

TF DUEL

A transformation story by JohnManTD

Round 1

The digital death cry of Felix's space marine echoed through the dorm room, a tinny, pathetic squawk that was immediately followed by the victorious fanfare of John's victory screen. The words "FLAWLESS VICTORY" blazed across the television in fiery letters, a monument to Felix's utter and comprehensive failure.

"That's the fifth time in a row, man," John said, not even trying to hide the smug grin spreading across his face as he set his controller down. "Maybe you should stick to single-player games. Something with adjustable difficulty. Like, 'story mode' easy."

Felix threw his own controller onto the beanbag chair with a frustrated groan. "Fuck this game. It's bullshit. Your character is totally broken." He ran a hand through his light brown, dusty hair, his lean, runner's frame coiled with restless energy. "That's enough. I can't take any more of your gloating."

John leaned back on his own bed, arms behind his head, the picture of a conquering hero. "It's not gloating if it's just stating a fact. The fact is, I am a god at Aetherium Crash, and you, my friend, are... less so." He chuckled. "So, what do you want to do then, champ? Since gaming is clearly out of the question for your fragile ego."

The two had been friends since their Pokémon cards were their most valuable possessions, a bond forged in the crucible of elementary school playgrounds and solidified through years of shared classes, bad decisions, and the unique camaraderie that comes from knowing someone's most embarrassing childhood secrets. They were classic bros, a comfortable yin and yang of personalities. Felix, the business major, was the sociable, outgoing one, his easy charm and boundless energy making him a natural center of attention. John, the computer science major, was quieter, more analytical, but with a dry wit and a competitive streak that made him a formidable opponent in any game of skill. They were both tall, standing at an even six feet, with the kind of normal, unthreatening attractiveness that allowed them to navigate the complex social ecosystem of UCLA with relative ease.

Felix's frustration seemed to melt away, replaced by a sudden spark of inspiration. "Oh!

Dude, I almost forgot. I bought something today.” He hopped off his bed and started rummaging through the chaotic pile of clothes, textbooks, and empty snack bags that constituted his side of the room. He emerged a moment later, holding a small, unassuming black box. “I found this at that weird pop-up market off campus. Some card game. Looked interesting.”

He tossed the box to John, who caught it with a practiced ease. The box was plain, matte black, with elegant silver lettering on the front that read simply: TF DUEL.

“TF Duel?” John asked, turning the box over in his hands. “What’s the TF stand for? The Fuck?”

“Not sure,” Felix admitted, already tearing the plastic wrap off the box with his teeth. He dumped the contents onto the worn carpet between their beds. A deck of cards, as stark and black as the box, cascaded onto the floor, along with a small, folded sheet of paper. “Let’s check the instructions.”

John examined the box more closely. It felt... odd. The cardboard was a strange, almost velvety texture. And there was no barcode. No manufacturer’s logo, no copyright information, no sign of its origin at all. He read the fine print on the bottom. “Transformation Duel: a game for those looking for thrill” he read aloud, his eyebrows knitting together in confusion. “Transformation? What kind of game is this? Where did you say you bought this?”

“Some weird little stall at that market by the food trucks,” Felix said, his focus entirely on the instruction sheet. “The guy running it looked like a weird dude. Long grey beard, weird robes. Sold me this for two bucks.”

John laughed, shaking his head. “Felix, man, you and your weird, impulse-buy crap. Remember when you tried to get us all to play Coup? You spent half an hour trying to explain the rules and still nobody, including you, had any idea what was going on. We all just gave up and went to get boba.”

“Hey, Coup is a great game! You guys are just dumb,” Felix retorted defensively. “Besides, this one is just two-player. How hard can it be?” He scanned the instructions, his brow furrowing. “Huh. That’s... weird.”

“Let me see.” John snatched the paper from his hands. He read it over, his initial skepticism slowly giving way to a genuine, analytical curiosity. “Dude, this doesn’t read like a normal

game. It's like... a weird mix of Uno and Truth or Dare?"

They both looked down at the pile of cards on the floor. Felix picked one up, turning it over and over. They were completely blank. Both sides were the same matte, featureless black. "Maybe there's a special pen or something?" he suggested, shaking the box again. "Something to write on them with?"

