

Erutell: Game of Change

Description:

Nate is an intelligent college student in his early twenties who has an affinity for board games. One day, while exploring the back of a dusty bookstore, he discovers an ancient-looking board game called 'Erutell.' Intrigued, he steals this forbidden tome, wanting to play it with his three other friends at their weekly game night. But little do they know that for each card drawn, changes both mental and physical will alter their destinies, and it will be a race to the finish line to see who, if anyone, will be able to win the right to turn back.

Erutell: Prologue

The store was tucked away in the corner of a forgotten street in a ridden-down suburb. The street lamps faltered occasionally, and a low mist settled on the streets almost as soon as the sun had shone its last ray upon the town's horizon. Haverton was the kind of town most people drove through to get to other, more interesting places. It had just one cinema, one mall, one elementary and high school each, and a college with a campus that held barely eight hundred students. Most people who went for degrees there had no desire to live elsewhere; otherwise, they would have gone to college elsewhere already. Still, the town had its charm; it backed against a largely untouched forest that reached up to the mountains, the kind of forest that generated all sorts of fun rumours and superstitions among the townsfolk. And the weather was perfect in summer and full of white snow in winter. And there was a closeness to the people, for the most part. Havertonians, as they called themselves, had little reason to bicker and fight, their population being too large for the close mindedness of rural types, and too big for the apathetic selfishness of big city types. The biggest problems in Haverton rarely extended beyond juvenile delinquency and the occasional neighbourly dispute. And, of course, Sheriff Knott's rare but memorable drunken mishaps.

It was also just large enough of a town to hide away little stores that some never ever knew were there. That was part of the reason why Nate Portis stayed, for the little stores like this one. He was a promising student with a love of fantasy, science fiction, and all kinds of creative worlds, but in truth he aspired to little more than to write such stories himself in the town of his birth. You'd be surprised what kind of inspiration one could get, especially from tucked away prizes such as this.

Satler's Antiques & Memorabilia

That was what the sign read. It was, technically, located below the street, with one of those sets of stairs that leads directly to a multi-story building's basement from the side of the street. Nate knocked, saw that the sign said 'Open', and decided to go in.

"Hello, is this place open? I know it's late."

"We're open, young man," came a wearied, older voice.

There was a man with bedraggled grey hair who sat not behind the counter, but was currently perched on what appeared to be a rickety wooden stool, fixing up a display of carved wooden soldiers. It was far from the only display in the store; the small business was positively cramped with antique toys, games, books, tomes, displays, posters, hanging ornaments, model trains, baseball cards, Christmas decorations, Halloween costumes, and so on and so forth. The air was musty and stale, as if the combined ages of all the items in the room had aged the building with it, and all those who entered. It was powerful on the senses, and the yellowed lighting only made it feel even older.

Somehow, it only made Nate even more famous.

"Wow, I've never known this place was here all my life, and I grew up here."

The old man chuckled, stepping down from his stool and extending a hand. Nate shook it. "You'd be surprised, young man, how often people say that. Not that I get much business, but then I mainly run this store for fun, anyhow. Consider me an antique in charge of all the others."

Nate chuckled. He liked this man.

"I'm Nate," he replied, and he took another look around the area. You'd have to step carefully, just to avoid crashing into the various hanging model planes and lead-painted toy figurines. "This place sure is amazing. I love stuff like this."

It made the old man grin. "*That*, I don't hear as often. Some people don't have an appreciation for nostalgia. Is there anything I can help you with?"

"I'm looking for games."

"No videogames here, son. Don't make me feel too old by claiming a videogame can be an antique!"

Nate grinned and shook his head. His brown hair tousled over his forehead, and he swept it away. He'd have to get it cut soon. "No, sorry, Mr . . . ahh . . ."

"Satler," the old man said with a grin, scratching the stray hairs on his chin. "It's on the door."

"Ah, yes, Mr Satler. No, I'm more old school. A few friends and I, we do game nights together every week, sometimes more than once. We love board games, but we've played most of what's out and we're looking to change things up. I thought I'd surprise them with something older they hadn't heard of, instead of something new."

The old man rested a hand briefly on his shoulder. "Well then, it seems I've misjudged the youth of today. Here I thought you with your hoodie and jeans and no belt might not have the right kind of taste for this store. Glad to be proven wrong. Glad indeed. Let me show you around."

Mr Satler did. Nate stared with wonder at the numerous astonishing piles of dust-covered tomes and toys and memorabilia. He couldn't help but pick up several first edition copies of *Space!* comics, along with a signed hardback of *Land of the Barbarian Kings*, his favourite pulpy fantasy novel as a young teenager. It truly was a blast from the past to be here, and he stopped several times to ask Mr Satler about how he acquired it all, usually resulting in a long-winded story. It seemed the owner had a keen mind and memory for each item acquired.

Finally, they arrived at the board games section, and Nate took to perusing. Mr Satler hung back, allowing him to pour over forgotten early editions of *Monopoly*, numerous wargames, a proto-edition of something approaching *Dungeons and Dragons*, and a number of boardsets from other countries, some not even in English or missing their instructions. Mr Satler left him to do some rearranging, and Nate spent what felt like half an hour searching over. There was so much to interest him, but he had to keep his friends in mind: Gary would want something exciting, and Katy didn't want anything cooperative, she was a ruthless competitor. He had to balance that with Jill's more nerdy demeanour, especially since, well, he'd always had a bit of a crush on Jill. He wanted something that would appeal to her.

He was considering between two options, neither of which felt quite right, when the strange feeling occurred. It came from the back of the store, like an ancient sigh, or a soft hiss, without sound and yet echoing in his mind. Something was back there, and he wasn't sure how he knew that, only that it was there, and it wanted to be found. He put the two games down, and stepped slowly towards the location where the strange sensation was coming from. It seemed almost soothed by his approach, and it made him curious as to whether this was merely instinct, his own intuition, or something . . . more.

