



Chapter 2

Madison explained how to loot the bodies. "By mentally clicking on the corpses, you can see their inventory and take what you find. I suggest you check them all and then assign the treasure according to..."

All the loot vanished as Hal and Paul raced to see who could get the most stuff.

"... need...." Madison finished. "Listen, you need to learn to cooperate."

"Yeah... yeah..." Paul said. "Next?"

"If you check your skills tab, you'll see that each skill has a level. The more you use the skill, the better you will get at it. Use your hammer, get better at your hammer. Levelling up in your skills will also speed up how fast you level overall."

"What if I just keep casting magic missile against a wall for practice?" Eric asked.

"That will only work if you find a designated training zone. Otherwise, they have to be used in context."

Grant took note. Looking at his spells, he wasn't surprised to see they were all lame: Heal, Shield and Hide.

Madison continued the tutorial.

"You don't need to physically carry anything in your hands unless you're using it. You can stow your weapons in your inventory and then just summon them forth when you need them." The guys all chuckled as their weapons popped in and out of their hands.

"Cool," Paul said. "That hammer was heavy as hell."

"You said we could only use weapons our characters know how to use," Eric said. "So, keeping the orc blades is useless for anything who doesn't have sword skills, right?" He had a curved dagger, which he popped in and out of his hand as well.]

"That's why I suggested that you coordinate the looting," Madison said, pleased with herself. One reason she'd chosen Eric was because he knew gaming and could help teach the team. "However, two more things to consider. You will find places to sell items, so even things you can't use have value. However, your inventory is limited, so you will eventually have to make choices as to what is worth carrying."

“That sucks. Why can’t you just change that so we can carry unlimited stuff?” Hal grew tired of popping his weapon. Bored, he let his eyes drift over to Grant’s curvy little body. It was habit. How could he not check out a hot little female? Grant had a bombshell figure and would have looked hot in a burlap sack, but laced into that little black corset he was drop dead gorgeous, with pale, radiant elf girl skin that glowed with fecund energy. He wore a tiny little lace skirt that fluttered in the dungeon breeze, and Hal couldn’t help but imagine what the formerly big, powerful man had between his long legs.

Having managed to calm himself, Grant for his part had tuned out the tutorial session, instead



finding himself consumed with the soft prison of flesh in which he found himself. He was looking down at the round swell of cleavage, and though he knew these breasts were his, he also reeled at the thought. He didn’t have—breasts. He couldn’t have breasts. Yet, looking down, he plainly saw he did. How real is this VR bullshit? He put a hand to his left breast. The corset cup was stiff and hard, the lace rougher than it looked. He put his other hand on top of the soft flesh of his other breast, where it swelled up above the corset and his mind swam with confusion. It felt—good and not at all something he’d ever felt as a man.

Kim didn’t flush him with extra pheromones. His body was hyper-sensitive and the touch itself has his brain lighting up.

I’m not supposed to feel this. No man is. He thought, not even sure what he was feeling, but knowing it was something only a woman should ever feel, as were some of the other sensations tingling in his body. He felt he’d been—lessened-- as a man, and the pleasure he felt shook his sense of self.

Still curious, he lifted his shoulders and watched as the soft shapes rose, his cleavage growing deeper and more rounded. When he left his shoulders drop his breasts jiggled moving slightly within the soft, silky lining of his corset, his skin brushing against the cups and sending more girl feels to torment him.

Corset.

He pictured Charise, one of his favorite strippers back in the real world who often started her routines in a corset, her tits pushed up and held out on display. The sight of her all dressed in that hot little thing had made him insane, and he was wearing one now and he felt like he even had bigger tits and finding himself like her, with a body like her and thinking of seeing her in her corset and how much it turned him on to see her not just a woman but being all woman, dressed to please, and now he was like her and he was...getting a little turned on at what he was now...



"This isn't real," he whispered, the soft little voice that came from his mouth giving him chills and thrills equal parts aroused and shamed. Pain. His corset crushing his waist like a vise. Is it supposed to hurt? He wondered, putting a hand to his side. Strands of his long hair blew across his face, and he reached up to pull it away, noticing for the first time his long, painted fingernails. He paused to look at them, to look at his soft little hand— a woman's hand, topped with those nails, and once more he felt shaken to know this was his hand, and he had long nails like a woman. His mind reeled with shame. Breasts were something women had. The nails were something women did, an expression of their femininity.