"No, look," John said, pointing to a section on the instructions. "The game contains two decks: the Goal Deck and the Effect Deck. The face of each card will reveal its unique text to its possessor only after the game has commenced. This is to ensure fair play and prevent any player from gaining an unfair advantage." He let out a snort of incredulous laughter. "What kind of bullshit is that? 'Reveal its unique text'?"

"Whoa, hidden ink!" Felix exclaimed, his eyes lighting up with boyish excitement. He started rubbing a card vigorously between his palms, as if trying to generate enough heat to reveal a secret message. "That's so cool!"

John continued reading. "Okay, so, 'The game begins when one player draws a card from the Goal Deck. This card will present a challenge that both players must attempt to complete in the real world.'" He paused, looking at Felix. "So, you were right. It is a dare game."

"Told you," Felix said smugly, still furiously rubbing the blank card.

"After the Goal is revealed," John read on, "the text on each player's Effect cards will become visible to them. Each player is then dealt a hand of seven Effect cards." He frowned, rereading the next part. "This is where it gets weird. It says there are three turns in the card phase. Turn one, you have to play one card that affects yourself. Turn two, you play one card that affects the other player. And on turn three, you get to choose who to affect. Then you discard the rest of your hand. After the card phase is over, the challenge begins. First one to achieve the goal wins."

Felix finally gave up on the card, tossing it back onto the pile. "Okay, so it's a dare game with extra steps. What's the prize?"

"Upon successful completion of the Goal, all effects from the played cards are immediately nullified for the winner," John recited. "The winner is then permitted to draw one card from the Effect Deck. This card is theirs to keep, a permanent trophy of their victory. The card's power can be used at any time in their daily life, on themselves or another, to enact a

permanent, real-world change.”

They both fell silent, the strange, almost mystical language of the instructions hanging in the air between them.

“Permanent, real-world change?” Felix finally said, breaking the silence. “What does that even mean? It’s just a card game. It’s got to be flavor text, right?”

“I don’t know, man,” John said, a thoughtful look on his face. “This is some seriously elaborate bullshit for a two-dollar game. But I still don’t get it. If the goal is something like, ‘first person to order a pizza,’ what are the Effect cards for? How would I need a card to help me do that?”

He scanned the instructions again. “Maybe it’s not that simple. Maybe the challenges are more abstract, like in a tabletop game. Like, the goal card says ‘Slay the Dragon,’ and the Effect cards are buffs and debuffs. I play a card that reduces your stamina, you play one that boosts my strength. It’s a metaphorical battle, and the cards affect our... player characters, or something.”

Felix groaned. “Ugh, I don’t want to play D&D, dude. I want to do something real.”

“Hey, this was your game, buddy,” John shot back with a grin. “And besides, I’m curious. I want to see how this ‘revealing text’ thing works. I’m a computer science major, remember? This kind of interactive, responsive tech is fascinating. I want to see what’s on these cards.”

That seemed to be enough to convince Felix. The allure of the mystery, of the strange, magical-sounding technology, was too much for his short attention span to resist. “Alright, fine,” he said, already starting to gather the cards into a neat pile. “Let’s give it a shot. What’s the worst that could happen?”

They set up the game according to the strange, cryptic instructions. The larger deck of blank black cards, the Effect Deck, they placed in the middle of the floor. They separated the smaller Goal Deck. All the cards remained stubbornly, resolutely, blank. John picked one up, holding it up to the light, feeling its strange, velvety texture. There was no seam, no hidden layer, no hint of any kind of technology. He was beginning to think this was just some elaborate prank, a box of useless black cardboard sold by a weirdo at a flea market.

“Ready?” Felix asked, his hand hovering over the Goal Deck.

“As I’ll ever be,” John replied, a skeptical smirk on his face.

Felix drew the top card. He held it up, a look of profound, anticlimactic disappointment on his face. “Still blank.”

He set it down on the floor between them. And then, the air in the room seemed to shift. A faint, almost imperceptible hum filled the space, and the card on the floor began to glow with a soft, internal silver light. Words, elegant and sharp, seemed to bleed into existence on its black surface, as if written by an invisible hand.

The two friends just stared, their mouths agape, the earlier skepticism evaporating in a puff of pure, unadulterated shock.

“What the fuck...” Felix breathed, his voice a strangled whisper.