The area at the back of the store was marked as *For Staff Only*, though it appeared Mr Satler was the only staff. Nate looked around, checked that he wasn't being watched as the proprietor sorted through a stamp collection, and stepped through the door.

The forbidden zone was dark and dusty, far more than the stale customer area. It was a thin space, the shelves crammed with all manner of books, toys, ornaments, and games. But one in particular seemed to draw him forth, and he could see why. It was a large, heavy looking game set that was bound by two thick locks. It was coated in dust, more so than most of the other items there. The sigh increased in his mind, and Nate found himself wanting more than anything to see what it was. He pulled the locked tome from the rack, and

dramatically blew the dust from its surface. There, inlaid in metal that stood from the leatherbound cover, was its title:

Erutell

“Erutell,” he repeated, and flipped the tome around. “Erutell, the Game of Chance and Change,” he read. “Brave adventurers and explorers, pioneers and trailblazers, must reach the end of the course. For each card drawn, the world of Erutell will come further to life, and bring wonders and dangers to be shared and overcome. Suits 4-6 players.”

Nate beamed. He didn’t know exactly what genre this game fell into, or what kind of game exactly it was, but something about it felt right. That strange compulsion, that odd call that brought him to it had died away, but it felt more than right anyway in his hands.

“What are you doing back here?” a crusty voice muttered.

Nate spun, the bound game in his hands. Mr Satler stood in the doorway, the light framing him like he was a giant blocking out the sun. It made the young man’s heart skip a beat.

“I was looking for games,” he said weakly.

The owner beckoned him forth and tapped at the top of the doorframe where it said *For Staff Only*. “Don’t they teach young people to read these days?”

“Oh, uh, sorry. I didn’t see that there.”

“Yeah, yeah, just don’t do it again. What’s back there isn’t for sale, okay? What were you looking for anyway . . .”

The man’s eyes froze as he saw the game in Nate’s hands. For a moment, there was something like horror in them. He snatched the book and carried it with alacrity to the front desk of the store.

“No, no, no! Not this one, *never* this one!”

Nate followed, confused. “I’m sorry, I didn’t realise. Is it a family heirloom or something.”

Mr Satler turned, and suddenly he looked far older. Too old, almost. “One of the most terrible sort. *Erutell* is a curse, young man, though I doubt you’ll believe me. It carries with it - oh, never mind. It’s not meant to be played by human hands, nor can it be understood or have a place in mortal ken. I keep it safe back there.”

“I’m pretty responsible,” Nate replied, “I can give you fifty dollars for it. I promise I won’t destroy it or damage it.”

The man laughed, and it was a dry, wheezy laugh. “Destroy it, huh? If it could be destroyed, I would have done that some time ago. No, it is *not* for sale.”

“But -”

“Don’t press me on this, young man. You want to buy your comics, then you drop this argument now. *Erutell* is not a game, it is fae magic, or perhaps something beyond that. I won’t chance it, not after . . .”

His breathing slowed, and he stopped talking for a moment. Instead, he simply took the book and placed it behind the counter, and shrugged.

“Look, you seem like a good kid with a sensible head on his shoulders. I’ve got a few other games hid up on the shelf I can show you, and even give you a discount on. How about that?”

Nate was shocked at what had just transpired. “Uh, sure, yeah, that sounds good.”

The man grunted, glad to be done with the argument, but not in a rude way.

“I’ll just go get a taller ladder, ‘cause I’ll need it. Just wait here, I won’t be longer than two minutes.”

He walked away, opening a separate door and rifling audibly through what sounded like a full closet of equipment. A bead of sweat dripped down Nate’s forehead. The call was still there, distant despite the game’s closeness, but present all the same. The old man was probably a little crazy, or just did drugs or had a nasty break up over the game or something. That’s what had happened to Katy and Gary, and they were friends again now. This Mr Satler was just a little weird over it.

Slowly, Nate peered over the store counter, where the metal-embossed game sat, looking ancient and mysterious.

“I’ll return it right after games night,” he said to himself. “I’ll even apologise and pay him that fifty. I’m just . . . borrowing it.”

Slowly, carefully, cautiously, and yet with great daring, Nate reached and grabbed the heavy game set. He could have sworn, just for a moment, that it thrummed with power in his hands. He twisted his head to see if Mr Satler was coming out of his storeroom, crashing through to intercept him. But there was nothing, only more difficulty with the folding ladder behind a closed door.

With a slight grin, and more than a little helping of guilt, Nate backed out of the room, clutching *Erutell* against his chest. He backed into the cold night, where the mist had swelled to almost impossible thickness, and disappeared into the fog.

Tomorrow night, he would have a new game to play with his friends.

To Be Continued . . .

Erutell, Game of Change, Part 1: Highborn, Lowborn

"It's called *Erutell*," Nate declared, unveiling the large wooden tome. His friends "oohed" as he unlocked the flap and unfolded the heavy wood board that was its playmate, taking out the ancient tray with its many carved pieces.

Katy, Jill, Gary and Nate were at Katy's folks home on the edge of Haverton, up on Sentry Hill. It was a big house - practically an estate - with a lovely view of the lake and distant mountains, and nearby meadows of flowers. It was their favourite place to play their weekly games together, and not just because the living room was enormous: Katy's parents were almost always away on business, leaving her to run the place by herself. The large halls and magnificent fireplace in the living area gave the house an almost medieval atmosphere, which was a perfect background ambience to what they were about to play. It was Saturday in the mid-afternoon, and they were all set to enjoy themselves, keeping the fire stoked against the chilly fog outside.

Jill's eyes widened behind her glasses. She was the same age as Nate - twenty three - and he had always had a crush on her. With her frizzy blonde hair, light blue eyes, and lithe, short stature, he'd always found her quite cute, especially since she had a habit of blushing sweetly when she was complimented. She liked cooperative games mostly.