Kim, back in the lab, watched him staring at his hand, his nails, and she smiled and tapped on her keyboard. The

monitor showed Grant's brain flashing, flooding with pink. The word "pleasure" flashed under the image.

Grant noticed how his nails sparkled when they caught the light just right. He turned his hand side to side, and a smile crept across his pretty face. They were... well, they did look good, even if they were stupid.



Hal and now Paul were both staring. In addition to having a hot bod, seeing him standing like that, his long blonde hair fluttering around him as he looked at his nails, he looked so... hot. It was hard to even imagine she used to be a man, and they each found themselves picturing that body naked, the torch light laying across smooth skin.

Kim tapped. The word "anxiety" flashed under the image of his brain.

Grant felt a buzzing sense, a warning, something he would later come to understand was his female intuition. He sensed someone was looking at him. He looked up to see

Paul and Hal staring at him, and they both had that look in their eyes, the ones that made him feel like a woman, like prey. "Fuck off," he said, wishing he didn't sound so ridiculous. "I'm a guy."

Hal looked away, ashamed to have gotten caught. Paul just chuckled and continued to peruse the pleasing shape. "You don't look like a guy."

Grant's dagger flashed into his hand.

"Okay. Okay." Eric stepped between them. "Let's get back to the tutorial, so we can level and get out of here." He kept his eyes on Grant, ready to restrain the little girl if he had to. Grant put his dagger back in his inventory.

"Hal, your time to shine," Madison said.

"It's always my time to shine." He did his air-guitar pose.

"Dude," Paul said. "What, are you, 12?"

Before Hal could respond and her motley crew descend back into bickering, Madison went on. "You have stealth skills. You can move quietly and blend into your surroundings. You can serve the party by sneaking ahead and scouting. You can also detect traps. You should be scanning for traps all the time, so you and the party don't fall into a spike pit or get crushed by closing walls."

"Scan for traps. Got it."

"The orc lair is down the hall. Use your stealth and detect traps. The rest of the party should wait here and watch so you don't tip off any potential foes."

"Potential foes?" Paul chuckled. "You even talk like a nerd."

"Thanks," Madison said. "I have a degree in nerd."

"This is fucking awesome." Hal moved from the room, staying low and darting from shadow to shadow. The others watched, impressed with how he blended in with his surrounding like a chameleon.

"You have to consciously detect traps," Madison said in his head. "Try it."

Hal activated detect traps from his skill list. He saw a glowing, holographic 20-sided die roll across dungeon floor. It came up 15. "What does that mean?"

"Your detect traps is not infallible. You will roll when you use it and other skills. As it levels up, it will get better and the roll you need to detect a trap will get lower. So, with a 15, if there was a trap, you would have detected it."

"But if I fail a roll, I'm going to get spiked or something?"

“You can also use your eyes. If there’s a trip wire you can see, you can see it, but, yeah, if you don’t detect the trap you can get trapped.”

“Okay. This is slightly less awesome.” He slowed down, both checking with his skills and his eyes. He came to the door of the orc lair and checked for traps. He reached for the handle. Stopped. He didn’t know what was in the room, and he was getting into the idea of the game. If there were monsters within, he didn’t want to end up alone. “All clear,” he called.

Paul headed down. Eric held up a hand for Grant to pause. “Fuck off,” Grant said.



“Just hold on. I wanted to tell you, this sucks for you. I’d hate it, too.” It took all his will power not to look down. He could see those perfect crescents out of his peripheral vision, rising and falling with each breath. “But, if you can get your head in the game we can all work together. The sooner we reach level 20, the better for all of us.”

The breeze tossed Grant’s long, golden hair around his pretty face like he was a supermodel on a photoshoot. His face was stunning, with big eyes, tiny little nose and pillowy lips. Eric felt himself getting warm.

As for Grant, he didn't trust anyone, and he'd spent his life backing people off, intimidating them with his size and strength. Tilting his head back to look up at Eric, he felt like a child, and his natural distrust of people now filled him with feelings of vulnerability, which he hated. He also hated the sound of his new voice, so he just grunted and walked past Eric, making a point to bump him with his shoulder.

