[b][u][center]The Beta-Testers
Chapter 1: Logging In
By Draconicon[/center][/u][/b]

Hank couldn't help but gawk at his surroundings when he arrived at the cabin. Well, that was what the officials were calling it. To him, it looked like a home from the future.

"How the hell...this stuff has to cost a fortune."

"Well, you're right, but I.I. has the money for it."

He nodded blankly at his guide's answer, still hardly able to believe the futuristic looks of everything. The walls were a soft chrome, with a fun-house mirror effect to everything passing by due to their curved shape. The floor seemed to be as shiny and smooth as an ice-skating rink before everyone got out on it, and he almost didn't like walking on it, for fear of smudging it.

In fact, his guide stopped him at the border between doorway and interior.

"Ah. Please, we need to keep it sterile."

"And...what does that mean?"

"Well, start with the shoes."

"Oh, uh, right."

Leaning against the 'cabin' wall - which looked like wood, but he would bet anything wasn't - he quickly untied one shoe, and then the other, before shucking them off. The guide from Insidious Interactive took them, and gestured at his socks as well.

"Really?"

"Rules are rules."

"Okay, okay…"

Well, at least it would feel like home. He pulled at his socks, and blushed a bit as he handed them over. As the employee tucked them into the shoes, Hank looked into the house again, his head turning left and right.

"So where are the other beta testers?"

"They should be hooked up to the gaming pods, by now. Might be one or two stragglers, but you know how it goes."

"Heh, I guess...This is my first time, after all."

"Well, let's make it a good one. Come on."

The chrome floor felt very cold under his feet, sending a chill up his spine as he walked on it. The cabin opened up pretty quickly once they were through the doorway, and Hank whistled at the sight.

Most of the space in the main room was taken up by twenty pods that lined the walls, making the room stretch out in a long oval that had to be more than sixty feet long. Most of the pods had a person inside of it, either getting comfortable and wriggling around or already asleep. Pod lights blinked off and on as the machines regulated themselves - or so he guessed - and technicians aplenty observed them.

Hank let out a silent whistle as he slowly rotated in place, following the lines from the sleek black pods towards the ceiling, where thick cords led up towards some overhead chandelier. It looked like it was getting brighter with each successive person to fall asleep in the pods. A server, he guessed, or maybe just the loading point for them to get into the game.

"This is just...wow…"

“You’ve gotta be fucking kidding me!”

Jumping at the sudden shout, Hank whipped around to see what was the matter. His eyes immediately settled on a woman, barefoot just like him, and in little more than…

He turned away, his cheeks on fire as he tried to forget the rather intimate way the woman had been decked out. She’d been wearing nothing more than her bra and underwear, and it hadn’t left a great deal to the imagination. Hank tried to shut her out of his mind, but she was shouting so loud that there was no way he could ignore her.

“What do you mean, I have to get completely naked?! I thought that we were testing a game, not giving you guys a peep show. You think I’m going to strip down while everyone’s here?”

“Ma’am, please -”

“Don’t you ma’am me. I’ve got a name, and you’re going to use it.”

“Well, then, Sarah, please, understand.”

“Make me, buster. I’ve got standards, and you’re paying me to do this, so you want me. So, either I get in with my underwear, or you make a damn good speech check to persuade me otherwise.”

[i]Nice reference,[/i] Hank thought as he rubbed the back of his neck. He leaned over to his guide, whispering.

“Um...does she have to get naked to get in the pod?”

“Yes. You will too, actually. That’s not going to be an issue, I hope?”

“Uh, no, no, not at all.”

“Good. I don’t want to deal with another screamer.”

He followed his guide as the shouting went on for another minute or so, dying off before long. Either they’d reached an agreement, or she’d been fired; one way or another, the issue had been solved.

They reached the only other empty pod in the cabin, and his guide held out his hands. Knowing what he meant, Hank sighed and started pulling off his clothes. [i]Just think of it like the locker room,[/i] he thought, even as he started blushing as soon as his shirt came off. His pants took a bit longer, his fingers fiddling while he worked up the courage.

