

PATRICIA

V2



CHAPTER TWENTY

The Uber pulled in front of his aunt's house, a modest two-story with overgrown ivy creeping up the brick. Jeffrey stepped out, waved at the driver, and stood on the curb as the car hummed away. He turned toward the house, took a deep breath, walked up the path, and knocked on the door.

While he waited, his mind churned with the usual tension between his mom and Aunt Sarah. It was exhausting, being the messenger, the go-between. His mom had been frantic on the phone, her voice tight with worry, but when he pressed for details, she'd clammed up. *Afraid*—that was the word. Not just worried, but afraid of her own sister. He didn't get it. Sarah had always been the cool aunt, the one with the big ideas and the gentle laugh. What could have changed?

He rang the doorbell again, the chime echoing inside. He was about to turn around, ready to call it a lost cause, when the door creaked open. A young man stood there, mid-twenties, with tired eyes and a lopsided grin.

"Oh hey," Jeffrey said, forcing a casual tone. "Is Sarah here? She's my aunt."

The young man blinked slowly, then shrugged. "Sure, come inside." He turned and walked away, leaving the door ajar.

Jeffrey hesitated, the hairs on his neck prickling, but he pushed the door open and stepped into the dim foyer. The house smelled like dust and old coffee. "Who are you?" he called after the man. "You look familiar."

"Craig," the man said without turning, his voice flat. "I live nearby." He shuffled toward the kitchen. "Your aunt asked me to water the plants while she's gone."

"Oh. Where is she?"

"She's out. She'll be back soon."

Jeffrey followed him into the living room, noting the wilting ferns and the layer of dust on the shelves. "Okay. Well, I told her I'd stop by to grab my mom's car. You don't know where the keys are, do you?"

Craig paused, rubbing his chin. "Oh yeah, they're down here. Follow me."

Jeffrey's stomach tightened. "Down here" meant the basement, a place he'd only seen once, years ago, when Sarah had first started tinkering with her 'special project'. He didn't like the thought of descending

into that concrete hole alone.

But he followed.

The basement stairs groaned under his weight, and the air grew cool and metallic. When he emerged into the room, his breath caught. A chair sat in the center, flanked by monitors and cables snaking across the floor. A helmet with a tinted visor rested on the seat, its surface gleaming like polished obsidian.

“Oh yes... I’m supposed to do something for you.” Craig said, his voice hollow.

Jeffrey frowned. “What? What are you talking about?”

Craig shrugged, picking up a remote from a cluttered desk. “I don’t know. She just told me to show you this.”

“Show me what?”

Craig aimed the remote at a monitor, and the screen flickered to life. Sarah’s face appeared, plan as ever. She seemed warm and upbeat. Nothing seemed unusual about her; nothing to be afraid of, that much he was certain. Was his mother overreacting?

“Hey, nephew!” Her voice crackled through the basement speakers. “Hope you’re doing okay. Sorry about this whole situation. Must be so annoying.”

Jeffrey was confused as ever. *What situation?*

“It’s just a big misunderstanding. Anyway, I’ll show you where the cars keys are,” the recording continued, “but I was wondering if you can do me a favor and help me test my newest invention. A VR machine. Virtual Reality like you’ve never seen before. It’s almost done, and I was just wondering what someone in your age bracket feels about it. It’s really cool. You’re gonna love it.”

She paused, her expression softening. “Anyway, yeah—give it a try, and afterward, I’ll let you know where your mom’s keys are. Appreciate it!”

Her face blipped off the monitor, leaving a blank screen.

Jeffrey stood frozen. “What the hell?” He turned to Craig, who was leaning against the wall, arms crossed. “She wants me to test this out?”

Craig didn’t answer, just nodded toward the chair.

Jeffrey looked at the helmet, the restraints, the blinking lights. He could feel the pull of curiosity. But there was also a knot in his gut, a whisper that said *run*.

He thought about his mom, her trembling hands, her refusal to explain. He thought about the keys, and how badly he just wanted to grab them and leave. And then he looked at the machine, harmless enough, and with... how did she put it? “Virtual Reality like you’ve never seen before.”