As Grant pushed past him, Eric lost discipline and let his eyes drop to Grant's tiny waist, the swell of his plump, inviting rear. Eric felt surprised as he realized Grant wore high heels. He moved with sleek and feminine ease, his hips swaying side to side. Strange, Eric thought. How does he know how to walk like that? Is he coming on to me?

Grant's "intuition" tingled. He knew Eric was staring at his ass. He glanced back over his shoulder and said, "burn a hole in it, why doncha, shithead?"

Eric cursed himself. He'd been wanting to get Grant to trust him. One step forward, two steps back. He'd have to be more careful. The party needed a healer. He followed the group down to the orc lair.

"The door's locked." Hal tugged on the knob.

"Use your lockpicking skill," Madison said.

Checking his inventory, Hal pulled out his lockpicks. The die rolled. The lock clicked open.

"How come I don't have any cool skills?" Paul asked, feeling jealous that Hal was getting to do everything.

"Your cool skill is smashing the hell out of things," Eric said.

"I like smashing things." He chuckled, then remembered puking at the sight of the mangled bodies. "But I don't like seeing them smashed." He looked up. He couldn't stop thinking of Madison as being up there somewhere. "Can we change classes?"

"I'll switch with you," Grant said.

"No, thanks."

"You cannot switch classes. As with other aspects of your characters, your classes were chosen for their therapeutic benefits." She went on. "You can all check your skills by clicking on the skills tab. You actually have a few. Everyone does."

Curious, Grant checked his Skills tab, closing his eyes and cursing when he saw some of skills he'd been given.

Hal reached for the doorknob.

Grant heard something moving inside. He smelled something like a dog. No one else seemed to notice. He thought about ignoring it, letting the fools get surprised, but if they died and lost a level that wouldn't help him. Pre-cringing at the sound of his voice, he said, "Hold on. There's something in there."

"I don't hear anything." Hal said.

"Go ahead and open the door, then," Grant said.

Eric, drawing on his knowledge of gaming conventions, jumped in to explain. "She's an elf, she.."

"I'm not a she."

"He," Eric corrected, "has heightened hearing. What do you hear?"

"Something like claws scratching. I also smell dog."

"Let's make a plan..."

"It's just a dog," Paul said, grabbing the handle and pulling the door open.

"No. Wait..."

The Warg slammed through the door, jaws latching onto Paul's shoulder. "Hell!"

Hal and Eric froze.

Grant laughed. "I tried to tell you."

Paul reeled, dropping his hammer and punching at the Warg's head with his fist, falling backward. The Warg let go of Paul's shoulder and went for his throat. Paul blocked with his forearm, shouting as the teeth tore into his flesh. The word "Diseased" flashed above his head.

Eric queued up a magic missile and fired, the bolt slamming into the Warg's head, which now oozed blood, but the Warg kept biting. "Hal! Attack." Eric shouted.

"Oh, yeah." The short swords popped up in Hal's hands. He would never admit it, but he felt afraid. The creature was like a wolf out of some horror movie. Yet, he didn't want the other guys to think he was a pussy. He charged, plunging his swords into the creature's back.



“Rat pack it,” Grant shouted. He summoned his dagger and took a step forward, meaning to jump into the fray, but then he remembered his small body and low hit points. He didn’t want to risk losing another level. Besides, he needed to work on his skills no matter how lame they were. He cast Shield on Paul, his hands glowing and sparkling. Kim tapped on her keyboard and Grant felt a thrill of pleasure as the spell energy flowed through him.

Hal jabbed and jabbed, blood splattering in his face. The Warg found its teeth pushed back from Paul’s flesh and now ground against the shield spell. Sensing its impending death, it pulled off meaning to run, but a second magic missile took it down, the Warg’s dead body falling on Paul’s chest.

“Damn.” Paul lifted the corpse and threw it down the hall. His arm and shoulder throbbed with pain. “That hurt like hell. I thought I was a, what did you call it? A brick?”

“As a brick, you can take a lot of damage,” Madison explained, “but it will still hurt.”

Blood poured from Paul’s wounds. His health bar was dropping. He looked at Grant. “Healer?”

Eric looked at Grant. “Your time to shine, healer.”

Grant groaned. “Fine, but I hate this.” He cast Heal. Kim tapped and Grant felt a surge of pleasure.