It wasn’t that he was ashamed of his looks, even. Hank wasn’t the best looking guy, admittedly; he had a pretty big gut, and while he’d been working out on his days away from the office, he hadn’t done much to get rid of it yet. He had gotten some muscle, though, standing out against his pale skin. Probably should have gotten some sun, too, now that he thought of it.

He pulled off his underwear with his pants, and handed it all over to the guide.

“Thank you, Hank. The technicians will get you hooked up now.”

“Is this gonna hurt?”

“Well, that depends.”

“On?”

“How much do you like needles?”

He shivered.

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Thankfully, it wasn’t so bad. Once he got in the pod, laying his back against the liquid foam surface, they got to work. The techs only needed to put three IVs in him, one in his neck, and one in each arm. They went in easily, and the techs had numbed him up so that he didn’t even feel them.

What was worse were the long-term ‘care chambers’ that they placed on him. It was embarrassing enough to watch and feel them guiding his dick into a clear plastic tube, but it got a whole lot worse when it started sucking on him, pulling itself down to the base of his cock and then squeezing shut, holding itself there. Only the pressure of the tube and the downward pull kept him from springing up with an erection.

“Is this...really necessary?”

“Unless you want to short out the electronics with a week of piss and shit, I’m gonna have to say yes.”

“...Ew.”

“You asked.”

“Wait, you said...oh, gods. What are you going to shove up there?”

The tech held up a black tube that was a good two inches around, and had the tell-tale marks of something that was flexible enough to inflate. He groaned, particularly as the pod inflated under the base of his spine, thrusting his hips forward. It was just enough - with the way that the pod naturally spread his legs - for them to reach under him and press the tube against his ass. He bit his lip, grunting as they pressed against his hole for a moment, two…

And then it slid in. Surprisingly easily, too, and he blinked.

“What kind of stuff do you put on those things?”

“Some stuff that one of our more perverted eggheads came up with in his spare time. You want some of it?”

“Uh, no thanks…”

He blushed.

“Um...maybe. Let’s talk after.”

“Heh, alright. Now, you signed the waiver and everything? The non-disclosure agreements, and the -”

“Uh-huh,yeah. Every bit of paperwork that your guys shoved at me is signed. I did it the day you interviewed me, remember?”

“Just making sure.”

The tech patted him on the chest and stepped back a few paces.

“Now, remember, you’ll be in there for a week, real time. It’ll feel a lot longer to you, closer to seven weeks. So, remember that a day passes in real time every time a week passes in game, alright?”

“One week game time is one day real time. Got it.”

“So, if you have any quests that you think really need to be done, any bugs really need fixing, or you just have something you particularly want to do, make sure that you prioritize. That last week will be your last chance to do anything before you’re pulled out of the game.”

Hank nodded a few times. It was all stuff that he’d heard before, but now that he had a chance to see the equipment that they were using, he was actually listening. The idea of being sunk into a game this deeply, not just out of it being so good but because he was actually [i]in[/i] it, was...amazing. He’d had the feeling of playing his character before, in the best tabletop games he’d played, but never in a video game. Maybe this one would be that good.

The tech made a gesture, and someone else elsewhere in the room pressed a button. The pod let out a hiss of pressurized gas, and slowly, the lid began to close. Hank looked up at it, and took a few deep breaths, trying to calm himself down. Despite his best efforts, his heart was racing.

[i]Just keep calm. They're just closing the door on you.[/i]

It could malfunction, trapping him in there forever.

[i]It's just a door. Like something on a car.[/i]

He'd be stuck, for weeks, and weeks, and weeks.

[i]They're gonna be right there. Nobody's gonna let anything happen to me.[/i]

Stuck stuck stuck stuck stuck -

And then the pod door clicked shut. The rapid set of clicks and snickts going on around him, as it locked itself down, made his heart pound hard. Hank tried to pull himself up, to beat his hands against the pod door, but the machine was already activating.