“Fine,” he muttered, more to himself than to Craig. What’s the worst that could happen? “Do you know how this works?”

Craig stepped forward, his expression blank. “She told me I just have to press this button here.”

“Okay.” Jeffrey let out a shaky breath. “Guess I’ll give it a try.”

Slowly, he lowered himself into the chair. The leather was cool and smooth. He carefully lifted the helmet, its weight surprising, and settled it over his head. The visor was dark, like looking into an empty sky. He placed his hands on the armrests, his fingers curling around the cool metal.

Then came the click.

Restraints wrapped around his wrists and ankles, snug and unyielding. The helmet sealed itself with a hiss, locking into place, pressing against his temples.

“What the hell?” He jerked against the bonds, panic rising. “Craig?”

“Don’t worry,” Craig said, his voice distant now, like it was coming from the end of a long tunnel. “She says you’re gonna love it.”

Jeffrey opened his mouth to scream, but the visor blazed white, flooding his vision with blinding light. The world fell away, and he felt himself tipping forward into the void, his body dissolving into sensation alone.

Sarah watched it all on her laptop, hiding in her bedroom... her old bedroom. The trap was sprung. The new VR program came to life, designed to slowly corrupt her nephew, step by step. It was a bit of a hack job, she didn’t have much time to put it together. But with a few lengthy sessions, Jeff would be... perfected.

* * *

The white light receded like a tide pulling back from shore, leaving Jeffrey standing on a vast, featureless plane that stretched into infinity. No walls. No ceiling. No horizon. Just an expanse of pure, luminous white that somehow felt solid beneath his sneakers. He blinked hard, the afterimages of the blinding flash still dancing at the edges of his vision.

Then the letters appeared.

They materialized out of the nothingness, massive and three-dimensional, floating twenty feet ahead at eye level. Each character had substance—smooth, glossy, faintly iridescent like the surface of a soap bubble. The words read:

NEW LIFE

And beneath that, in smaller but equally solid lettering:

BETA

"The heck is this?" Jeffrey's voice sounded strange in his own ears. Flat. Like he was speaking into a pillow. The words didn't echo so much as they simply died, swallowed by the endless white.

Then the music began.

It wasn't coming from anywhere specific. It was just... there. A soft, chiming melody that circled around him, delicate and slightly off-kilter. Like a music box that had been wound too tight. The notes seemed to tiptoe across his skin, leaving goosebumps in their wake.

"What kind of game is this?" he muttered, looking down at his hands.

His hands.

He held them up, fingers spread. They looked... wrong. Not injured or deformed, but slightly fuzzy around the edges. Pixelated. Like a low-res texture in an old video game that hadn't fully loaded yet. He turned them over, examining his palms. As he watched, the fuzziness sharpened. The pixels smoothed. Within seconds, his hands were crisper than real life—every crease, every knuckle, every tiny hair rendered in hyper-detailed perfection.

"Wow," he breathed. "These graphics are crazy."

He looked back up at the floating title. The music box melody continued its eerie loop. And then, directly beneath NEW LIFE, new text began to fade in from nothing. It shimmered into existence, letters arranging themselves with the soft chime of a notification:

NEW GAME

Jeffrey felt his lips—his real lips, he could feel them—curve into a grin. The fear from moments ago, the panic of the restraints clicking shut, the terror of the helmet sealing around his head... it all felt distant now. Muffled. Like it had happened to someone else.

"Huh. Aunt Sarah has outdone herself."

The words hung in the air, and for a split second, something flickered at the edge of his memory. His mom's worried face. Her trembling hands. The fact that she'd refused to come here herself. But the thought dissolved before it could take root, washed away by the chiming music and the hypnotic glow of the floating text.

"Alright," he said to no one, shrugging. "When in Rome."

He took a step forward. The white surface felt solid under his sneakers, but it made no sound. Another

step. And another. His arm extended, fingers reaching for the glowing NEW GAME text.

His fingertip touched the last letter.

The world changed.