The glowing words on the card were now crystal clear:

GOAL: BE THE FIRST PLAYER TO GET A STRANGER’S PHONE NUMBER.

“Okay,” John said, his voice tight, his analytical brain struggling to process the impossible event he’d just witnessed. “So... you were right. It is just a random dare game.”

“Dude, who cares about the dare?” Felix said, his eyes wide with a manic, childlike glee. “The card just... it wrote on itself! How did it do that?!”

“I don’t know,” John admitted. “But the instructions said... after the goal is revealed...”

As if on cue, the seven cards in his hand, which he’d been holding in a tight, forgotten grip, began to shimmer with the same ethereal, silver light. He fanned them out, and his breath caught in his throat. Each one now bore a line of elegant, silver text.

“Holy shit,” John whispered. “Are yours... are yours as weird as mine?”

“What do you mean?” Felix asked, his own gaze fixed on the cards in his hand. “Mine are just... words. Like, traits and stuff.”

“Show me,” John said. Felix held up a card. To John, it was still just a blank, black rectangle.

“Dude, show me one with writing on it,” he said, his voice laced with frustration.

“I am!” Felix insisted. “Can’t you see it?”

They went back and forth for a moment, a frantic, confused argument, until the impossible truth dawned on them. John fanned his own cards out, turning them so Felix could see.

“They’re blank, man,” Felix said, a look of profound confusion on his face.

John dropped his cards face-up onto the floor. To him, they were a collection of bizarre trait modifiers. To Felix, they were just seven pieces of black cardboard. The words were truly, magically, invisible to the other player.

“This is... this is impossible,” Felix breathed, his earlier excitement giving way to a dawning, slightly terrified awe. “How is this even possible?”

“I have no idea,” John said, his mind racing, trying to find a logical, scientific explanation and coming up completely, utterly, blank. “But the game... the instructions... Turn one. We have to play a card. On ourselves.”

They stared at each other for a long moment, the un-spoken question hanging in the air between them. Was this real? Were they really about to do this? The shared, silent decision was made in an instant. The curiosity was too strong, the mystery too enticing.

“On three,” John said, his voice a low, steady murmur. He selected a card from his hand, one that seemed relatively benign, powerful but not... world-altering.

“One...” Felix said, his own eyes scanning his hand, a look of intense concentration on his face.

“Two...” John’s heart began to pound a frantic rhythm against his ribs.

“Three!”

They both slapped a card down on the floor in front of them, face up. For a moment, nothing happened. Then, the words on the played cards, once invisible to the other, shimmered into existence, now visible to both of them.

John’s card read: MUSCULARITY +50%.

Felix’s card read: HEIGHT +4 INCHES.

They stared at the cards, a tense silence settling over the room. “So... is that it?” Felix asked finally. “Are we just supposed to... pretend? Is this like, imaginary stats for the dare?”

And then, he felt it. A deep, strange, pulling sensation in his bones. It started in his feet, a weird, tingling ache that shot up his legs, his spine, his neck. He gasped, a sharp, involuntary sound, as he felt his entire skeleton stretching, elongating. He was sitting cross-legged on the floor, but suddenly the ceiling seemed closer, the room smaller.

At the same time, John let out a low, guttural groan. A hot, burning sensation was spreading through his body, a fire igniting in his muscles. He looked down at his arms and watched, in stunned, horrified disbelief, as they began to swell. His biceps, his triceps, his pecs, his abs... every muscle fiber in his body was contracting, thickening, growing with a speed that was both terrifying and mesmerizing. The fabric of his t-shirt, once loose, was now stretched taut across a broad, powerful chest and a set of newly defined, rock-hard abs.

They both scrambled to their feet, their movements clumsy, uncoordinated, their brains struggling to catch up with their rapidly changing bodies. Felix, who had been an even six feet just moments ago, now towered over John, a veritable giant at six-foot-four. John, who had a lean, athletic build, now looked like a professional bodybuilder, his frame packed with thick, dense, powerful muscle.

“Holy shit,” Felix breathed, looking down at John from his new, dizzying height. “You’re... you’re jacked.”

“And you’re a freakish giant,” John shot back, his own voice a slightly deeper, richer baritone than before. He flexed a bicep, the muscle bunching into a perfect, grapefruit-sized sphere. A slow, incredulous grin spread across his face. “But holy shit. This is... this is real.”

