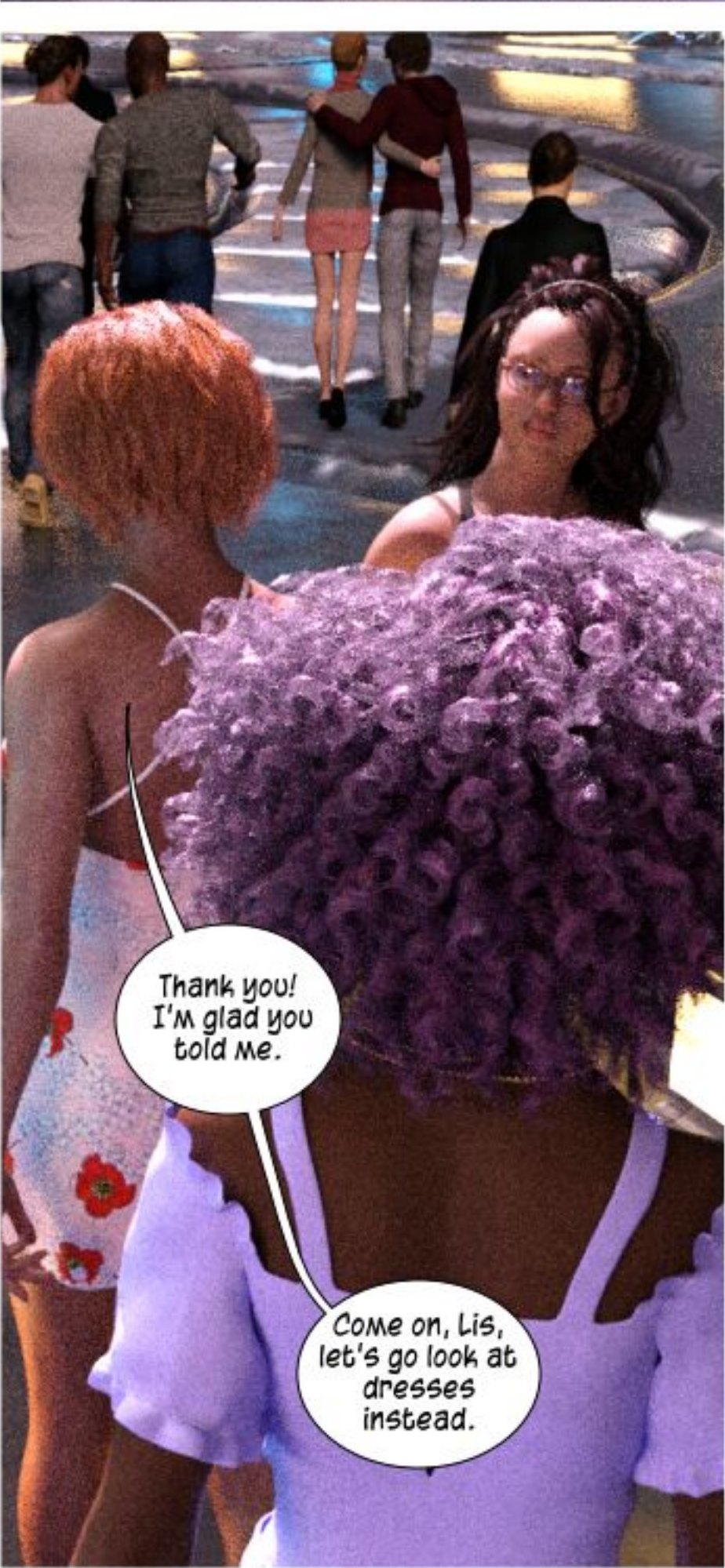
... I just can't walk in them! I've tried to wear heels like this before. It never works! I fall on my face!

I have the solution for that! Just put your feet in this device. It'll reshape the structure of your feet so that walking in heels feels completely natural, and isn't painful!



Of course, after you do that, you won't be able to wear flats anymore; when you do, you'll have to walk on tiptoes with no support and you can't do it for long.

Oh!



Thank you! I'm glad you told me.

Come on, Lis, let's go look at dresses instead.



So do you two just like to go around ruining people's business, or what?

Get out of here!

Uh ...



Sorry! I guess she thought we were together ...

I should have just kept my mouth shut, but I hate seeing people get scammed.

It's OK. Though I liked some of those boots ... I was sort of working up the nerve to try some on ...

Huh! 'scuse my saying so, but I wouldn't have figured you for it ... especially not with what you're wearing ...



Oh, well ... when you're in a situation beyond your control, you might as well take the opportunities ...

"Beyond your control"? What do you mean?

Uh, it would take a while to explain ...

I've got time, try me. This sounds interesting.

I'm Flux. Do you have a name?

MEANWHILE, IN THE INFIRMARY ---



I can't believe you didn't report it! There is an ironclad policy that any incidents of that sort --

I work for the Facility, Ms. Renard. I don't work for ReVamp LLC, and I certainly don't work for Morphic Labs.

If I report anything to you it is as a courtesy, in matters where your company has an interest.

And you didn't think we might have an interest in an unauthorized, untraceable piece of biomaniplulation?

I'd have thought the head of the Medical staff would have a bit more concern for public safety.

I want their scans.



Of course I'm interested in public safety. But you don't actually give a damn about that. You're just worried someone's stolen your tech.

I'm also concerned with patient privacy. And, unlike the agreement you've forced the vendors into, I'm obliged to give you nothing.

For what it's worth, we didn't make any scans. There didn't seem to be a point, they weren't sick or injured.

Names. I need their names.

Were you even listening?

No.



Dr. Baldwin, seventy percent of the vendors at this con license tech from us.

If we pull those licenses, there are no vendors. If there are no vendors, there is no con. ReVamp goes broke, and I tell everyone it was your lack of concern for public safety that led us to make that decision.

Do you value your job?



... Wow, that's really something. I wonder what's going through this woman's head ...

Who knows? I don't know if it matters, really. She might even be onto something. I think Greg could use the eye-opener. Of course, it probably won't work ... his sleaze muscles are too well-developed for that.

Ha!



What I don't understand is how she's allowed to just wander around zapping people -- I mean, even if the convention staff approve of it, it can't be very good P.R. ...

Oh, no, I don't think they approve. More likely they don't even know she's doing it. Or they know but can't catch her. This con is always understaffed. I've been coming for four years and they're consistent that way.