[i]Stupid, stupid, stupid! Why didn't you tell them you had claustrophobia? This was stupid, this was stupid![/i]

His hands and legs were bound down as the foam pads reshaped themselves, trapping his hands and feet in place, and a soft hissing filled his ears. The pressure of flowing air - no, jets of gas, he realized - pressed against his cheek, and soon, his eyes closed, his head flopping back against the hard, bumpy surface at the back of the pod.

The last thing he felt before unconsciousness claimed him was the soft shock of the circuitry in it linking with his mind, and tugging him into the game.

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It started with blackness. Pure, unending blackness, with nothing to be seen. Hank floated in it, feeling very much like he was in the middle of a pool, halfway between the surface and the solid bottom. He shuddered, his breathing still coming faster than he'd like, and he was almost glad of the darkness. At least this way, nobody could see him blush.

[i]That...that was close. I…[/i]

He jerked a bit, taking a few deep breaths to try and calm himself down the rest of the way. He'd never told the interviewers that he had claustrophobia; if he had, it would have been an instant disqualification. The game would have been off-limits to him, and more to the point, he never would have gotten a chance to play it in the real world, either.

But…

Hank shook his head. He needed to face this. Needed to try and get around it. It was only a few seconds, right? A few seconds as the pod door closed, as he was locked up -

The shakes and the tremors started coming back, and he forced himself to not think about it. After all, he was floating in blackness, emptiness. No restrictions, no closed-off space. Just a nice, open -

"WELCOME, PLAYER!"

"Holy fuck!"

Falling backwards as the world suddenly lit up around him, Hank fell through a shimmering blue light onto a solid platform. Glowing a blue-white beneath him, it felt as solid as a piece of rock, yet seemed to fizzle and sparkle whenever he moved or shifted his weight.

As he looked up, he looked for the source of the voice, but nothing could be seen. Well, nothing but a speck in the distance, but that couldn't be the source of -

"Oh, sh-"

He hit the deck as soon as he saw it start moving, and it was a good thing he did. Even though this was cyberspace - it had to be, had to be - the speck lunged towards him, moving at impossible speed, and he felt the wind as it shot past him. Hank panted, shaking his head as he looked over his shoulders.

As he did, two things became very apparent.

First, he didn't have a body anymore. Well, at least, not a normal body. Every inch of him was black, as if all the details that made him him had been scrubbed away and left him as nothing but a silhouette. It was a rather disconcerting look, and he shuddered.

Second, the speck that had overshot him was a man in a chair, and was even now backing up a bit. The stranger muttered under his breath, shaking his head.

"I had told them to fix that. It seems that the measurements were off by about 25 mega-pixels…"

"Um…"

Hank slowly stood up, now that the chair and the individual were in front of him. He held up a hand, paused, and stared instead.

It wasn't a person on the chair, at least, not as far as he had ever seen in reality. Instead of a human being, the guy on the chair was a snow leopard, furry as could be, but on two legs instead of four. He was dressed in a fancy-looking suit that would have looked in-keeping with a rich European court, including a double layered tunic, thick furred boots, and a pair of trousers that clung to him exceedingly tightly...particularly around the crotch.

Shaking his head, Hank asked the one question that stood out from the rest.

"What...what's going on here?"

"That, I suppose, is a fair enough question."

The snow leopard leaned back on his...throne, Hank supposed it would be. A screen popped up in front of him, almost like a holographic display. No, exactly like one, he realized. The feline looked over it for a few seconds, and then looked back at him.

"Your name is Hank. You were hired from a day office job, and have little experience in the way of MMORPG games. However, you showed a natural inclination towards RPGs in general, and stated during the interview that you have played tabletop games for a decade plus, and have some experience in game design of that sort. Is that correct?"

"I...yes, I suppose."

"Hmm. Your vital signs are a bit shaky. Fair enough, however."

"How...Are you a game admin, or something?"