It all clicked into place. The strange box, the wizard at the market, the magical cards. It wasn’t a prank. It wasn’t a trick. It was real. It was magic. The realization was a dizzying, exhilarating cocktail of terror and pure, unadulterated power. The game was real. The transformations were real. And the challenge... that was real, too.

A competitive, familiar glint returned to John’s eyes. He smirked up at his towering friend. “Good luck getting a girl’s number looking like Slenderman,” he said, his voice rumbling with a newfound, muscular confidence. “Chicks dig muscles, man. Not... stilts. This is going to be easy.”

Felix just laughed, a booming sound from his newly expanded chest cavity. “We’ll see about that, muscle-head. We’ll see. Because now... it’s turn two. And this time, we get to play on each

other.”

The thrill of the game, the sheer, intoxicating power of it all, had completely eclipsed their initial fear. This was the greatest thing that had ever happened to them. They each drew a new card from their hands, a wicked, conspiratorial grin on both their faces. The race was on.

They each selected a card with a newfound, predatory focus. This wasn't about buffs anymore; it was about sabotage. On the count of three, they played their cards, slapping them down with a dramatic flourish. The silver text shimmered into view.

John's card, played on Felix, read: AGE +5 YEARS.

Felix's card, played on John, read: HEIGHT -5 INCHES.

John felt the change first, a bizarre, compressing sensation, like the world was suddenly expanding around him. His bones seemed to shrink, the floor rushing up to meet him as he lost nearly half a foot of height in a matter of seconds. He stumbled, his new, muscular frame feeling squat and top-heavy on his shorter legs. He was now a five-foot-seven, muscle-bound guy.

Felix, on the other hand, felt a more subtle, insidious change. It wasn't a physical stretching or swelling, but a strange, internal shift. A weathering. He pulled out his phone, switching it to the front-facing camera. The face staring back at him was... his. But older. The boyish charm of his twenty-one-year-old features had been replaced by a more mature, rugged handsomeness. There were faint lines around his eyes, a shadow of stubble on his jaw that hadn't been there before, a new, worldly confidence in his gaze. He looked... twenty-six.

“Oh, you bastard,” John growled, his deep voice sounding comical coming from his new, shorter frame. “Good luck picking up a college chick looking like some washed-up grad student.”

Felix just smirked, admiring his new, more mature visage in the phone's reflection. “Dude, I look hotter. Chicks love older guys. It's a fact. You, on the other hand...” He looked down at John, a genuine, pitying laugh escaping his lips. “You look like a fire hydrant. A very angry, very jacked fire hydrant. Good luck with that.”

They went back and forth, the familiar rhythm of their trash talk a comforting constant in a world that had suddenly gone completely, wonderfully, insane. “Okay, okay,” John said finally,

cutting off Felix's detailed explanation of why being taller and older was a strategic advantage in the modern dating market. "Turn three. Player's choice."

John knew he had to do something about his height. Being a short, overly muscular dude was not a winning combination. He scanned his remaining cards, a desperate look on his face. And then he saw it. A lifeline. With a sigh of relief, he selected a card and, on the count of three, played it face-up on the floor, pointed towards himself.

HEIGHT +3 INCHES.

Felix laughed. "Seriously? You had two height cards? What are the odds?"

"The odds of me winning," John said with a smug grin as he felt his body stretch again, bringing him to a much more respectable, if still very muscular, five-foot-ten. "Now let's see what pathetic little debuff you wasted on me."

He looked down at the card Felix had played. It was pointed at him. And the words on it made his blood run cold.

GENDER SWAP.

"What?" John whispered, the color draining from his face.

Felix's smirk was pure, unadulterated, triumphant evil. "Good luck picking up a girl... as a girl, idiot."

And then, the transformation hit him. It wasn't a slow, subtle shift. It was a cataclysm. A complete, system-wide, biological overhaul. The thick, dense muscle he'd just acquired remained, but it was reshaped, softened, rearranged into a powerful, yet undeniably feminine, form. His broad shoulders narrowed slightly, his waist cinched inwards, his hips flared out with a dramatic, breathtaking speed. His skin, already smooth, became flawless, almost translucent. His face softened, his jawline losing its sharp, masculine edge, his cheeks gaining a delicate curve. His hair, his short, dark, Japanese hair, sprouted, cascading down to his shoulders in a waterfall of glossy, black silk.