Huh. If you don't mind my asking ... what's the draw? I mean for you personally. I don't, uh, I don't think you're a modder, not when you wear eyeglasses ...



I like glasses because when you take them off, everything gets blurry, and sometimes I like things to be blurry.

But you're right, I'm not a modder ... and you were too nice to ask, but I'm not here to shop or party either. Believe it or not, there's a science track at this con. Mostly it's Morhic giving talks which don't reveal anything useful, but there's also some good stuff.

Are you -- ah -- in the Field?

Let's say I'm adjacent. I'm a research assistant to someone who is. So, yeah, it's professional.



You know, the presentations don't really start until tomorrow.

If you're serious about going for new experiences under the circumstances, I can go around with you and try to set you up to ... you know, get into it a little more. If you're interested in a little shopping.

That ... might be nice.



I don't know if I want to do too much else in the way of body mods, especially if I can't revert them individually ...

I was thinking clothes. I'm not super-Pemme myself, as you can tell, but a woman who's interested in Petish boots ought to at least try wearing a slinky dress and some heels ...

And maybe hair. You can always cut hair if need be.

Good afternoon! Are you interested in learning about physical and spiritual rejuvenation?

Not today, thanks.



What was that about?

They're a church. They'll give you a complete physical rejuvenate for free ... if you join them and embrace their teachings. Or pretend to convincingly.

They don't get much business -- a rejuvenate from some of these other vendors is already super-cheap -- but they're here every year, so somebody must fall for it.

Sorry. For all I know you're devout ...

No. I always kind of felt like religion was for people who couldn't tell right from wrong without help.



MEANWHILE ...

B-but ... you don't think they're big enough already?

You want to get noticed, right? Trust me. Dykes like tits just as much as guys do.

Now, what we're gonna do, we're gonna take off some of that belly and put it where it does more good, and we're going to improve a couple of other things while we're there.

Undress and get in the tube. I'll tell her what you want.

Right here? In front of everybody?

Aw, that's cute. Don't worry, honey, I have a Modesty screen.

Hey, Foley, what's up?



Are you ... I mean, is this really the way to go? I peel ridiculous ...

We'll need the accelerated growth to Finish First, of course ...

Once that's done, I think something bouppant, perhaps a color change ...

I'm picturing a lot of pink in the Pace. Nails to match, of course. And we must do something about those brows.

Of course you do! You've got that great body, but your hair's half-assed and you're wearing nothing but a sweaty t-shirt.

My pants won't fit now!

We're going to get you some clothes, don't worry. Hair and Pace First.

What's all this? Since when does Foley go near a salon?

She Pound a guy who jumped the Pence but isn't admitting it. She's having a little Pun with him. He's cute but kind of stupid.

Foley, my Pace Peels weird with all this stuPP on it ... and my tits are messing with my balance ...

Hotness requires sacrifice, baby. We're almost done. Just need to get you something to wear.



She didn't sell me any underwear!!

Oh my god, that's amazing!

You know, I wasn't sure you were going to go all the way through with it. I think you must actually like looking like an enormous bimbo.

I thought you were trying to help me!

I am! I absolutely am. There's only one thing left to do. Come on, we're all going to go to my room.

There's only one lesson left, but it's the most important one.

Come over to the side of the bed and get on your knees.



But I ... Uh ... Really?

What's the matter, did you never do this when you were a guy?

See, I'm not dumb. You could have just told me the truth. But it's OK. You want to be a dyke? I'm glad to help.

Carpet diving is a very important dyke skill! And it won't hurt you any if you go back to being a guy, either.

Now, you're going to bring those pretty pink lips over here and you're going to make all three of us come.

If you do, we'll give you a reward that you can't even imagine. Yet.

You don't want to Plunk when you're so close to the Finish line, do you?

Get over here!



So, now that you've been wearing it a while ... how is it?

It's nice! I mean, it *Peels* great ... I do *Peel* a little, uh ... exposed ...

You've never dressed to stand out before, have you? I guess straight guys don't really do that.

Not that I do it much either ... I'm more of a "hide in the shadows" person.

I think I might be one of those, too.

By the way, thank you for finding heels I could actually walk in.



I'm glad you're OK with the outfit, because I was *Peeling* a little guilty about spending your money ...

Oh, no, it's fine. I'm not rich but I can afford a splurge or two.

I was a little surprised ... all the biomods are cheap, but the clothes and hairstyling and such aren't ...



Oh, I can explain that!

For the biomod vendors, the con is advertising. They don't *quite* give it away, but remember, the first couple of years they thought it was going to be "free trial" and everybody would revert when they left.

When it was obvious that wasn't happening, they decided it was worth it to offer cheap services at the show for publicity. Out in the real world they charge a hell of a lot more.

The clothing vendors and stylists, on the other hand, are here to make a living. That woman with the boots probably does more business at the con than she does the entire rest of the year.

Is this table OK?

Sure.



People are looking at me! I mean, they're looking at me like ... you know.

You've never had someone look at you like they want to take your clothes off before?

Uh ... if they were, I wasn't aware of it.

Men or women? Looking at you right now, I mean.

... Men.

I bet some women are too.

Men mostly don't notice when women are. Some of that is because women have to be more careful, but some of it's because men are kind of oblivious.



I think gay men are probably better at it. They'd have to be, right?

I ... never really gave it any thought.

Well, that's what I mean. That's kind of a luxury. To not give it any thought.



Usually when I've gone to bed with someone it's been because they made it hard to miss.

I'm not saying they have to hold up a flashing sign, but ... anyway, it might be safer that way, y'know?

I'm glad you told me that. Now I know if I want to have sex with you I should just come right out and say it.

Oh. Uh ... do you?

Yes.



Let's just take all this off ...



DAY TWO



Mr. Bright?

Uh ... yes?



I suppose it should be "Ms." For the time being ... I'm sorry that this happened.

My name is Diana Renard. I'm a representative of Morphic Labs.

Obviously we're very concerned about this, and we'd like to catch the person who did it. To that end, I need to get a full medical scan from you.

Why?

Why? Because we don't have the information on what exactly she did to you with that unlicensed appliance. The only way to know that is to scan you ...

HMM. I'll think about it.



You'll think -- You seem remarkably unconcerned! Don't you want this woman caught?

Sure, I guess, but I don't see how you getting the medical information helps with that. Trying to catch her in the act would be a lot more effective.