"That is correct. You may call me Mr. Lee, if you need to call me anything. I am the admin assigned to groups 1-5, and my counterpart, Mr. Grant, is assigned to groups 6-10. We will be overseeing you, as representatives of Insidious Interactive, during your testing period.

"Now, you are about to go through your character creation. You will not be able to change this after you settle on a design, so please choose carefully. You may also choose your class at this time, or you can wait until you reach a second level in the game, and get a bonus to your skills and abilities. I'm assuming you don't want to do that?"

"...All the other players are already in the game, aren't they?"

"Yes, they are."

"No, I'll pick it all now. No need to wait any longer."

"I will note that down."

As the snow leopard ticked something on his display, Hank couldn't help but take another look at the model for the strange two-legged animal man. It was...very strange, he had to admit, to see something that well-modeled. Cool, though, even if it was rather...explicit in the crotch.

Mr. Lee sighed, and Hank's attention was brought right back up.

"There's a speech that I have to do, as per company policy. If you would pay attention?"

"Um, you're the admin. I kind of have to, don't I?"

"So you'd think. But it is rather similar to the long-winded legal explanations everyone skips. And there's no option to 'scroll down' this particular one."

"...Let's get this over with."

"Very well.

"Insidious Interactive's latest game, 'Lords of the Spire,' is designed from the ground-up to be a fully immersive fantasy RPG, with the ability to simulate any aspect of life in a medieval time frame, as well as a fantasy one. Players will have access to the lives of kings and queens, wizards and warriors, thieves and whores -"

"Hang on, hang on. What was that?"

Hank blinked a few times.

"You...you can't have just said...whores...right?"

"Lords of the Spire is rated as an adult game for reasons of plot, mature themes, and other things, Hank. Can I continue?"

"I, uh…"

"I'll assume that is an affirmative."

The snow leopard kept going through the speech, while Hank was stuck wondering how in the world someone could have programmed something like this. A world like that, with so many different possibilities, would have pushed a human brain with a small group to its limits, reacting and coming up with different situations based on what players did. If this game had a way of doing that, and of bringing the world to life no matter what a person did...well, it might just be the best RPG he'd ever heard of.

And if they were also giving people the opportunity to do those things…

He blushed, suddenly glad that he was little more than a silhouette. Dating hadn't exactly been his forte in the real world, and there were some things that were next to impossible to ask anyone for. But if he could ask someone in the digital world, then -

"Do you accept the terms and conditions of playing an adult game with adult themes, as they have been laid out for you?"

"Yes!"

Blushing worse at his own enthusiasm, Hank slowly nodded instead. Mr. Lee shook his head, tapping a few more buttons on the display, and then his chair started floating upwards.

"The menus will arrive momentarily. You can adjust all aspects of your character, from your species to your color, to your intimate measurements. Please take your time, and get it right the first time. Group 3 had two people that meant to grow themselves to insane masculine size, and instead broke the coding and got nothing."

"Got…"

He sputtered a bit, shaking his head as the snow leopard left. The idea of breaking the character creation screen that badly…

His platform suddenly lit up with green light, and he turned to the source. Several glowing fields - Name, Species, and Class - suddenly floated in front of him, the latter two with drop-down menus rather than a text entry screen.

After saying his name out loud - he didn't feel the need to change it for the game - it popped into the Name field. He reached out and tapped the Species button, expecting to see a list of different, typical fantasy races. Elves, dwarves, hobbits, orcs, that sort of thing; he had already come up with an idea of using some warrior classes…

Except that they weren't there. Instead, it was a list of animals. He blinked, scrolling up and down to try and find the missing fantasy stuff, only to realize that the animals were all that were available.

"Huh...is that a bug, or…"

Maybe Mr. Lee was a sign of what the game would be like. If they were all like two-legged animals, that meant that the world had to be built around that, right? Which meant that it was probably like that one tabletop game that he'd heard of some friends playing...Steelfang or something? He couldn't quite remember.

But if that was the case, it threw his plans for a character build right out of his head. No gaming the system for him.