Paul felt a stinging, and then a warmth as his wounds mostly healed. He knew he should say thanks or something, but Hal had already headed into the orc lair looking for loot, and he didn’t

want to miss out. Getting to his feet, he meant to rush into the room, but instead he fell to his knees and puked, once again grossed out by the blood and death he'd experienced.

"Good call to stay out of the fight," Eric said to Grant.

Grant was starting to think Eric was coming onto him. Furious another man would have the gall, he ignored the wizard and walked into the orc lair, looking for treasure.

The orcs didn't have much: some copper coins, rancid food, but there was a book, which when they clicked on it was revealed as a Spellbook: Cure Disease.

"By reading spellbooks, the spell casters can learn new spells. This is a priestess spell, so Divinity can use it." Madison explained.

Paul was still in the hall, now sweating, looking grey. "Something's wrong with me."

"What is it?" Eric asked.

"He's diseased." Grant held the spellbook in his hands.

"How do you know?"

"As a priestess and the party healer, Divinity can check on the health status of all members. She'll know if you're diseased or otherwise limited, your health level ...etc..."

Grant seethed, annoyed every time Madison referred to him as a girl or with the name Divinity, but he didn't think there was any point in complaining. Obviously, this was all part of her twisted therapy. When he got out of here, he would be making a complaint against her. He felt pretty sure forcing a guy to pretend he was a woman violated some kind of code.

For now, he would have to settle for snark. "How convenient that I just happened to get a cure disease spell right after Sir Pukes a Lot caught a disease. The writing in this game is so first rate."

"It's a tutorial mission," Madison said. "The purpose is for you to learn the basics."

"Do I actually have to read this thing?" Grant opened the book and saw pages and pages of mystic looking text.

"No. Just click on it."

Grant clicked on the book, and the spell now appeared in his Spells Tab. He tried to cast it on Paul, but nothing happened. "It doesn't work."

"You have to lay hands on the target to cure disease."

Grant rolled his eyes. "Of course."

Paul, even feeling sick, couldn't resist. "May I suggest where you lay your hands, beautiful?"

"You wanna die of dog disease or shut the hell up?"



"Fine. Fine." Paul said.

I can use these stupid spells for leverage, Grant realized. Grant knelt down and put his hands on Paul's arm. He hesitated. Grinned. "I could just let you die."

"I was just messing with you. Come on."

As Grant cast the spell, Kim flooded him with endorphins. It felt good to cast spells.

Looking to complicate things, Madison flooded Paul with endorphins, or maybe it should be said more endorphins. He was already getting turned on by the feeling of Grant's soft little hands on his body, but now as Grant healed him, he felt--bliss.

Their eyes met, their pupils fat. "Thanks," Paul said, his voice hoarse as he felt overcome with a powerful need to kiss this beautiful girl.

Feeling the attraction, Grant reeled. "Eat shit," he said, shocked and confused at what he was feeling. He got up and turned toward the wall, as he didn't want anyone to see him blushing.

"I thought you guys might kiss," Hal said, chuckling.

Grant flipped him off.

The group stood around for a minute. "Now what?" Eric asked, letting his hands spark.

"A few more details. To encourage you to get into your characters, I will program the AI to award you +5 experience points when you use your character names for each other."

Grant groaned. Now everyone would call him Divinity. Somehow, somehow, Madison was gonna pay for all this.

"In order to add to the fun and excitement, there is a timer for each level. If you complete the level within the allotted time, you receive bonus experience points." As she said the word, a digital clock appeared in the air. It currently read 12:00. "For this level, you have 12 hours. Between levels you will find a safe room where you can rest. If you sleep in the dungeon, you risk encounters with wandering monsters."

"That's typical of these sorts of games," Eric said.

"We get that you're a gaming dork," Grant said. "You don't have to keep reminding us."

"You can just grind around finding and killing monsters, but you'll level up a lot faster if you do the main and side quests. They give more experience than grinding. The quests also come with special rewards like rare armor and weapons."

"So how do we get the quests?"

"One's coming to you right now."

"Help me," they heard a small voice say. Turning, they saw a furry little girl with a face like a fox stumbling into the room. "Help me." She swooned and fell to the floor.

Bonus