And his chest... oh god, his chest. The hard, flat planes of his pecs swelled, softened, blossoming into a pair of firm, athletic breasts. Not huge, but definite. A solid B-cup, maybe, perched atop his powerful, muscular torso. His voice, when he tried to scream, came out as a high, melodic, perfectly feminine shriek of pure, unadulterated horror. And between his legs...

the familiar weight of his penis and balls dissolved into nothingness, replaced by a strange, slick, warm, hollow presence. A vagina.

He was a girl. A five-foot-ten, incredibly muscular, moderately-breasted girl.

Felix just stared, his jaw slack, his earlier triumphant smirk replaced by a look of genuine, stunned awe. “Whoa,” he breathed. “That was... that was a wild one.”

“You... you turned me into a girl!” John shrieked, his new voice a strange, beautiful, terrifying sound in the quiet of the room. He stumbled towards Felix, his new center of gravity feeling strange, off-kilter. “You have to change me back!”

“I can’t!” Felix said, taking a step back, holding his hands up in a placating gesture. “The card’s been played! I don’t know how to reverse it!” He fumbled for the instruction sheet, his eyes scanning the cryptic text. “We just... we have to finish the challenge. The winner gets reset to normal, remember?” He paused, his face going pale as he reread a line he’d previously glossed over. “Oh, shit.”

“What?” John demanded, his new, dark eyes blazing with a furious panic. “What is it?”

Felix looked up from the instructions, his own face a mask of dawning, catastrophic horror. “Dude,” he whispered, his voice cracking. “It says the winner gets reset to normal. But... it says the loser... the loser is stuck with all the effects from the round. Permanently.”

The words hung in the air between them, heavy, cold, and utterly, irrevocably, terrifying. Stuck. Permanently. One of them was about to have their life completely, irreversibly, rewritten.

“Felix, you have to let me win,” John said, his voice a desperate, pleading whisper. “You have to. I can’t be stuck like this. I can’t be a girl. It’s your fault! You did this to me!”

The look on Felix’s face was a mixture of guilt, pity, and a cold, hard, survivalist terror. “No way, man,” he said, shaking his head, his own voice low and firm. “No fucking way. I am not getting stuck as a twenty-six-year-old. And I’m not being six-foot-four for the rest of my life. I’m sorry, John. I really am. But it’s every man for himself.”

And with that, he turned, bolted for the door, and ran out of the dorm room, leaving John standing there, alone, in his new, muscular, female body.

For a moment, John just stood there, paralyzed by a mixture of shock, fury, and pure, existential dread. And then, the adrenaline kicked in. The competitive fire that had been smoldering all afternoon roared to life. He wasn't just playing for bragging rights anymore. He was playing for his life. For his identity. For his dick.

"Oh, you are so going down, you bastard!" he yelled at the empty doorway, his feminine voice filled with a raw, masculine fury. And he ran out too.

The UCLA campus, usually a familiar, comforting landscape, was now a strange, hostile, alien world. John sprinted across the main quad, his new breasts bouncing with a distracting, uncomfortable rhythm against his muscular chest, his long hair flying behind him. He was still wearing his own clothes—a stretched-out t-shirt and a pair of baggy cargo shorts—and the effect was... not good. He looked like a very confused, very angry, and very muscular butch lesbian.

He had to get a number. A stranger's phone number. His first instinct was to approach the groups of pretty, laughing girls scattered across the lawns. He was, fundamentally, still a guy who was into girls. But every attempt was a catastrophic failure.

"Hey," he said to one girl, his voice a strange, confusing mixture of feminine melody and masculine bravado. "Can I get your number?"

She just looked him up and down, taking in the bulging biceps, the broad shoulders, the men's clothing, and gave him a look of pure, pitying disdain. "Sorry, not interested," she said, turning back to her friends, who were all giggling behind their hands.

It was the same story, over and over. Rejection. Confusion. Laughter. He was too masculine, too aggressive, too... much. The girls he was attracted to were clearly not attracted to him. Or, her. Whatever.