He scrolled through the different species, wondering what might be good. A dragon could be fun, if he wanted to take the easy road. Then again, there were probably at least a dozen of those in the game already, considering it was a fantasy. He could try out a horse, if he wanted to really play up the stud stereotype, but that didn't sound good either. Besides, he might have to deal with having hooves then, and he'd never had much inclination for that.

He kept on scrolling, going past the middle towards the end, and then paused, clicking on one of the species in the S list. A hologram popped up, showing a two-legged creature with a striped tail and somewhat large feet.

"[i]Skunk, mammal. Bonuses of thick tail attraction (+2 to diplomacy), Musk ranged attack (30 feet range), and Natural Acrobatics (+2 Dexterity). Class Bonus: Sorcerer.[/i]"

"Hmmm…Haven't played a magic using class in a while...And that does sound good…"

Admittedly, not so much the musk attack part. He'd had enough issues around other people before for being a geek, and he didn't need that sort of stereotype following him as a skunk. At the same time…

He tapped it, meaning to set it for the moment to see what the bonus was. However, as soon as he double clicked it, the game moved on, opening up the classes and graying out the species box.

"...Crap."

Sighing, he scrolled down to the sorcerer class and picked it. If he was locked in, might as well make it all the way.

As soon as he pressed the 'okay' button, his silhouette started to shimmer. He felt a good deal of the bulk around his middle fading away, leaving him feeling surprisingly light. More than that, he could feel fur growing in, a warmth that spread over the black surface of his skin and quickly overtook most of his body.

He turned this way and that as he watched it grow in, lifting a foot to watch as the underside grew pink and padded, while his toes grew claws from the tip. His fingers did the same, and as he felt a growing weight on his backside, he looked over his shoulder again.

A long, thick tail started pushing free, the heavy fur on it hanging down and looking so soft. Even looking at himself, he couldn't help but smile; it was a pretty darn cute tail. He reached around, holding it as it grew out, and giving himself a bit of a break from the sheer weight of the massive, floofy thing.

Soon enough, he was a naked, two legged skunk, though with anatomy that he didn't quite understand. The sheath thing was...very new, and he shook his head a bit at it, looking around for some of the customizing menus.

It took him almost five minutes to realize that the menu was actually implanted in his avatar. As he touched his sheath, a green screen popped up, with five different options. Girth, length, color, sheath, and anatomical correctness. He paused, and tapped the sheath one, flicking the option over to 'off.'

Instantly, his cock went from being held up like that to hanging between his legs, looking much more proper, if rather small for his body. He looked at it, then the menu…

And slowly, a smile slipped across his face.

"I hope that people don't mind waiting a day, because this is gonna take a while."

#

[i]Six hours later…[/i]

Hank spent more time customizing this character than he usually spent at the office, but by the time it was done, he was happier than he had ever expected to be.

He was a skunk that stood just under six feet high, with a bit of pudge in the belly - he had to be somewhat true to himself, even if he toned down the true-to-life size a bit. His muscles were there, making him look a bit thickly built for a mage, but it could be a nice surprise for people. Though he wasn't expecting a lot of backdoor action, he wanted to make sure that it wouldn't hurt if he got it, so he'd set his ass to have a tight pair of muscled cheeks and a loose hole. Loose, not gaping; tempting as that might be to ease the pain of entry, he wanted to make sure he didn't look like a slut.

And in front, a cock. Humanoid, he chose, rather than a sheath, and it was quite a good one. Currently set to erect, it measured about nine inches long, and had a thickness that should set anybody moaning on it. His meaty hands could wrap around it easily enough, but some of the smaller species would probably have trouble.

His balls were proportionally as big, and low-hangers, too. He always loved that look.

It didn't take nearly as long to choose his clothes, and he quickly whipped through the options. A blue robe looked nice enough, with a staff that came with it. Sandals barely fit his feet, but he knew better than to pick boots; they'd get stuffy and hot too quickly.