The white plain didn't just darken—it collapsed inward, folding like origami made of shadow. The floating letters dissolved into wisps of light that swirled around him once, twice, then winked out. The music box melody stretched into a long, low drone and then fell silent.

Darkness. Complete and total.

Jeffrey stood in the void, his heart thudding somewhere in his throat. He could still feel his body—his chest rising and falling, his fingers clenching at his sides—but he couldn't see any of it. Just black. Endless black.

Then the panels appeared.

They materialized in front of him, a grid of glowing squares arranged in a neat row. Each one was about the size of a movie poster, their edges soft and luminous. Inside each square, a figure rotated slowly, suspended in three dimensions like a sculpture made of light.

The first panel showed a man. Broad shoulders, strong jaw, close-cropped hair. The figure rotated slowly, expression neutral, arms at its sides. Below it, a small padlock icon glowed red. The entire panel was washed in grey, desaturated and lifeless.

Jeffrey reached for it anyway. His fingers passed right through, meeting no resistance. There was short buzzing sound, and the lock icon pulsed once, warningly.

"Okay," he said, pulling his hand back. "Not that one."

The second panel held an old woman. Deep wrinkles mapped her face, her silver hair pulled back in a severe bun. Greyed out. Locked.

The third made his stomach clench. A little girl. No older than seven or eight, with pigtails and a gap-toothed smile frozen on her rotating face. The lock icon over her image was larger than the others, more prominent. Jeffrey didn't try to touch that one at all.

He moved to the fourth panel.

And stopped.

The young woman inside was beautiful. Not pretty—beautiful. Wavy red hair cascaded over bare shoulders, catching light that didn't exist. Her body curved in ways that made his eighteen-year-old brain short-circuit. Full breasts, a waist that nipped in dramatically, hips that flared like the neck of a wine glass. She rotated slowly in her glowing frame, and unlike the others, her image was vibrant. Alive. Technicolor in a world of grey.

Beneath her, no lock icon. Just a soft, pulsing glow. An invitation.

"What am I supposed to do?" he asked the void. "Is this the only option?"

The void didn't answer. The music had stopped. The only sound was his own breathing and the faint, almost imperceptible hum emanating from the woman's panel.

He looked left. Nothing but darkness.

He looked right. More darkness.

He looked behind him. The same endless black.

No exit. No menu. No way to quit or restart or call for help. Just the four panels and the one that wanted him to press it.

"Fine," he muttered, the word tasting like surrender. "Guess I don't have a choice."

He pressed the icon.

The moment his fingertip made contact, the panel erupted. Not with light—with something thicker. Something that moved like liquid electricity, glowing tendrils of energy that uncoiled from the woman's image and wrapped themselves around his hand. They slithered up his wrist, his forearm, circling his elbow.

He yanked his arm back, but the tendrils came with him, clinging to his skin. They moved with purpose, spiraling upward, reaching his shoulder. A warmth spread through his body, starting at the point of contact and radiating outward. Not painful. Not even uncomfortable. Just... warm. And deeply, unsettlingly pleasant.

"What the—"

The words died in his throat.

Something was happening to his vision. The periphery of his sight was filling with color—a deep, rich crimson. He looked down, and red locks spilled into his field of view. Hair. Long, wavy hair the color of autumn leaves was cascading over his shoulders, growing impossibly fast, each strand materializing from nothing like ink spreading through water.

He reached up and grabbed a lock. Lifted it. The individual strands caught light that didn't exist, gleaming copper and gold. His hair. Growing out of his head. The weight of it pulled at his scalp.

"What the heck?"

He released the strand, and his eyes caught on his hand. His fingers were... slimming. The knuckles that had been thick and masculine were smoothing over. The coarse hair on the back of his hand was retreating into the skin, disappearing follicle by follicle. His nails—short and blunt and bitten-down—

were pushing outward, lengthening into perfect ovals that gleamed with an invisible polish.

A sound escaped his lips. Not a word. A sharp, breathy exhalation that was half-terror and half-something he couldn't name.

His chest began to itch.