"Wow, this actually looks really authentic," she said, pouring over the details closely, her fine eye giving attention to the details.

"Looks badass," Katy said. "Way better than the last game, right Gary?"

In contrast to Jill, Katy was a competitor at heart. Be it games, drama performances, or even dating, it was all a matter of beating the other side. She had dark skin and grey-green eyes, a result of mixed Arabic-Indian heritage, and was quite attractive with her tall, slender body. If Jill was a whiz when it came to mathematics and science, Katy had the performing arts locked down. She'd been introduced to the group through Gary, who used to date her, and there were still some sparks that occasionally flew between them.

"Hey, that's not my fault," Gary replied. "It was about football, I thought it would be fun! Besides, this game might suck as well. It looks like it has elves or whatever."

Gary was the designated 'jock' of the group, though in truth that was an unfair designation. After all, he loved video games and boardgames as much as the rest of them. It's just that he was also a rampant gym nut and football fan, and always played on weekends. He had a slightly Mediterranean look and complexion, something the ladies often liked. He often ribbed Nate for not having a 'man's body', which annoyed Nate, but he never spoke up about it. People quickly learned to ignore some of what Gary said.

"Trust me, this'll be good," said Nate.

He himself was an ordinary looking man in his twenties with chestnut brown hair that nearly went to his eyebrows, and was slightly shorter than average height - Gary liked to remind him of this fact often. Still, he often felt that he was the glue that really held the group together; it was his love of boardgames that had brought them all together, and they'd been playing for years now. When Gary and Katy split up a second time, it was him who organised with Jill to get them talking as friends again.

He looked at the other three, and a dramatic smile came over his face.

"After all," he said, "this game is *cursed*."

Jill rolled her eyes, but Katy clearly loved the drama.

"Oh, a curse! Do go on . . ."

Nate indicated to the large wooden board before them. On it, a strange and fantastical geography was detailed of a large kingdom and several neighbouring regions. In cursive script, the kingdom was titled *Erutell*. It bordered the sea around its southern coast, and had large plainlands to the north. Several dark forests clustered throughout the land, as well as several cities and many outlying towns. All of it had been carved into the wood intricately, and through it all ran flat tracks - the 'roads' the player pieces were meant to travel down on each dice roll, one space at a time.

"I got this from a little shop called *Satler's Antiques & Memorabilia*. Heard of it?"

The others shook their heads.

"Neither had I. But it was filled with tons of antiques and old toys and the like. It was awesome. But at the back of the store was a forbidden area, where this was located. The old man that ran the store didn't want me to have it - he said I would regret it, as would any that played it. It was too dangerous."

"So how did you get it?" asked Jill.

Nate paused. Saying he stole it might make Gary impressed, but he didn't want Jill to judge him. "I, well, I bribed him. I had some antique baseball cards he wanted, and some extra money from work, so I went all in."

Katy scoffed. "Can't be too cursed then."

"Yeah," Gary injected, "I think you got *cursed* into paying extra, dude. Should've haggled. Got right up in his face."

Nate sighed. "Okay, so it's not cursed. But it *looks* cursed, doesn't it? I mean, have you ever heard of *Erutell*?"

The others shook their heads.

"How does it play?" Jill asked. She was situated next to Nate, and was the most obviously interested.

Kate lifted part of the board in order to read the instructions.

“Erutell, the Game of Chance and Change. Brave adventurers and explorers, pioneers and trailblazers, must reach the end of the course. For each card drawn, the world of Erutell will come further to life, and bring wonders and dangers to be shared and overcome. Suits 4-6 players. Hmm, sounds pretty neat. Competitive too - it says here there can be only one winner. So I vote we play it, so I can fucking dominate you guys.”

“Oh, you are so on,” Greg said. “How do we set up?”

Nate explained, “okay, so here’s what I can tell of the rules. We each choose one of the six player pieces, and place it on the south-eastern coastline here: that’s the starting point.” He gestured to where *BEGIN* was painted on the large board in fancy Olden English style. “From there, the oldest player starts, and the game proceeds in a clockwise direction around the players. You roll two dice, and the number you roll advances you across the board.” He traced his finger over the path that wound its way over the board. “The first to reach the end is the winner.”

“Dude, that’s boring as hell,” Gary said.

Jill rolled her eyes. “There are more rules, Gary. Why do you think there’s that slot on the end of the board?”

Nate gave a silent ‘thank you’ to Jill, before proceeding to read the thin wooden set of further rules he had in his hands..

“But beware, brave adventurers, for complications away. After each roll, an adventurer must draw a Card of the Fates from the Weaving Wood of Erutell’s borders.” He indicated to the slot Jill had pointed out, off the edge of the map. “There are three kinds of cards:

“*Green* is Change, the most common card, and will bring exactly that to your life, befitting your new place in Eruell.

“*Blue* is Setting, which will manifest the world of Erutell around you, bringing you close to its fold.

“*Red* is Event, which will bring forth action and mindset befitting the kingdom’s nature.

“Each brings danger and opportunity as you advance towards Erutell, capital city of the same name. The winner will be freed, and be granted a boon. The last behind will suffer their fate. But beware, if the game is not finished within the span of a day’s passing, you will be fated to reside in Erutell forever more, as the Card of the Fates has decided.”

He finished reading, and placed the instructions down carefully. They were old, and he didn’t want to break them.

“Well, that was weirdly ominous,” Jill said, raising an eyebrow. “Are there any other rules?”

Nate checked over them. "There's a lot of warnings of not trying to cheat, or roll the dice out of turn. Also apparently additional players can join in the middle of a game in-progress, gaining some benefits to help give them a chance of victory, but also some negatives to compensate for it. The game takes itself quite seriously."

"I like it," said Katy. She grinned widely. "Especially since I'm going to win."

"Yeah, right," Gary cut in. "It's a game set in medieval times, right? Who better to win than the knight in shining armour?"

He moved to grab the knight piece.