Felix, meanwhile, was having his own set of problems. His new height and age, which he'd thought would be an advantage, were proving to be a double-edged sword. He approached a cute freshman sitting on a bench, flashing what he hoped was a charming, mature smile. "Hey, I'm Felix," he said, his voice smooth and confident.

She just looked up at him, and up, and up, a slightly intimidated look on her face. "Hi," she said nervously. "Are you... a professor or something?"

He struck out. Then he tried a girl who looked a little older, maybe a senior. She seemed interested at first, but then she found out he was supposedly an undergrad, and her interest cooled. “You’re twenty-six and you’re still a junior?” she’d asked, a skeptical look on her face. Another strikeout. This was harder than he thought.

Back on the quad, John was starting to despair. And then, a thought struck him. A desperate, brilliant, game-changing thought. The goal card had said “get a stranger’s phone number.” It hadn’t specified the stranger’s gender. Maybe... maybe he was aiming for the wrong team.

He spotted a group of guys throwing a frisbee nearby. His stomach churned at the thought. But he was desperate. He took a deep breath, squared his new, slightly narrower shoulders, and walked over. “Hey, guys,” he said, his voice a little shakier than he would have liked.

They all stopped, turning to look at him. They stared at his muscular arms, his powerful legs, his face, which, despite the feminization, still held the core structure of his old one. They just looked... confused. One of them snickered. “Yo, aren’t you gay or something?” he asked, before turning back to his game.

Defeated, he was about to give up. And then he saw them. Sitting under a large oak tree, a group of three girls, one with a rainbow pin on her backpack. They were laughing, relaxed, beautiful. His last hope. He walked over, a new, more honest strategy forming in her mind.

“Hi,” he said, his voice soft, vulnerable. “Sorry to interrupt. I’m... having a really weird day.” And he started to talk. He didn’t hit on them. He just... talked. And they listened. And for the first time that afternoon, he felt a flicker of genuine human connection. One of them, a girl with kind eyes and a warm smile, seemed to be particularly receptive. They were laughing, connecting. These girls were definitely gay, and they seemed interested in the butch woman John appeared to be. John was about to ask for her number, he was so close, he could taste the victory...

And then, the world dissolved into a dizzying swirl of light and color. He felt a violent, lurching sensation, like being sucked through a straw, and then he was sitting on the floor of his dorm room, staring at Felix.

Felix was back to normal. His own height, his own age, his own familiar face. He was smiling, a look of profound, triumphant relief on his features. And John... he was not. He

looked down at his own hands, his own slender, powerful, yet still female hands. He was still a girl.

“Whoa,” Felix breathed, looking around the room, which was exactly as they had left it. “It must... it must teleport you back when one person wins.”

“But... I didn’t win yet,” John stammered, his new voice a heartbroken whisper. “I was so close. She was about to give it to me.”

“I guess I was closer, buddy,” Felix said, not even trying to hide the smug satisfaction in his voice. He looked at the clock on his desk. It was reset to before they had even started the round. It was as if the last hour had never happened. “The third girl I talked to,” he explained, a proud grin spreading across his face. “She was new on campus, a grad student. Totally into older, taller guys. It was a walk in the park. Twenty-six is a great age, it turns out. I just told her I was getting my masters. She loved it.” He stood up, stretching his normal, six-foot frame. “So easy.”

The reality of the situation crashed down on John with the force of a physical blow. Felix had won. He was back to normal. Which meant... John had lost. He was stuck. Like this. Forever.

“You son of a bitch!” he screamed, lunging at Felix, his new, female voice raw with a pain and fury that was all too real.

“Whoa, dude, what?” Felix said, easily sidestepping his clumsy attack.

Their argument was cut short by a soft chime from the game box. Felix looked down. A single, blank black card was sliding out of a slot on the side of the box. His prize. He picked it up. The card shimmered, and silver text bloomed into existence. MUSCULARITY +15%. New text appeared at the bottom: This card can be permanently applied to any target, including yourself, at any time.

“Awesome,” Felix breathed, his eyes wide with a greedy delight. John’s predicament was already forgotten. He looked at the card, then at his own arm. “I’m gonna use it now.” He tapped the card to his bicep. A faint, silver glow enveloped him, and he felt a familiar, hot, burning sensation as his muscles swelled, not to the grotesque proportions John had achieved, but a subtle, powerful enhancement. A permanent upgrade.