I've had enough medical procedures for right now. Like I said, I'll think about it. Now if you don't mind, I'm trying to have breakfast.

Come on, aren't you a little bit tempted to rebase and turn up at your parents' next weekend looking like this?

They'd just use it as more evidence that mixed marriages don't work.



Don't think about it too long. There could be ... consequences.

Enjoy your breakfast.



"Consequences." My ass. Where's she get off --



Hey there!

AAAA!

Oh! Sorry.

For a second I thought it was that woman again.



"That woman?"

Her name's Renard. She works for Morphic Labs, wears eyeshadow like an escapee from a cabaret act, and is not a bundle of joy.

She wanted me to let her take medical scans. She said she needed it to help track down the "Womanizer." She was very insistent.

When I didn't say yes right away, she said something about consequences. I think it was a threat.

I'm not surprised.



Morphic doesn't sell any of their tech directly. They license it to other people. Any vendor here selling bodymods is using Morphic's stuff. This gives Morphic a real stranglehold. And they use it.

All those mod vendors are required to share their data with Morphic. Who their customers are, what was performed, all of it. If they don't comply, Morphic just says they can't have any toys.

So some mod hardware they don't control ... yeah, that'd send them into a huge hissyfit. They'd see that as threatening their monopoly.

Yeah, I figured out that they don't really care about catching or stopping her; they just want the tech.

This isn't going to ... hurt, is it?

No! It's great. Trust me.

Even more so since I think it's tech they don't have.

I've never heard of anything before that could do changes like that just from a transmission, as opposed to a field immersion ...



In English?

It changed you -- almost instantly -- just by zapping you. Normally changes that extensive would require you to sit in a broadcast field or a tank for a while.

The Morphic people are probably creaming their pants for it and having a nervous breakdown about it at the same time.

I'm curious: Why didn't you let her scan you?

Oh, you look so good! How does it feel?

OK, I guess ... but I wish you hadn't picked yellow.

Yellow looks good on you! Besides, not too many others pick it. You'll stand out at the robot party tonight!

I think mostly because I didn't like her. She was mean, and I don't like mean, especially first thing in the morning.

Also, I'm just not sure I care that much at this point. I mean, how much harm did the Womanizer lady really do?

HMM. Speaking of that, you may not have heard ... there've been ...



... two more?

What exactly is your operational plan here? Is it just to let this woman do whatever she wants with an unlicensed weapon? Do you even care that she's wreaking havoc on your convention floor?



I wouldn't exactly call it "havoc" ...

I'm not sure what you expect, Ms. Renard. We have a very small staff to run a very large convention. We don't have the people to patrol every inch of the floor every second of the day.

Until we catch her in the act, there's nothing we can do.

Unless Morphic would care to contribute the cost of additional temporary security ... but I know better.

You should. Morphic is not going to pay for you to do your job properly. If you can't manage your con, then maybe you shouldn't be having it.



But I'm not interested in discussing that right now.

Obviously, if I'm going to find that device, I'm going to have to do it myself.



Well! Really leaning into it, aren't you?

I suppose there's something to be said for enthusiasm.

... Who are you?

My name's Diana Renard. I represent Morphic Labs. I was going to apologize for what happened to you, but seeing as how you're apparently embracing it ...

I'm not embracing it as much as all that. And you're not funny. What do you want?



I want to do a full scan. To help us figure out what she did to you.

What's in it for me?

How mercenary!

You don't have the data, or you wouldn't be asking, and it's important to you ... or you wouldn't be asking. I'm just looking for fair value.

Well, I can't pay you ... at least not in money.



But if you're interested ...

... I can make it worth your time in another way.



Give me a minute. I need to go pee.

Careful on those heels!

I'll get us both more wine.

And a more comfortable place to sit.



You -- ah! -- you call me mercenary?

MM, point, but -- SMK -- I'm fascinated, you see.



Such an adaptable creature ... -- SMK -- willing to throw herself into the role so wholeheartedly -- MMH -- ... it's exciting. It makes me want to tear your clothes off.

... oohhh ...



Do you like this? Do you enjoy being an excitable, empty-headed little lust creature?

-- MMH! --



wait ... wait, Diana, hold on -- I feel ... really weird all of a sudden ...

Oh! Then it's time to go somewhere else.



... Where are we going?

To do your scan, like you agreed.

I did?

Of course you did. You agree to everything. You're very agreeable right now.



I ... I don't think I ...

Try not to think. You're throwing yourself into the bimbo role, remember? Thinking is out of character.

But I didn't --

Sure you did. I told you, you agree to everything right now.

Watch.

You consent to this scan.