"How do you know Nate isn't the knight in shining armour?" Jill asked. She blushed a little as she asked it, and it warmed Nate's heart.

"Because he doesn't have the upper body strength. No offence Nate, but this is a job for a real man: that's what the middle ages were all about, right?"

Jill rolled her eyes again. "You really need to read up on your medieval history . . . but you're not wrong. It was pretty patriarchal."

"But this is fantasy," Nate corrected, "so anyone can choose whatever figurine you want to play as. The cover has an elven warrior princess, so -"

"DIBS!"

Katy grabbed the green piece, carved perfectly into an elven princess stringing her bow, and placed it on the starting point. Jill shrugged, and from the remaining four pieces decided to select the mermaid.

"Nice seashell bra Jill," Gary remarked. Katy punched him hard enough on the arm to make him wince.

"I like mermaids," Jill said a little defensively, as she placed the blue figurine on the board, alongside the grey night and green elf.

"That leaves me then," Nate said. He decided upon the barbarian warrior piece, coloured brown.

"Well, that's easy to remember at least," Jill said. "Nate has brown hair and a brown figurine. Katy chose green; she has green eyes. And I've got blue; I'm the only one with blue eyes."

"What about me?" Gary asked, pressing his finger on the grey night.

"You've got grey sludge for brains," Katy ribbed.

"Screw you!" he said, but we were all chuckling, him included. "Okay, let's get started before we have to think about what to order for dinner."

Nate ordered the board for them; he'd examined it over already several times. There wasn't much to organise, and he was a little nervous that the cards that were meant to come out of the old wood carved game wouldn't even work with their mechanism anymore, or worse, were simply missing. They arranged themselves around the coffee table, the

fireplace keeping them warm, and the old walls with their numerous photographs and old paintings setting the perfect mood for them. Gary was the oldest, so much to his macho, take-charge delight, he was set to go first, followed by Jill, then Nate, then finally Katy. The ambience of the room was perfect for the game, and despite some initial scepticism, Nate could tell that each of his friends were keen to play.

“Okay,” Gary said. “Let me show you ladies how a real knight wins their game.”

“I hope my elven archer shoots you in the butt.”

“I volunteer to drag him down to the ocean depths.”

“I’ve got a particularly brutal looking club there that may help.”

Gary just put on a shit-eating grin. “Bring it on then, take a swipe at the king. C’mon, double-sixes!”

He rolled the dice, and the game began. The group looked in interest as the heavy wooden dice bounced and rolled across the board, finally resting after several seconds. Gary frowned, and the rest of the ‘adventurers’ grinned.

“A three and a one? No fair!”

“Suck it Gary!”

He gave an exaggerated frown, and was about to say something in return, when Holly squealed, scaring the rest of them.

“What the hell, Jill?”

“Are you okay?”

She just pointed to the board, where to the astonishment of all of them, Gary’s knight piece was moving of its own accord across the landscape, four places in total.

“It’s gotta be magnets, right?” Katy asked. “Maybe the game isn’t actually that old.”

“Looks like,” Nate said, but there was something strange about the motion that made them all go silent. There was a strange smoothness to the way the knight movements that seemed almost unnatural.

The tension was broken by the harsh clip of a card slotting quickly into place through the gap in the ‘Weaving Wood’ in the top half of the board. The quick motion jolted them all, and poor Jill had to cover her thin mouth to avoid yelping again. Instead, she gave a surprised squeak.

“It’s a blue card,” Nate said, eyes hovering over the intricate backing design of the card, which depicted a sun rising over a medieval city. “That’s a setting card.”

Gary snatched it up, suddenly intrigued, and read it aloud.

*“Erutell has its share of mist and dark and dun
But in this moment feel its warm and rising sun.”*

The macho man screwed up his features. "Ooookay. Weird. Nothing's happening, though. Is that my turn?"

The rest looked to Nate, who shrugged. "I guess it is."

Gary passed the dice to Jill, who took a moment to examine the. They were old, heavy, and seemed to be weighted with metal beneath the carved exterior. She was about to roll when the sun's rays came in through the window, quickly clearing the mist.

"Huh, the sun's come out," she said, "and it's really warm. Nice."

"My God, I really did make the sun come out!" Gary declared, his voice dripping with sarcasm as he held up the card.

Katy giggled, twirling her fingers. "Oooohhh it's the cuuurse! It's given us the terrifying gift of warm weather!"

Jill rolled the dice and got a six and a four. She gave a cute little fist pump.

"Still not fair," Gary said as her mermaid slid forth ten places. She stuck out her tongue at him and took her card. It was Red.

"An Event card," she said. "Cool. It says . . .

*"You could make a fine young maid,
Were you to wear an appropriate braid."*

"Oooh, the curse! Please, not the braid!"

"Jeez, the game doesn't like your hairstyle Jill. I told you I should style it."

Katy fell to laughing with Gary. Jill just looked at Nate and shrugged. "I guess that's it. I'm sure it'll get more interesting."

Nate cringed a little internally. The game wasn't exactly going how he'd hoped it would. "Yeah, I hope so."

Suddenly, a weird urge overcame Jill. Perhaps it was simply being made aware of her frizzy hair style, and the mention of it by the card and Katy both, but for the first time in a long time she felt like changing it. Changing it *now*.

"I'll be back in a moment," she said. "I've just got to go to the bathroom."

"Everything alright Jill?" Katy asked. "You look . . . focused."

"Yeah, I'm okay. I'll be back in a moment. Keep playing."

She stood and left, leaving Nate to roll the dice.

Jill stared at herself in the mirror, dissatisfied. She occasionally got like this; between her frizzy blonde hair, thin lips, and rounded glasses, she certainly couldn't compare with Katy's beautiful looks. Even her face was a little thin; a bit too willowy, at least to her eyes. She had never had the knack for makeup or hair styling though, not like other girls, and now

she wished she did; she liked Nate, had for a couple of years now, but she doubted he would show much interest in a girl like her. At best, she was 'cute', the word guys had for girls who could never be 'beautiful' or 'sexy.' She sighed.