[i]Options set. Character: Hank. Species: Skunk. Class: Sorcerer. Visual settings: accepted. Mature settings: accepted. Character creation, complete.[/i]

"Heh...now let's see -"

#

"- what the game's got for me - oh…"

He popped into the game in mid-sentence, right in the middle of a speech from a lion. He was in the back of the room, unfortunately, so all eyes turned on him almost immediately. Hank blushed a bit, rubbing the back of his head as the expressions ranged from curious to annoyed to amused.

"Uh...hi. Sorry, I took an extra long time on my character."

"That's alright," the lion at the front of the group said. "We're just getting started, anyway. Why don't you go over to Sarah there, and she'll fill you in?"

"Oh, fuck you too, Ronald; saddle me with the newbie? Get over here, skunky."

He walked over to the lioness. Apparently she hadn't been kicked out earlier. He hoped that meant that she could be reasoned with.

Ronald - apparently the leader of their group, from how he stood at the front - waved at everyone to get their attention back to him. The lion wore a sword over his shoulder, and had a

fair amount of leather armor on. At a guess, Hank would say he was probably a rogue or a light style of fighter.

"Anyway, as I was saying, welcome to Ronald's Pride. Yes, that's what we're calling this particular clan; I was the first person here, and I was the one that the company assigned to keep you guys focused. You don't like it, we can make it a fight, but let's not do that on the first day, okay? Let's just have some fun.

"You'll see in a few minutes that we're all part of the same clan. That means we'll share private chats, and can call out to each other from anywhere in the game world, as far as I know. If you need some help, give a shout, and those of us that can come running, will. That's one of the rules I'm setting down for the Pride."

There was some groaning at that, but Hank nodded. He would do that for anyone in his gaming party, he'd do it here, too.

He was relieved to see Sarah nod with him as Ronald continued.

"Now, we've all been here for a little while, except the new guy here. He'll probably want to explore, and I suggest that we all do the same. Get to know the world, figure out what the game is like, and then, and only then, get our first quests. You know there's gonna be people rushing out to get those done, and they're gonna be the first people to die. Let's play this smart, people. You remember the competition here, right?"

Hank vaguely did, and the muttering through the crowd definitely helped. The 'clan' with the highest leveled people and the most accomplished during the beta-testing would be paid an extra $100,000 as well as getting the basic paycheck that they'd all been promised. It was quite the incentive.

Ronald made a few closing remarks, and then hopped off the stage. Stepping between a golden-armored dragon and a leather-wearing otter, the lion walked over to him and held out his hand.

"Sorry for missing you earlier. I tried to meet everyone else. I'm Ronald."

"Hank. Uh, Sorcerer, I guess."

"And a skunk, too."

Before he could continue, Sarah butted in.

"Look, I'm gonna take him out to the city. Can we do the meet and greet later? Yeah? Good. Come on, skunky."

Hank yelped as she suddenly pulled him by the arm, dragging him out of the group and towards a door on the far side of the room. He had just enough time to see that the room was made of wood, that the colors were rather dark, and that it seemed to be a meeting hall of some sort before they were out.

She dragged him down a hallway and then through another couple of rooms - bedrooms, as far as he could tell - before they were approaching the front doors. A pair of banners, adorned with lions and swords, were all he saw before he was outside.

Finally, Sarah came to a stop, and he was sure it was for the same reason he had.

Sprawled out before them was the hub city featured in trailers for the game. Dalia, he remembered it being called, and it was gorgeous. Cobblestone roads spread out for as far as the eye could see, heading down a hill towards the rest of the city. He realized that they were at a high point of the massive metropolis, and shook his head as he took in the view.

The city loomed over a nearby river, and as Hank turned to face the south, he could see a massive forest out there, as if it was keeping watch over the city as the city kept watch over it. To

the west, a huge tower seemed to soar over the land, and he almost giggled at the sight of floating rocks circling the top of it. That had to be a mage tower, or at least, a collection of mages had to live there. He knew one place he would have to explore.