Not a surface itch. Deeper. Inside the tissue itself. He looked down just as two lumps began to push themselves outward from his pectorals. The fabric of his t-shirt—his favorite band tee—was stretching. The lumps grew with alarming speed, rounding, filling, becoming unmistakably, undeniably female. His nipples, visible through the straining cotton, were darkening and thickening, pushing outward into tight peaks.

"Oh my god."

The words came out breathless. Higher than his normal voice. He clamped his mouth shut, but his hands were already moving, cupping the growing mounds as they swelled against his palms. The weight. The impossible, dizzying weight of them. Warm and soft and heavy, his new breasts overflowed in his fingers, the nipples pressing insistently against his touch.

Behind him, something was happening.

He felt it before he understood it. A pressure at the base of his spine. A fullness that was building, swelling, pushing outward. His hands flew from his breasts to his rear, and his palms met flesh that hadn't been there moments ago. His ass was expanding, rounding, the curve of it pressing back against his searching fingers. Hips that used to be narrow flared outward, straining the fabric of his jeans. He heard a series of ripping noises. Then his waist was pinching in, the bone structure itself reshaping with a series of soft, internal clicks.

"Ahh—"

The moan escaped before he could stop it. His new waist. His new hips. The sensation of his own hands gripping the lush curve of his own rear. It was surreal. It was terrifying. It was...

How was this feeling so good?

His breathing had gone ragged. Each inhale made his new breasts rise and fall, the weight of them a constant, foreign presence. Each exhale came out as something between a gasp and a whimper. His lips—were they fuller?—parted, and his tongue darted out to wet them and met flesh that was plusher, softer, more sensitive.

He lifted his fingers to his mouth and poked.

So soft. The kind of lips he'd seen on models in magazines, the kind that made other men turn their heads. He traced the new curve of his upper lip, the fuller sweep of his lower. The sensation was electric, every nerve ending firing at triple strength.

His vision blurred for a moment, and he blinked hard. His lashes had grown. Long and dark, they fanned against his cheeks with each flutter, catching at the corners of his vision like delicate curtains.

Then came the last surge.

It wasn't localized. It was everywhere. Every change that had been building, every shift and swell and softening, all slammed into place simultaneously. His breasts gave a final, firm push outward, settling at what he guessed was easily a D-cup. His waist cinched one last notch. His hips—god, his hips—flared to their full, womanly width. His rear bounced as if given a final, invisible slap.

The whole thing popped into place.

At least, that's what it felt like. Like every piece of him had been disassembled and put back together correctly. Like this body had been waiting for him, and he'd finally stepped inside.

He was panting. His chest—his breasts—rose and fell with each ragged breath. He poked experimentally at the plushness of his new chest, and a sound escaped him. A squeak. High-pitched. Feminine.

"What is happening to me?"

His voice was more than just high. It was something softer. Breathier. Sultry. Sexy.

A shimmering appeared directly in front of him.

The mirror materialized from nothing, a full-length oval framed in spun silver that hovered at waist height. Jeffrey stared at his reflection, and a stranger stared back.

The woman in the mirror was... gorgeous. There was no other word. Wavy red hair tumbled past her shoulders in a cascade of copper and gold, catching phantom light. Her face was heart-shaped, with high cheekbones and a delicate jaw. Long, dark lashes framed eyes that had shifted from muddy brown to a startling emerald green. And her lips—full and pink and slightly parted—looked like they'd been designed for sin.

His clothes began to morph.

The strained t-shirt and ripped jeans he'd arrived in were distorting, the fabric rippling like water disturbed by a thrown stone. For a brief, shocking moment, the clothing dissolved entirely, and he caught a glimpse of his new body in its naked entirety. The full, heavy breasts with their tight nipples. The dramatic inward curve of his waist. The flare of his hips and the pale, smooth expanse of his—

His penis was gone.

Between his legs, where his familiar, masculine equipment should have been, there was only a soft, puffy mound. The hint of delicate folds. A new sex entirely.

"Oh my god."