"What am I doing?"

But the compulsion was there again, the urge to actually try something different. Something new. Something that would *fit*. Slowly, opened the drawer to the various brushes, combs, bands, and dryers.

"I don't have the slightest idea of how to even manage a braid," she said, and yet in moments she was doing exactly that. She expertly combed and brushed her hair, and impossibly it began to straighten a little, going from frizzy to beautifully curly, and it almost seemed as if her hair was becoming shinier, even blonder somehow. It was an alarming thing, and yet for reasons that escaped her it felt *right*, and soon she was forming a loose braid in her hair.

"I swear my hair isn't this long," she said, shocked. But still she adjusted it, finishing off her new style. She took it in, gazing at her reflection. Her hair now looked like an old-fashioned braid, almost like that of a peasant woman or lower nobility of a medieval period. She half expected a coif to materialise on top of it.

"Wow, I look . . . really good," she said. The style matched her, and it felt right.

Jill returned to mixed cheers and groans from all members of the game. Nate was playing with a sword taken from Katy's dad's collection of them, twirling it in the air with surprising expertise.

"NERD!" Gary called.

Katy was clapping. "When did you get so good at fencing, Nate? You would be great on stage!"

"I - I don't remember!" Nate called, as he flipped the sword and manoeuvred it as if he were a natural swordsman. "I guess the card just reminded me that I could do it - I am a *Star Wars* fan, after all."

He finished his display and sat down, a little startled, but kept his sword close. Jill joined them, her changed hairstyle the new centre of attention.

"Nice flourish there, Nate," she said.

"Thanks," he said, a little sheepishly. He was trying not to admire too obviously her new hairdo, which had a timeless quality to it, and seemed to accentuate the best features of her face. "It came after a card about 'lords and swords' and all that. I only rolled seven"

“Speaking of cards, I see someone has responded to theirs,” Katy teased. “Jill, you look gorgeous! I swear your hair is actually shining!”

“Yeah, what brought on the change?” Nate said, before quickly following up. “It looks really good. I mean, it suits you Jill.”

Even Gary assented. It made the blonde woman blush appreciatively.

“Okay, okay, thanks guys. I just . . . I just felt like doing it, I guess! It’s your turn then, right Katy?”

The competitive woman leaned forward, her green eyes gleaming. “Yeah, finally! So far this game is a real wash, but I’m sure I’ll at least kick you guys down to size.”

She took the dice and rolled them, causing everyone to groan.

“Double sixes, are you kidding me?”

Her elven warrior moved forward, and a card spat out.

*‘Roll again on doubles, in order to stay mobile,
For doubles sixes gain riches, worthy of a noble’*

“Fuck. Yeah,” she said, grinning. The dark-skinned woman took the dice and rolled again, before giving a little dance of joy on the spot. “What have I told you? Queen of the board right now. Absolute. Queen.”

She rolled a seven, and advanced seven more places, entering the first Zone of the area; a part of the kingdom labelled Riverwend. A card slotted into place, and she removed it, reading allowed in her most dramatic theatre performance.

*‘No dark creature or vicious soldier may ever harm her,
When she take on the form of a man in shining armour’*

The group looked around at each other.

“This game is weird,” Gary said. “Besides, I’m meant to be a knight in shining armour. You’re too . . .”

“Female?”

“I was going to say hot.”

She punched him on the arm. “Knights *are* hot, excuse me.”

“Yeah, but you’re the wrong kind of hot. Like, not muscular enough.”

“Excuse me, I’ll have you know that - UGH!”

Suddenly, Katy doubled over, dropping her card to the floor. Her eyes bulged as she tried to form words, but her stomach was overcome with a strange knotting sensation, one that was rapidly expanding out from her core to the rest of her.

“Katy! Katy? Are you alright?”

Gary immediately launched to his feet to see to her, as did the other two. Gary caught her as she fell backwards a little into his arms, and the sense of concern upon his

features told a story. She groaned, body writhing, and to everyone's astonishment - especially her own - her skin began to bubble and shift.

"What - what's h-happening to m-meeee!?"

She arched her back as her spine popped, new vertebrae forming to give her a greater height. She clutched her head in response to the strange feeling of her hair actually receding back into her head, and mid-groan her jaw seemed almost to clench and crack; it shifted wider, bones growing to give her a more manly shape.

"Holy shit, what the fuck is happening to her?" Gary asked, agitated.

Nate and Jill looked on in horror as their friend's body continued to warp, growing taller, more muscular, and developing hairs along her bare forearms.

"F-fuck!" the woman gasped, looking down at herself. "It's like s-someone's sitting on my ch-chest! Nngggghh!"

And just like that, her breasts began to deflate. While Katy had always been fairly lithe and athletic, she had always been proud of her sizable C-cups. They were perky and bouncy, and the right kind of outfit made them pop. But now they deflated, the pressure sinking them into her chest, fat and tissue being directed to leave her with strong pectoral muscles instead.

"Katy, your boobs!" Jill declared, pointing.

"I c-can feel it! Ahhh!" Katy whined. In truth, it wasn't a totally painful experience, but it was weird as all hell, especially when her hips pushed inwards, losing their attractive slight hourglass shape, and even more so when she felt a bizarre tugging in her genitalia.

"No! No! No!" she cried, but already her voice was deepening, dropping several octaves to a low, masculine impression. An Adam's apple rose upon her throat even as her face lost its softness, and began to grow a short dark beard."

"The hell!" Gary gasped, dropping her back to the couch and taking several steps back. "You're a dude!"

"Ab-about to b-be! UUUggghhh!"

And just like that, she felt a large member snake out between her legs, passing through her passage and filling in the flesh behind it. Two large testes sort of 'popped' in after them, eliciting a gasp from her each time.