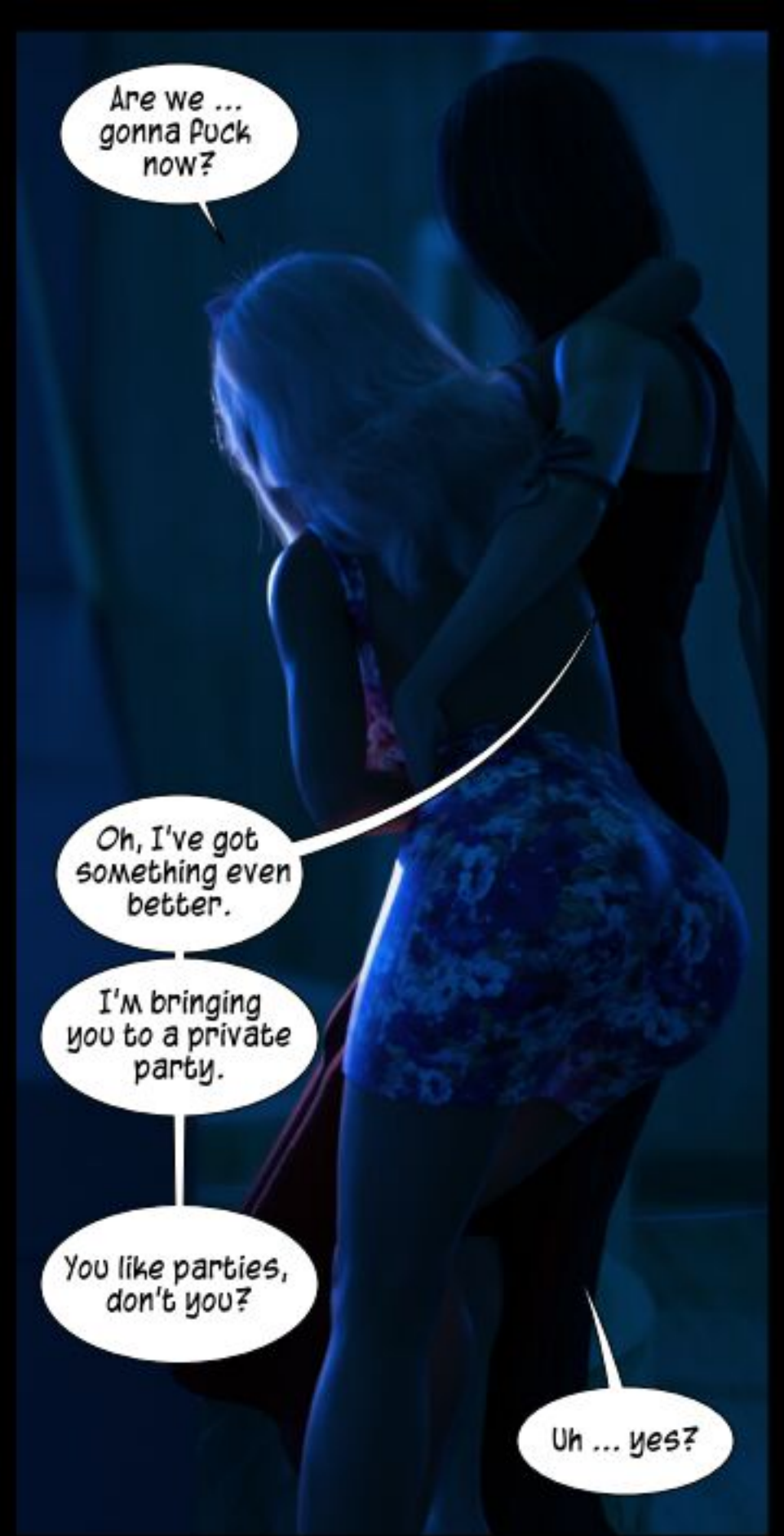
I ... consent to this scan.

You agree that you are really quite stupid.

I ... agree that I'm ... quite stupid.

You think you are only fit to be the slut you're pretending to be.

I think ... I'm only fit ... I'm ... a slut ...



Are we ... gonna Puck now?

Oh, I've got something even better.

I'm bringing you to a private party.

You like parties, don't you?

Uh ... yes?



I personally think they're a roomful of pigs, so I won't be staying to watch, but I'm sure you'll have a Fabulous time.

But I -- whoa!!

Oops!!

You really are going to have to get better at walking in those if you plan to stay like this.

Still, that's a good starting position.



You see, I suspect you've been cherry-picking the good parts a bit.

You can't claim to really have had the Full Feminine experience until you've been pawed and molested by a group of men with no boundaries.

You're their ideal woman: you literally can't refuse them.

The toxin wears off in a couple of hours. Have Fun.



KNOCK KNOCK
KNOCK

I told you in the message to just come on in! I put you on the door lock ...

It felt more polite this way.



You're sweet. Sorry I wasn't around all afternoon ...

Are you OK? You look kind of unhappy.

Just a little worried about Greg is all. I can't find him.

I'm sure he's fine. He's not the type to do anything rash. Well, not that kind of rash.

You look really happy about something.

I picked up a surprise for you. Wanna see it?

Sure!



oh! ...

I thought you should probably, y'know, have the experience.

I'll get it reverted tomorrow. They're Fun, but they get in the way. I hate having to adjust myself whenever I sit down.



DAY THREE

Contact

FROM: 0046573 DALGREN
 HEY --
 I'M IN PRESENTATIONS ALL DAY, BUT LET'S MEET FOR DINNER IN THE VIOLET BAR! AND THEN AFTERWARD WE CAN DO OTHER THINGS.
 -- FLIX

FROM: 0010697 RENARD
 I HAVEN'T GOTTEN A REPLY FROM YOU ABOUT LETTING ME PERFORM THOSE SCANS. I'D LIKE TO REMIND YOU THAT MY PATIENCE IS LIMITED. BEAR IN MIND WHAT I SAID ABOUT CONSEQUENCES, MR. BRIGHT.
 -- DIANA RENARD



... Well, that's what he told me ...
 -- giggle --
 It's not true!
 ... It's mostly not true!

I really don't want to give Renard my scans. I don't like her, and I don't think I like the people she works for much either. But I need to know how much trouble she can actually make for me, especially since it sounds like all the people who actually run the con are scared to death of Morpheus ...

Maybe that woman in the infirmary will talk to me ... she seemed like the kind of person who'd tell the truth no matter what ...



!!!



Uh, excuse me ...

Oops! Guys, my friend's here. I've gotta go.

Thanks for not blowing my cover.

I realized walking up and saying "yo, Greg" wasn't a good idea. What did you tell them your name was?

I didn't! It didn't come up.

Greg, what happened? I lose track of you for a day and suddenly you've got tits out to your navel and you're giving men lap dances?

Well ... I kind of had an adventure last night ... and once I got past being scared shitless ...

Jer, men are so easy to mess with! We don't even know how easy we are. You play with a guy's dick a little, you can make him do anything!

And ... um ... I like the way they peel inside me.

Look, we've got about twenty-four hours left, right? This time tomorrow we'll be out of here. I'm going to revert it all at the end ... but until then, I want to get all the mileage I can.

But I want to find you both later, 'k?



Un Pucking believable.

The one time a guy ever was interested in Greg in an unmissable way, Greg freaked out for a week. I mean, he did it quietly, but ...

I think now you're actively trying to interfere in the situation.

This is unacceptable!

ooop! Whoa thar.

I know that voice, and I wish I didn't.



We're doing nothing of the sort --

No? How do you account for the information that Dr. Steinholtz' little protegee is attending this convention?

Information I had to get second-hand, by the way, making me look like a fool to my bosses, because you didn't report it the way you were supposed to!

Now wouldn't you say, knowing that, that she was an obvious suspect? But you sat on the information! And meanwhile, we're up to six victims!

Ms. Renard. We never agreed to do background checks on guests. We don't have the resources, it's against our privacy policy, and frankly, helping Morpheus pursue its vendettas is not our business, nor our problem.