John just stared, his mind a numb, static-filled void. He reached up, his hand instinctively finding his own breast, the soft, firm weight a horrifying, tangible reminder of his new reality. He was a girl. He was stuck.

“We have to play again,” he demanded, his voice a low, dangerous hiss. “Now.”

“Dude, chill,” Felix said, admiring his new, more defined physique in the reflection of the dark TV screen. “Maybe tomorrow. I wanna go hit the gym. See what this new body can do. You should come!”

“I can’t go out like this!” he shrieked. “Nobody will recognize me! My ID, my student card, they’re all useless!” In a fit of pure, desperate fury, he grabbed his wallet, pulled out his driver’s license, and shoved it in Felix’s face. “See?! This is John Henderson! Not... not whatever the hell I am now!”

Felix took the ID, a frown on his face. “Uhh, dude...” he said, his voice hesitant.

“What?” John snapped.

Felix turned the ID around. John looked at it. And the last, fragile vestiges of his old life shattered into a million pieces. The picture was not of John Henderson. It was of him, as he looked right now. A kinda-cute muscular girl with a serious expression. The name read: JOYCE HENDERSON. The sex: F.

A new, more profound, more terrifying understanding dawned on them both. The game hadn’t just changed his body. It had changed the world. It had rewritten reality itself to see him as this new person.

As if to prove the point, their dorm room door opened, and another student poked his head in. “Hey, Joyce, you got a spare charger I can borrow?” he asked, not even batting an eye.

John just stared, speechless. Felix, his face pale with a new, dawning awe, just pointed to his desk. The student grabbed the charger, said “Thanks, man... I mean, girl. Joyce. Whatever,” and left.

“See you later, loser,” Felix said, a strange, almost fearful look in his eye. He grabbed his gym bag and practically fled the room, leaving John standing there, alone, in a life that was no longer his own.

He stood there for a long time, the silence of the room pressing in on him. And then, with a slow, deliberate movement, he began to strip. He peeled off the tight, stretched-out t-shirt, the baggy cargo shorts, the underwear. He stood naked in front of the full-length mirror, and for the first time, he really looked.

The body staring back at him was odd. A paradox. Powerful, muscular arms, a defined six-pack, and yet, the unmistakable, soft swell of female breasts, the gentle curve of a woman's waist, the smooth, hairless skin. And between his legs, the alien, elegant, terrifying architecture of a vagina.

He reached out, his fingers tracing the unfamiliar lines of his own body. And then, he felt it. A deep, slow, coiling heat in his groin. A strange, unfamiliar tingling. He looked down. His new pussy was slick, wet, glistening in the dim light of the dorm room.

He touched himself. Just a single, hesitant finger against the exquisitely sensitive bud of his clit. A jolt, a sharp, electric shock of pure, unadulterated pleasure, shot through him, making his breath catch in his throat.

Defeated, heartbroken, and utterly, profoundly, confused, he stumbled to his bed. He lay down, the cool sheets a shock against his hot skin. And his hand, moving with a will that was no longer entirely his own, a will born of a deep, primal, biological curiosity, drifted back down between his legs.

The world outside, the world of friends and classes and a future he had once taken for granted, faded away. There was only this room, this body, and this strange, new, overwhelming sensation. It was nothing like the frantic, goal-oriented release he was used to. This was a slow, delicious, all-consuming burn. His hips began to writhe, his back arching off the bed, a series of soft, feminine moans—sounds he didn't recognize but were coming from his own throat—filling the quiet of the room. The pleasure built, and built, and built, a tidal wave of sensation that threatened to consume him entirely. And then, it crested. The orgasm, when it hit, was not a release. It was a detonation. A shattering of self. A complete, system-wide overload that ripped through him with a force that left him gasping, sobbing, his entire body convulsing in a paroxysm of pure, exquisite, and utterly, terrifyingly, female bliss.

He lay there for a long time afterwards, boneless, trembling, the lingering aftershocks of the orgasm still rippling through him, his mind a blissful, empty, silent void. His old life was over. His old body was gone. The world might see him as Joyce, but he was still John. And as

the last vestiges of pleasure faded, replaced by the cold, hard, terrifying reality of his new existence, he knew only one thing for sure. He had to play again.