But that was after he had time to explore the city itself. It felt massive, and he doubted he'd be able to see more than a portion of it in his first week in the game, let alone his first day.

"It's...beautiful, isn't it?"

"Yeah...man, VR's sure come a long way."

"No kidding. So…."

He cleared his throat.

"I'm Hank, a sorcerer -"

"Yeah, yeah, I was there when you told Ronald."

"And you're Sarah, right?"

"Look who was paying attention."

She smiled, ruffling his hair a bit.

"Something tells me that I'm gonna be looking after you a bit. I asked around, and looks like I'm the only one that took a healing class in the whole group. So, am I gonna be seeing you every hour, or every minute?"

"Hey, I'm not that weak."

"You coulda fooled me."

She patted his back, so he guessed she was teasing him more than anything else. Glad to see that she only showed that scary face and personality to the people that were trying to tell her what to do; maybe they'd get along alright.

Before he could say anything, she was walking down the street towards the east side of the city. Seeing the arena and various temples out that direction, he could only imagine that was where she was going, but he darted after her anyway.

"Um...weren't you supposed to show me around?"

"Yeah?"

"Well…"

"..."

Sighing, the lioness reached into her pocket, rooting around for a while. Hank was rather surprised when she dropped a couple dozen coins into his palm.

"Look. We both want to explore, and I'm guessing you don't really want people to know what you're looking for, right?"

He started to open his mouth, but stopped himself before he said anything. The words 'mature themes' and Mr. Lee's mention of whores were still lingering on his mind. Did he really want someone else to see him, well, trying that out?

Sarah smiled as he kept silent, and turned to leave again.

"See ya, little guy. Don't come crying to me too often, you hear?"

"I won't...And good luck!"

"Yeah, yeah."

#

It was interesting, wandering through the city. At first, he thought that his group had simply had good luck to get a guild house on top of a hill, but as the skunk wandered through Dalia, he realized that it was part of the game. Wherever the player happened to be standing felt elevated, giving a good view of everywhere around them. It was a little disorienting, at first, as it

meant that he had no high marks to give him a reference of where he had been, but at the same time, it gave him a much better view of where he was going.

The game didn't exactly guide him to the red light district on the north side of the city, but it wasn't [i]that[/i] hard to find it when he got down to it. Following the people as their clothing got skimpier and skimpier gradually led him to the streetwalkers, and a successful speech check got one of them to point him towards one of the cheaper brothels.

He stood outside of it, gathering his courage as he read the sign above him. 'Pink on a Platter,' it called itself, and he could already hear the moans and groans of what had to be some of the loudest sex that he'd ever heard. Hank blushed brightly enough that he could feel his fur burning as well as his cheeks.

[i]Just...get in there. You want to know what it's like, right? Just...get in there.[/i]

Gulping, the skunk stood up as straight as he could, and walked through the doorway.

As soon as he stepped inside, the smell of cum and pussy and cock hit him like a wet towel. He groaned, rubbing his nose as he felt almost assaulted by it. In the back of his head, he could almost hear the dice rolling, and felt that he had failed some sort of will or fortitude check; his cock started rising with each subsequent breath, and despite the looseness of his robes, he swore that it was rising up in the front.

He'd barely been there for a few seconds before a mouse approached him. The little male couldn't have been more than four and a half feet tall, and was dressed in nothing more than a pair of red silk panties. Silk panties that were bulging from a sac that looked even bigger than his own, for that matter.

Hank blushed as the mouse leaned against the wall, showing all of his size, and a pair of hips that looked amazing.

"Can I get you something, honey?"

"Um, I...I think...this is my first time, do you happen to have a menu or something?"

The skunk's ears felt like they were burning off, but the mouse chuckled before nodding.

"Sure. You hang out here, and I'll be right back."

As he watched that barely-covered mouse ass sway away, he heard the door open behind him. He turned, and blinked as he realized that it was an otter from his own group. He didn't know the guy's name yet, but he recognized him, dressed in something that crossed robes with armor. Voluminous and green, the clothes almost seemed to hide the otter within them, but they didn't hide the sword he carried.