I refuse to be scolded for not delivering something that we never agreed to give you in the first place. And I'm getting very tired of wasting time dealing with you. I have a con to run.

I think we're going to go back to Morpheus and have a long discussion about our working relationship and who is dependent upon whom. In the meantime -- and I say this in my official capacity -- get out of my face.

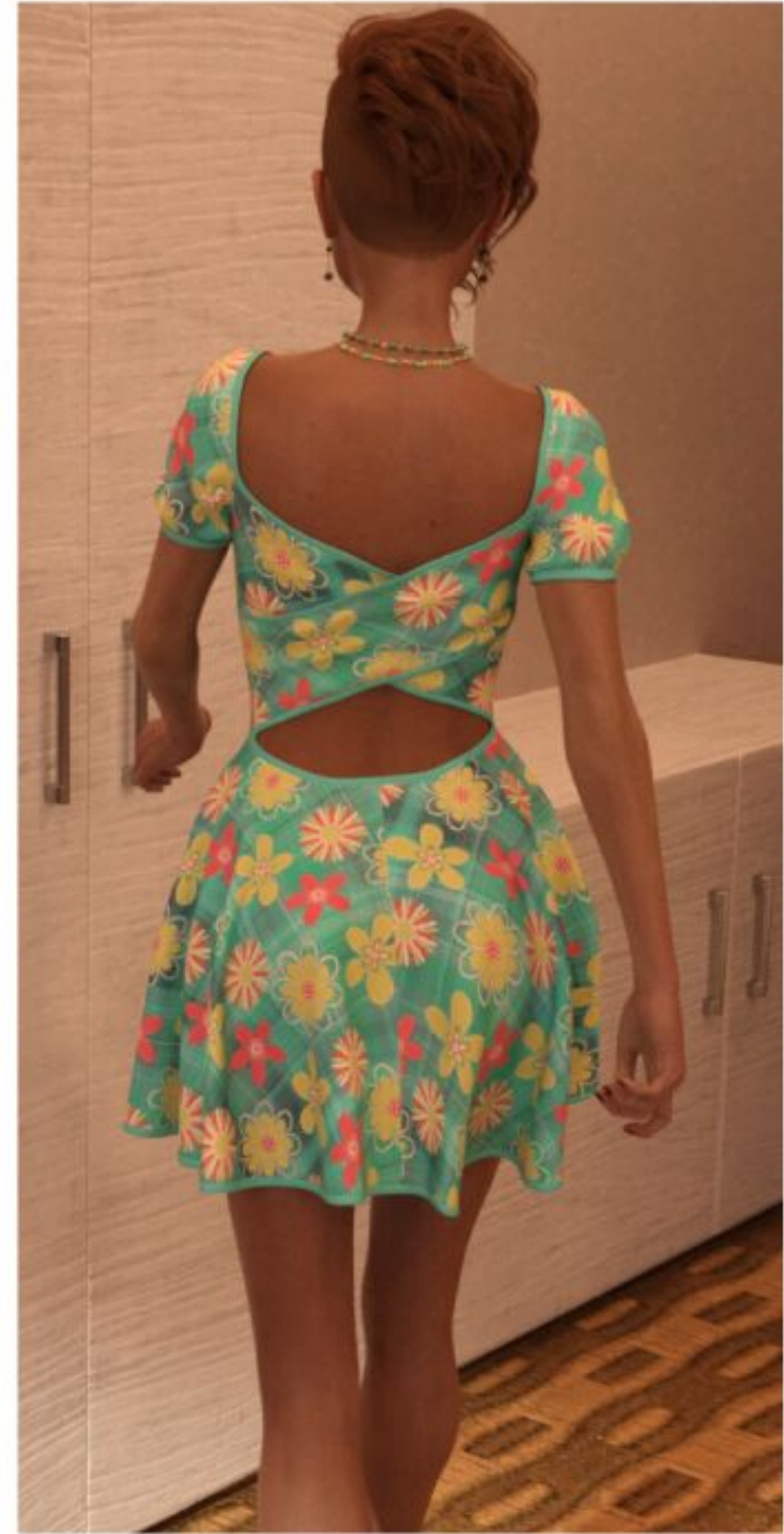
You want to investigate this woman? Fine. But we've given you everything we can. Stop asking.

$4x + 3 = 15$
 $4x = 15 - 3 = 12$
 $x = 12 \div 4$
 $x = 3$

shit.



Please have kept me in the lock list ...