"I've got a dick, I've got a dick, holy shit I've got a dick!" she - rather, *he* now - exclaimed, clutching the obvious and quite impressive bulge outlined between her legs. Thankfully, the sight didn't last too long, for in mere moments even his clothing was changing. It warped, becoming multi-layered and solid. On Katy's increasingly muscular figure, it felt quite light, despite taking on more and more metallic aspects. But very soon it was obvious exactly what his clothing was becoming.

"A knight! Just like the card says!" Nate exclaimed.

Katy was silent, simply gaping in shock as *his* clothing rearranged, becoming a classical shining knight's costume complete with a tabard of a tree atop of a waterfall; the symbol of Riverwend on the map. After perhaps twenty seconds, the changes were done, and he could stand on shaking, nervous legs.

"Is . . . is it over?" he asked.

The others nodded, staring at the man in front of them that had been Katy.

"I need - I need to see a mirror," he said, in a voice that was impressively masculine, and not too deep. It had an almost hopeful, dreamy cadence to it, or at least that was how Jill felt, before realising she was getting oddly aroused just looking at her transformed friend. Katy stood and shunted past Gary, who realised that his on-again off-again girlfriend was now taller than him.

"Holy shit," he said, turning to Nate. "The game is real."

Katy looked over himself in the mirror. He didn't really think of himself as 'himself', but his maleness was impossible to deny. He was still dark-skinned, still possessing those same green-eyes, still appearing to have mixed Indian-Middle Eastern heritage. But instead of an attractive, slightly busty woman in a tight black shirt and casual track pants, he was now a dashing handsome figure with a close-cropped beard and goatee, and eye-brow length hair that was neatly parted. He was bulky without looking 'roided up', and he was astonished at the raw power that he felt in his manly limbs, including how his plate armour felt incredibly light despite its obvious weight. He turned right and left several times to see himself in profile, unbelieving that the game had magically changed his gender. Between his legs he could feel a very impressive member, so different from having a womanly slit between his legs.

"Gosh, I look good," he said, and caught himself. "I mean to say *gosh*. I mean, *darn*."

He frowned. This was already bad enough, but he couldn't *swear* anymore?

"I guess I really have become the knight in shining armour," he mumbled sadly, appreciating the glint of his armour. "Darn this stuff is bulky."

He tried pinching his skin a number of times, as well as washing his handsome face with water, but nothing changed his new reality; he was now male. And an impressive male at that; it felt weird not to have a little jiggle on his chest or a wider set of hips. Not to mention having such facial hair; it was like a bristle! How did men get used to this?

He gave another heavy sigh, and wiped the soft tears in his eyes. Even crying felt different; it didn't come as easily, and the experience of it made him feel irritable. After he'd

cleared himself up, he stood tall and proud, and walked back in to see the others, head held high.

No one said anything as Katy returned and sat upon the couch, causing it to groan a little beneath his impressive weight. Next to him, Gary looked less impressive, and the macho man even felt strangely jealous of the former female beside him.

“So,” the new man said, “magic is real. The ‘curse’ is real. You’ve really made a mess of this, Nate! And I *wish* I could use the words I want to but this darn body doesn’t like that, but best believe I’m angry!”

Nate coughed awkwardly. “I - I thought it was a gimmick. We all did! I had no idea it was real magic, I mean . . . that’s crazy shit, isn’t it?”

Jill nodded, as did Gary. Even Katy had to agree with that.

“But I don’t think it’s permanent,” Nate said. “It’s a game, right? The game said the winner goes free, and the loser gets stuck with what changes they have. And the other two . . . well, it’s not clear there, but it seems to imply they’re free so long as they do alright, I think.”

“Well I don’t want to be stuck like this!” the knight shouted. His armour clinked with each movement.

“You’re pretty far ahead,” Gary said. “I think I’m the one that should be worried, Katy. Or is it *Kade* now?”

She punched him on instinct, and Gary howled in pain.

“Aaagh what the fuck! That shit hurts now! Jesus Christ, that’s gonna leave a mark!”

Katy went red around his dark cheeks. “Oh my goodness Gary, I’m so, so sorry. I don’t know my own strength!”

“Well I do!” he whined. “Damn it to hell, what do we do?”

“We have to destroy it!” Katy said. “That’ll end the magic, right?”

All eyes turned to Nate. It was clear that a re-read of the rules was necessary. He laid them out and re-explained, turning over the minutiae. There were the types of cards, the threat of being stuck in Erutell if they did not finish in twenty four hours, the notion that other players could join midway, the warning against cheating, and so on. It was only when he checked again of the minor rule set that he noticed something. Or a few things.

“Oh. Oh, that’s not good.”

“What? What is it?” Katy said. The knight in shining armour was fiddling with part of his outfit, and Jill was getting a little startled when she realised it was a sheathed *sword*.

“Umm, how do I say this? It says that we can expect further changes: *Beware adventurers, you shall take on new forms by the game’s end, and perhaps even take on new lives in the land of Erutell. Attempts to end the game early will cause lasting consequences, and any attempt to destroy the game will leave all adventurers stranded in Erutell.* So we can’t just destroy the game. We have to see it through to the end. It sounds like when we get Setting cards, it’s going to literally make the location around us more like Erutell, sort of like bringing us into that world, which must be a real place. Like another dimension or something.”

“Then we need to play through to the end,” Jill said. Nate was briefly distracted by her looks; her hair really did look very lovely now, and it had a shine and lustre it previously lacked.

“Yeah, exactly.”

“Shit,” Gary said. “So any one of us could change again?”

“That seems to be the case.”

“Nate, I blame you for all of this,” Katy said, crossing his arms, causing the metal to clink. “You better turn me back.”

Nate took a deep breath. “I’m so, so sorry. I - I had no idea.”

“It’s not your fault. It’s not *his* fault,” Jill said. “How could he possibly know that it was going to be a magical game?”