Their eyes met for a second, and they both blushed even worse. Hank opened his mouth to explain, just as the otter did the same.

"I just wanted to -"

"You see, I never tried -"

They stopped, only to start again.

"I mean, when am I gonna get the chance -"

"It's not like anyone will ever -"

He chuckled, the skunk's embarrassment fading a bit, and he gestured at the otter.

"Um...you want to go first?"

"Um, if you, uh, don't mind?"

"Go on."

"Well...I mean, it's a game that's gonna let us do anything we want, right? Why not...why not give a brothel a try, if there's no harm to us, right?"

“Yeah, and...and it’s not like we can just ignore it. We’re beta-testers, right?”

“Yeah, beta-testers!”

“So we gotta test it all.”

“I like your thinking. I’m gonna steal that.”

“Heh, steal away.”

The skunk offered his hand, and smiled as the otter took it. Almost immediately, he saw a name appear over the otter’s head, and realized that they’d become ‘friends’ by the game standards. It was rather funny, actually; seeing it happen that way made the whole system in other games feel all the sillier by comparison.

“Heh, nice to meet you, Stephen.”

“You too, Hank.”

“Gentlemen?”

They turned, and Hank’s blush returned as the mouse held out a menu for the both of them. Stephen took it and buried his head in it, while Hank [i]tried[/i] to be a little less embarrassed. Emphasis on tried.

He flicked through the pages, finding each one to be a picture of a prostitute and the services that they offered. The sheer list of things that they could get was baffling; from simple anal sex and blowjobs to footjobs, roleplays of various sorts, and the more extreme kinks that he had normally shied away from.

And all for...for so cheap…

“Um...anything goes, is that really…”

“Of course, sir. You can get as much as you want, for as long as you want.”

[i]And all for thirty gold? That’s...amazing.[/i]

“I’ll take that, with, um...with Valdun.”

“Ahhhh, you’re going to ride the dragon, are you? Excellent choice…Come with me.”

#

[i]Five hours later…[/i]

The skunk groaned as he flopped out on the bed, his cock feeling like it had been milked to hell and back. It still dripped with cum, and his balls, formerly so low-hanging, now felt like raisings. He’d been blown five times, fucked the dragon up the ass twice, and had experimented with getting himself fucked once. He wasn’t entirely sure that he liked it yet.

He blushed a bit as he saw the dragon wipe his feet clean, remembering that he’d tried getting a footjob as well. It had been...surprisingly fun, he thought. Not the best thing in the world, but more fun than he thought.

“Thanks for...for everything.”

“No problem, sir. Now, if we can settle up your accounts?”

“Right, right. That was, uh, thirty gold, right?”

“...Not quite, sir. It was thirty godites.”

“Um...what’s a godite?”

“About three hundred platinum.”

“And…” Hank felt his heart sinking, and sinking fast. “How much is three hundred platinum?”

“Three thousand gold.”

It felt like his stomach had just dropped out from under him, and he flopped back on the bed in shock. Thirty gold had felt too cheap, but he had gone with it anyway...and now he would be over two thousand, nine hundred gold in debt? How was he supposed to…

Wait, this was a game. What if he just…

The skunk got to his feet, walking to the window. He had it open and one foot on the sill when the dragon put a hand on his shoulder.

“What do you think you’re doing?”

“Uh…” [i]Bluff, don’t fail me now.[/i] “I paid at the front desk?”

Again, it was like he heard the dice rolling around in his head...and the dragon’s face told him that it had come up with a one.

“Uh huh. Nice try. Let’s talk to the boss, and see what you can do to work off your debt.”

“Work…”

[i]Oh, no….[/i] He could only imagine what working off his debt in a brothel would mean. He just hoped it didn’t take too long to get what he needed and back out into the game.

[b][u][center]The End[/center][/u][/b]