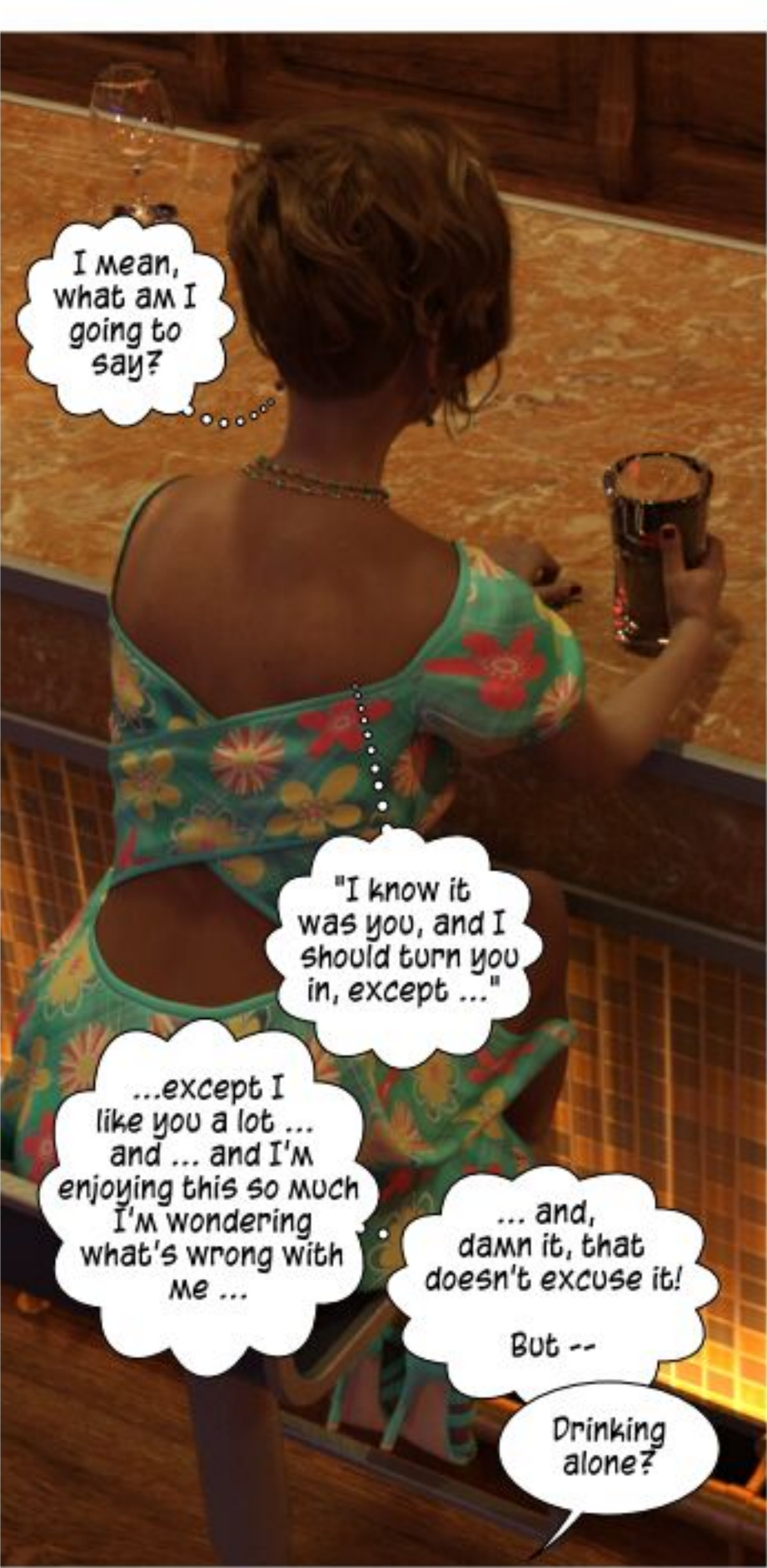
-- sigh --



Suddenly I'm Peeling really impatient with all of this craziness.

Why am I even still here? I should just leave early and get back to the normal world.

... maybe a beer will help.



I mean, what am I going to say?

"I know it was you, and I should turn you in, except ..."

... except I like you a lot ... and ... and I'm enjoying this so much I'm wondering what's wrong with me ...

... and, damn it, that doesn't excuse it!

But --

Drinking alone?



I don't think we're on social terms.

Actually, I'm here to make peace. Your friend gave me his scans, so I don't need yours, and I felt I owed you an apology.

I'll buy you a beer. Give me a second -- the bartender seems to think this end of the bar is Siberia -- I'll be right back with a round.



So Greg let you scan him, huh?

I persuaded him.

You see, I don't like being told 'no.' I suppose it's a little pathological how much I dislike it.

For years I had to deal with men who would tell me 'no,' not for any good reason, but because they could, and I was a woman, and they enjoyed that Peeling of power.

It makes me very upset.



So I gave your friend a nice big dose of my favorite psychotoxin.

When you're under its effect you can't say no to anything. You do whatever anyone tells you to do. That's how I like my men. Even the ones playing at being women.

After I got my scans, I brought him to a party full of horny, overprivileged men. The kind who like saying 'no' just because they can. They don't like taking it for an answer, though. I learned that years ago.



You did what??

You're ... You're ... uh ...

You're Peeling a little disoriented already, aren't you? You did drink that beer awfully fast.

I'll have to hurry up and think of something suitable to do to you.

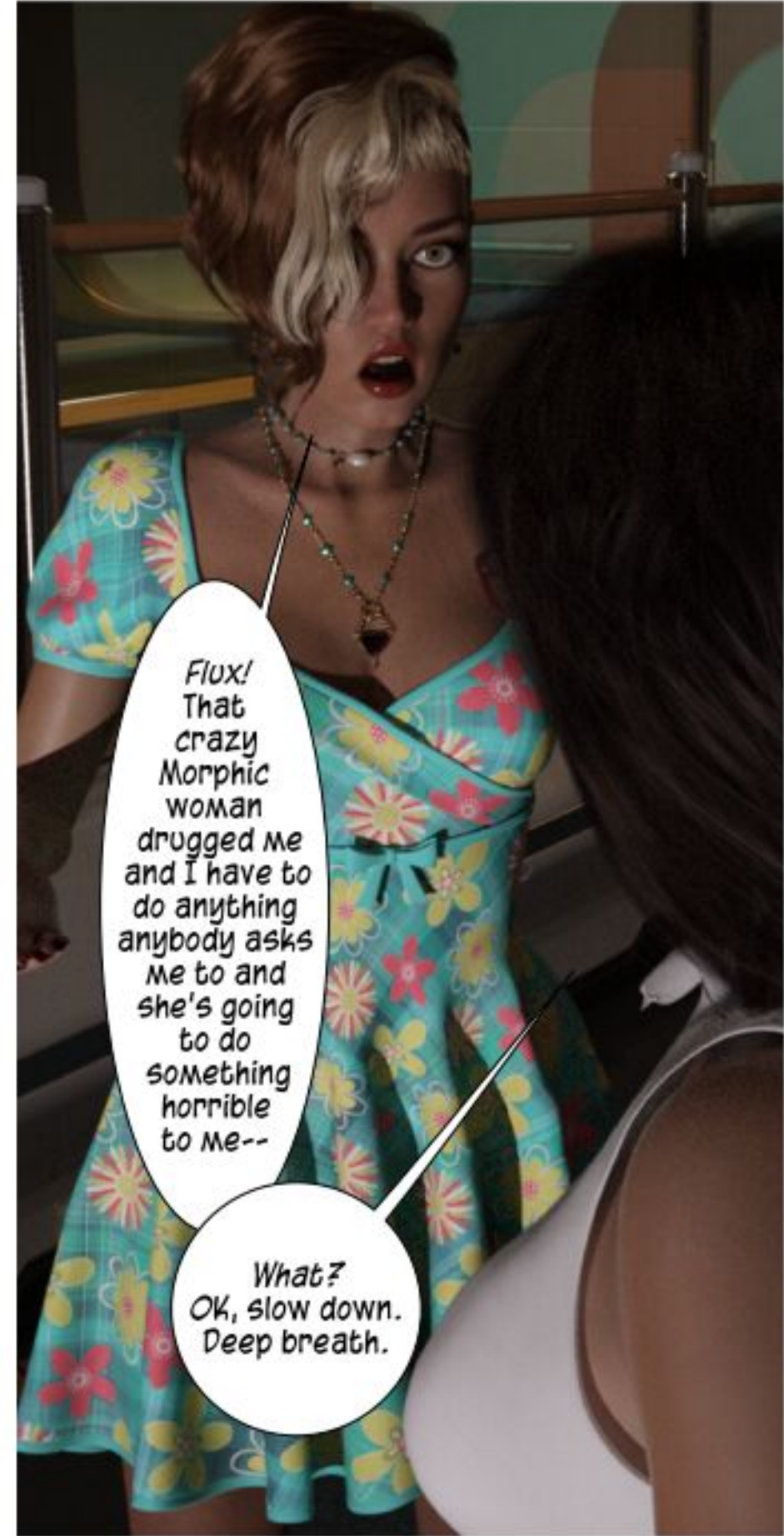
I told you there would be consequences.