“Maybe because it was *cursed*?” Katy said, voice booming.

“To be fair,” Gary pitched in, “all spooky and fantasy board games say shit like that.”

“Fine, whatever. This sucks, alright? I’ve got a penis. A big one.”

Gary’s eyebrow raised, a hint of jealousy emerging. “How big?”

“Big. Bigger than yours.”

“Fuck, you must be huge then.”

“Don’t make me punch you.” Katy looked around, the situation still sinking in for him, and for the others too. “I guess we continue then. Holy *moly*, this is weird. Actual magic, and it’s turned me into a dude. At least I’m winning.”

It was the awkward truth no one wanted to acknowledge just yet. If the loser kept their changes, who would be stuck? And as what? They could only hope that the change Katy had experienced was drastic to the extreme, and the rest would be small things like Jill’s hair.

It was with that fear in mind that Gary took the dice. Slowly, as if holding a pair of tiny grenades, he rolled them on the table, cringing.

“Nothing too bad,” he prayed. “Please, nothing too terrible.”

He rolled a six and a three, and his knight slithered a head.

"Not bad," Jill said, feeling tense. "You're not too far from Katy's elven - hey! Hers has changed!"

She pointed a finger at Katy's figurine. Sure enough, it had changed, becoming a metallic silver knight upon a horse.

"Oh God, even my game piece is male!" the transformed knight moaned. "This is so embarrassing."

The duller grey knight that was Gary's figurine slowed to a halt three spaces ahead of Jill's, and the requisite card popped into the slot. They each jolted despite knowing it was coming. The large, handsome knight in their midst was evidence of what the game could do. Slowly, hand shaking a little, Gary took the card, and read it aloud.

*"The best thing for a knightly need to quench,
Comes in the form of a busty tavern Wench."*

The entire room fell silent.

"Shit, I'm sorry dude," Nate said, then noticed Gary was grinning.

"Don't be sorry for me, Nate. I'm more than okay having a nice tavern wench on my arm. Looks like not every change is bad."

He grinned again, but the grin faded as he saw everyone's expression. "What?"

Jill bit her lip. "Uh, I don't think it means you *get* the tavern wench, Gary. I think it means, well . . ."

"It means you *are* the tavern wench," Nate finished. He'd figured out much the same.

"Wait, no, surely it means - Argh!"

Much like Katy had, he doubled over, scratching and clawing at his body as the flesh immediately began to ripple and alter. He groaned and grunted, grabbing at various body parts. He stood on shaking legs, pushing away from Katy, who actually smirked.

"I'm looking forward to seeing this!" he declared as Gary ran up to the fireplace, still making guttural growls. His body warped, his manly form visibly shrinking before their eyes. Gary himself felt overcome by hundreds of invisible hands pulling and pushing and massaging at his flesh. His lower stomach lurched as it was shoved aside, a new and rather feminine organ growing into place. His bones pulled, ligaments stretching in some places, pressing in at others. He writhed against the brickwork of the fireplace, and with each great huff of breath his ass expanded, becoming round and roudure, and outlining against the fabric of his pants.

"Ah, my ass! Shit! It's like I've got pins and needles all over my body. I can feel my fucking muscles disappearing. I worked so damn hard for these gains!"

True to his word, they shrunk down, hard-earned muscle melting to become the additional 'padding' women are known for.

Katy watched on as his once-boyfriend's body continued to feminise before his eyes. His hips widened with two audible pops, and his waist contracted with an accompanying wheeze from Gary; he felt as if he was being squeezed by the middle.

"Oohhh . . . Ahhhh . . . Aahhh sh-shit! I'm growing tits! Big ones!"

No one but Gary could see, though they did witness his clothing alter. His jeans and long sleeve shifted to become a green long skirt and green tavern dress that would be right at home in medieval times. It merged into a brown corset that pulled tight over a ruffled white blouse with short and equally ruffled sleeves. It was matched by a pair of brown low-heeled leather boots that conformed perfectly to his shrunken, quite shapely legs.

"Oooghhh! They're still growing!" he shouted, and Nate and all the rest couldn't help but try and crane unsuccessfully for a view. But Gary alone could see the flesh pooling into his once-muscled chest. It filled into his front, causing the two mounds to expand and rise like baker's dough. His nipples tensed and throbbed, and he could not help but squeeze and knead them in the resulting discomfort. They grew in size a second time, forming feminine areola around them, and becoming strangely erect to his ministrations. But still his breasts expanded, filling the cups of his corseted blouse, racing past their already ample C's and shooting past D's. They grew ripe and heavy on his chest, the main focus of his attention even as his face softened and rearranged, and hair began to spill from his head. It lightened considerably, going from dark brown to a bright and fiery red, and taking on a curly texture. His mind registered this all, including how his ass continued to expand and his body hair was shrinking back beneath his skin. But his new breasts surged forth, pressing and then straining against the white fabric, forming bountiful cleavage, until his newfound flesh could no longer press forward any further, and having no space left to go, began to push upwards. His mammoth mammaries rose, threatening to spill out, until his humongous boobs stopped shy of G-cups. Each was half the size of his own head, if not two-thirds! They were heavy, pushed up into a generous bust line, the flesh jutting from near his clavicle

"Ooohhhh . . . Mhhmmm," he moaned, and his voice had become a sweet soprano. "Gawd, I feel so dif'rent."