The words were definitely breathless now. Definitely feminine. He couldn't help it if he tried.

Then the clothes reformed, swirling around him like a tailor made of light. Denim wrapped his legs—high-rise cut-offs that hugged every new curve, lifting his already-perky ass and emphasizing the length of his legs. A tiny collared shirt materialized over his torso, the fabric a crisp white that contrasted with his pale skin, tied in a knot just below his sternum. The cut of it forced his cleavage into a dramatic display, the inner curves of his breasts pressing together in a deep valley of flesh.

Heels. Strappy little things that added four inches to his height, making his calf muscles tighten and lift. His legs looked endless. Luscious.

He stared.

The woman in the mirror stared back. She lifted one perfectly manicured hand to her hair and toyed with a strand, and Jeffrey felt his own hand moving in tandem. Her lips—his lips—curved into a nervous smile. Her hips shifted, and the motion was instinctively feminine, a subtle sway that made the cut-offs ride even higher.

"Oh my god," he whispered. "Is that me?"

A giggle bubbled up from somewhere inside him. It was high and musical and completely, utterly wrong. But it felt... good. The vibration of it in his throat. The way his new lips shaped the sound.

Then the worry crept back in.

This was insane. He was a guy. He was Jeffrey. He was Brenda's son, Sarah's nephew, a freshman at State with a 3.2 GPA and a thing for cheap beer and late-night gaming sessions. This—this woman in the mirror with her red hair and her impossible body and her stupid little giggle—this wasn't him.

Maybe I should stop.

The thought crystallized, sharp and clear. He could stop. There had to be a way to quit, to pull the helmet off, to go back to his real body and his real life and forget any of this ever happened.

As if responding to his thought, the mirror lifted. It rose straight up into the darkness and disappeared as silently as it had come, leaving him alone in the void with his new body and his racing heart.

Then the door appeared.

Twenty feet away, where nothing had been a moment before, a door stood waiting. It was simple—plain white, with a brass handle that gleamed softly. No sign. No indicator of what lay beyond.

Just a door.

Jeffrey stood frozen, his new heels pressing into the invisible floor. The void stretched endlessly in every direction. No exit behind him. No other doors. No way back. Just forward. Just the door and whatever waited on its other side.

He could feel his pulse in strange new places. His breasts, jiggling slightly with each heartbeat. The unfamiliar emptiness between his legs. The tickle of long hair against his bare shoulders.

"Fine," he said, with his voice of pure honey. "Maybe I'll just... explore this a little more."

His hips swayed as he walked.

He noticed it immediately—the new rhythm of his body. The shift of weight. The way his center of gravity had lowered, making each step a fluid roll of hip and thigh. The cut-offs hugged his rear like a second skin, and he could feel the friction of denim against flesh that was still exquisitely sensitive. The heels clicked against the invisible floor with each stride, though there was nothing solid beneath them.

The door grew closer.

Ten feet. Five. Three.

He could see his reflection in the brass handle now—a distorted, golden woman-shape that moved with his movements. A stranger. A fantasy.

One foot away.

His hand—slender fingers, perfect nails—reached and made contact. The brass was cool against his new, sensitive fingertips. He wrapped his palm around it, felt the slight give as he twisted.

The door swung open.

Beyond it was not darkness. Not the void. Not the white plane or the floating letters or the terrifying beauty of the mirror.

Beyond it was *color*.

A corridor stretched ahead, walls paneled in rich, dark wood. Sconces lined the walls, their flames flickering with a light that was too steady to be real. The floor was polished marble, veined with gold. And at the end of the corridor, maybe fifty feet away, a figure stood waiting.

Tall. Statuesque. Over worldly proportions. Pure sex. Dressed in crimson that clung to every curve like it had been poured on.

A goddess. Patricia.

She turned her head slowly, and even at this distance, Jeffrey could see the smile that spread across her flawless face. Not a kind smile. Not a welcoming smile. The smile of a predator who had just watched prey walk willingly into her den.

"Come in," Patricia called, her voice a low purr that traveled down the corridor like smoke. "The tutorial is over."