Hey!



-- oopN! --



Flux! That crazy Morphic woman drugged me and I have to do anything anybody asks me to and she's going to do something horrible to me--

What? OK, slow down. Deep breath.



All right, I'm going to give you some orders.

Go to my room, as fast as you can. Don't stop to talk to anybody, or even to listen to anybody.

And stay in there until I come find you. It might be a while.

O--OK.

And don't worry about the Morphic woman. I'm going to deal with her.



Diana? Oh god! It is you!

Wow, it's been ... what, five years now?

hmr?

You don't remember me at all, do you? Jen Becker. I was Dr. Steinholtz' Minder, until ... you know, until that happened.

The company decided they didn't want me around after that.



Steinholtz ... don't know where she is these days, do you?

Don't be ridiculous. Steinholtz knows better than to let me catch sight of her. Bitch cost me a good job.

I'm a Freelancer now, but I keep my eyes open for word of her. I only have rumors, though.

Lemme go get us some more wine and I'll tell you some of them.



'scuse my saying so, but you look pretty down. How are things going? You're still with Morphic, right? Everything OK there?

... ehh ... they don't give a damn ... tell you they want something and don't back it up, but when it doesn't work out s'your fault ...



... got someone runnin' around this con ... unauthorized device ... tell me to catch her but I get no help ... and the con people ... I think they think it's funny ... they wanna see me fall on my ass ...

Dunno why e'rybody likes to pick on Morphic ... wouldn't have this con without us ...

It's because you're the big name. Everybody wants to come for the king. It's like success makes you fair game or something.



well, it'sh mean an' I don' --

don' --

... I think I drank too much ...

No, that can't be it. Finish your wine.

But --

Finish your wine.



Wow, you're going to pass out, aren't you?

Hey, this stuff I stole from your purse while you weren't looking -- does alcohol increase the effect?

Because that would explain a lot. How much wine have you had, anyway?

You -- urgh --

Oops! Losing signal. Don't worry, I'll take good care of you while you're out.



Mhhrrr?
Oh, good, you're coming around.



Mhhrr!
Mhhrr! rrr!
Mhhrr!
Mhhrrr!!

Ssh. You need to be a good little toy. You're not upset or agitated. You're happy and compliant and empty-headed.

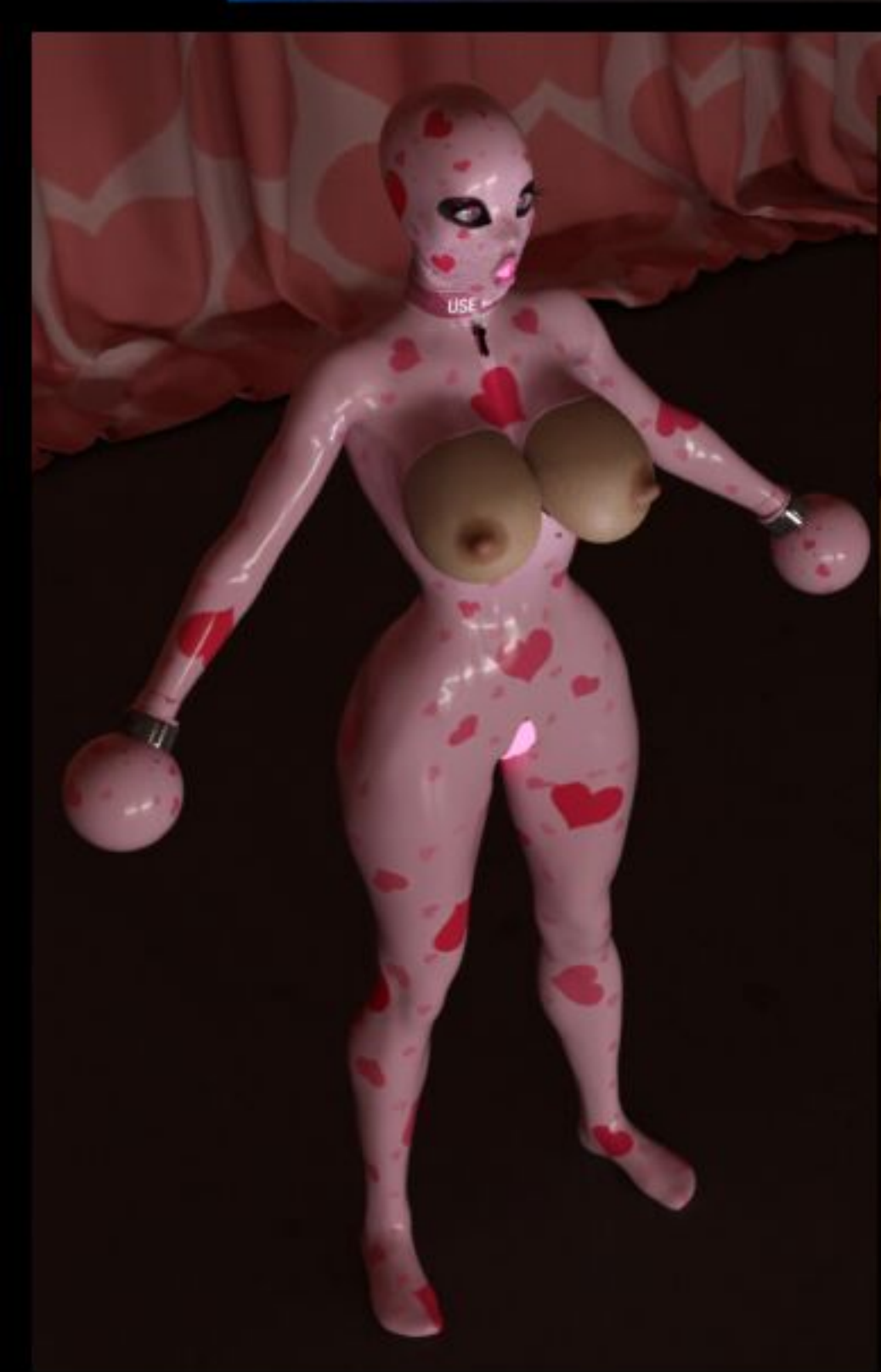
Besides, you can't talk. I had a few alterations made to your mouth.

I'm going to go open the curtain now. Remember, you're a toy for the party guests. This is your job.

By the way, I looked up your psychotoxin. Alcohol very much intensifies the effect. You're probably good for another four or five hours.



Have Fun.



AAA!

It's me!
It's OK.

I had to go incognito. I'll revert it all when I leave tomorrow.



Are you still under the influence?

I don't know! It's hard to tell. I guess you could try giving me a command ...

Wouldn't work. I'd just order you to have sex with me ...

... and I'd do that anyway. Right.

DAY FOUR



-- ZZHHXX --



Both of you!

I should have guessed you were in it together.

AAA!

What the hell? Get out of my room!

I'm going to pry your neurons so hard you're going to be pissing yourself and drooling the rest of your goddamned life.

Where is it? Give it to me. Now.



I have no idea what you're talking about.

If this is about last night, you deserved it and you know it.

The device! The unauthorized biomod device. I want it.

You don't know anything about it?

Then you won't care if I search your room for it.

Now, do I pry your brain before or afterward?



Don't even try it.

What??

Where'd you come from?

Ow!!

Let me go!

That weapon is illegal.

You have also entered this room illegally.

Furthermore, a search of your rooms revealed you are in possession of an illegal psychotoxin.

You searched my -- You had no right to do that!

We had a warrant. We received information about your use and possession of the drug.



Oh, I can guess where that information came from.

You're going to suffer, you little bitch. I'll make sure of it.

I'd be careful about making promises you can't keep.



I've already explained to your employer that their continued business relationship with us is contingent on them prying you. They've agreed. Unlike you, they understand that our needs are mutual.

They consider you a liability. I imagine they'll want to have some words with you -- once you get out of prison.

No!!

Needless to say, you are permanently banned from Revamp.

It'd give us great pleasure never to lay eyes on you again.

Let me go!!



You can't do this! You have no right to do this!

Get your hands off me, you ho



Nice talking to you? Thanks for the help? See you later?

... guess not.

That was close! She almost started -- uh, what I mean is --

She wouldn't have pum'd it anyway. It's not there.



What??

How do you --

Yesterday I went to ask the con office about her, and I found her yelling at them about somebody named Steinholz, whose protege was at the con. She was pissed she hadn't been told that. Then I thought about some of what you told me, and I realized there were too many coincidences. You're the protege, and that made it pretty good odds you were also the woman with the gun.

I checked your room because I figured she'd connect the same dots, and I wanted to beat her to it. I wasn't sure what I was going to do about it if I did find it -- but I sure knew I'd rather it was me making that decision than her. The costume and the gun are in my room.

I -- Huh.

So what are you going to do now?

I'm going to give it back to you.

I should probably be pissed off at you. I was for a little while. But I've had a really amazing weekend. I got to do a lot of things I never thought I'd do, much less enjoy ... and I got to be with you.

I'd like to know the whole story, though.



A few years ago, Morpnic's best researcher, Dr. Steinholz, got fed up with their policies.

Morpnic makes a lot of noise about safety and possible abuse of the tech, and that's all true, but really they lock it down because they want to be the only people who have it. And Dr. Steinholz thought that was preventing some beneficial uses. So she left.

She's been in hiding since then. Morpnic didn't take it well. They'll try to block anything she brings to market. She's worried if they caught her they'd try to kill her or worse. That's how bad they are now.

I started working for her not long after she left. I didn't know any of this then.

I guess I have a skill for it, and she's been great -- she's helped me with a lot of things ...

I wasn't putting anyone at risk with the gun. It had already been tested. I just wanted to ... Well ...

Look, I get tired of some of the men who come to this con just so they can hit on the women. You know that women make most of the purchases here? But more than half the attendees are men, and they're mostly not here to participate. Just to watch and exploit. Like your friend.



I made a mistake with you. I'm sorry. You were hanging out with him, I thought you were the same way ...

Greg's basically a decent person. He just thinks with his dick a little too often.

Anyway, don't apologize. It worked out.

So, are you ... uh ... are you keeping this?

-- sigh -- I don't know. I went back and forth about it a lot last night.

Honestly, I may not make up my mind until I have to pick which exit to take.

... You want to go get some breakfast before we pack?



Should have worn something else ... this top wasn't made for a flat chest, it looks ridiculous ...

Probably should lose the makeup and nail polish too ... or maybe I won't, let 'em stare on the train ...

Wonder if I can get away with keeping the haircut at work, I really like it ...

Hey there!



Hey!

Uh, so, as you can see ... I did decide to revert ... I'm sorry ...

You're sorry? You're sorry you reverted? I don't understand. Why apologize to me?

Well, you know, I figured, once I'd changed back, you wouldn't, uh ...



Did I ever say that? Was that what you were worried about?

Well --

I like you. You, the person. The body isn't the important part.

And, anyway, if you hadn't noticed from this weekend, that part is pretty changeable.

I -- You know, I can't tell you how happy I am to hear it.

DooPus. I can't believe you wasted worry on that.

Though I'm hoping you'll jump the Pence again at the con next year. I might too. I wonder what I'd look like with facial hair?



What I figure is, the only reason some people have some lessons to learn from changing gender is all the crap they bring in in the first place. You know. Baggage.

I don't think changing your body can actually change your personality much. Teach you, maybe, but it doesn't affect who you are. That's always in there, no matter what the outside looks like.

You're probably right -- though that cuts both ways, you know.

What do you mean?



Well ...

Oh. Right.

Now, I want to make sure I have everybody's numbers, 'k?

I want to see all of you again. Real soon.

- END -