It was then that the new woman clamped her hand over her mouth. As if it were an afterthought, a quick tug pulled her penis up into her body, leaving a womanly flower and passage in its wake. Gary squeaked in response to the sensation, which was so sudden that her hands flew to between her thighs, where she felt a set of lower lips beneath her medieval undergarments. She stood there, breathing heavily, her enormous chest rising and falling like a pair of fleshy mountains. She had no idea what to say. What was there to say? She'd just been stripped of her manhood and made female. She looked down at the large, pert boobs taking up no small part of his vision. *Very female.*

"Uh, Gary?" Jill asked. She was generally the most compassionate of the group, and she stood, drawing closer to Gary, who was not only a little taller than herself. She placed a comforting hand on his shoulder, and the former male jumped, turning on the spot and setting her tremendous bosom wobbling heavily. Everyone's eyebrows raised. Nate's jaw dropped, he was unable to look away from his friend's massive chest. As much as he had a crush on cute Jill, he couldn't deny that he'd always had a thing for 'well-endowed' women, and now one in a sexy tavern wench costume - her bosom practically straining to escape her corset - was right in front of him. He sat back down, crossing his legs a little awkwardly to conceal his growing erection. Thankfully, no one seemed to notice; they were too absorbed in Gary's chance.

"Good lord Gary, you've got tits like a cow in calf!" Katy exclaimed, before realising what he'd said. Yet another medieval way of speaking.

The woman held her large breasts with her dainty hands, shoulder-length red hair shifting with each movement. She touched them, pushing them up a little and little them fall. Nate squeaked a little; he certainly didn't want anyone to find out that he was quite the horny young man, especially not in response to his own friend. Gary let her new boobs wobble a few more times.

"Blimey, I'm a curvy lass!" she said in a rough commoner's voice and accent. "Them things are heavy!"

She turned a little red from embarrassment at her new manner.

"Nice accent," Katy said, giving a low chuckle.

This time it was Gary that punched, except she was substantially weaker, and the armour around Katy immensely strong. Her knuckles bounced off easily, leaving her wincing.

"Cor! That smites! Why am I talking this way?"

"For the same reason that Katy can't swear, though it looks like you've been hit harder," Jill said, analysing the situation. She adjusted her glasses, trying not to feel a little jealous that freakin' Gary of all people had more of a chest than her, though perhaps too much so. "The game is making us take on the roles when we change."

"Well I don't feel like much of a tavern wench," the new woman said. She crossed her arms over her chest, unintentionally lifting them higher. "Gawd, these things get in the damn way they do."

"But can you cook?" Jill asked.

The busty wenched raised an eyebrow. "I'm a dude, so no."

"Really? Think about it."

Gary did, and slowly an expression of wonder and awe crept across her features. Dozens of recipes came to her, ranging from the basic to the advanced, from lamb leg stew to garnished hare to stag supper. Ale too; many forms of it to be brewed and served, and

mead as well. Good hearty wines had a small selection, and ways to chop and present potato, carrots, and mix in the onions in various combinations to serve the main meal and fit the drink. She breathed heavily by the fireplace, large feminine globes rising and falling, continuing to strain against her tavern wench dress, as she absorbed this new information. As this occurred, Katy was glad for his armour; he was feeling the very unusual sensation of his large penis beginning to harden and rise, pressing against the codpiece of the armour. He'd always been a little bi, but something about Gary's new appearance was driving him crazy. It was hard not to stare into the impressive cleavage, or appreciate his wide hips and rondure behind.

"Gawd," Gary said, "I bin hit with all kinds of knowing. I can cook us all a stew toot sweet if needed. This is all so weird. I fuckin' hate it."

"Finally, it took turning into a woman to know how to prepare dinner for once," Katy said.

"Well at least I can fuckin' still fuckin' cuss, ya'hear?"

Katy burst into laughter. "You sound ridiculous!"

The two descended into a silly squabble as Jill turned to Nate. "I'm a little scared, Nate, or what we might turn into. Look, even Gary's figurine has changed."

Indeed, it was now in the form of a rather shapely tavern wench, though the miniature had her corset loosened, and her blouse falling down over one shoulder as if she'd just emerged from a tumble between the sheets.

"I know," Nate said, shifting closer to comfort her. "I'm sorry about all of this."

"It's not your fault, but it is crazy. I think we need to play this smart, keep the game going quickly, but memorise the rules and conditions."

"I agree," he said. Jill always did have a tactical mind, which was funny, because she didn't like to compete. "Whatever happens, I promise I'll do what I can to get you out of this Jill. I couldn't forgive myself if something happened to you."

She smiled a little, looking away, the moment a bit awkward. She looked back, and smiled again. "Thanks Nate. That . . . that means a lot. Holy crap, look at Gary though, she's about to bust out of her top!"

"I'm trying not to notice," Nate said, chuckling.

Jill rolled her eyes. It was a cute little expression of frustration he'd always enjoyed about her. "Of course, *men*."

"I can't help it! He - or she, or whatever - looks like she's about to topple over!"

"Uh-huh. Had no idea you were such a boob man."

Nate shook his head, a little too quickly. "I'm not, I'm not. But they are . . . distractingly big."

"I know it sounds ridiculous, but as scared as I am, I'm also annoyed that fucking Gary Smith has bigger tits than me."

"I mean, you look fine just the way you are, I think. Cute, even."

She frowned. "Cute, huh. Cute isn't always nice, when you want someone to look at you a certain way. I know you like me Nate, but *like* and *crush* are a league away from being *wanted*, if that makes any sense."

Nate wasn't quite sure how to respond to that, but thankfully he didn't have to; Jill was distracted by the subject with the 'bigger tits' wrenching her by the shoulder and shoving a pair of dice in her hands.

"Roll! I wanna get out of this!"

Jill shared a brief look with Nate, and it almost seemed she was annoyed to be interrupted. He was too; he wanted to tell her that she was beautiful in his eyes, but it wasn't the time. Perhaps, if they all changed and lost out, it never would be. Jill rolled the dice and got only a five.

"Damn," she said. A green card popped up, causing her to gasp. She'd been hoping to avoid that.

*'With great gait, figure, and massive stride,
From this barbarian princess you'll never hide.'*

"I don't like the sound of that," she said.

"Are you - are you about to become Sonja?" Nate asked.

Everyone leaned forward, awaiting the change, and soon it came. She buckled and writhed, moaning as her body shifted, growing taller, taller even than Katy's new height. Jill's high, sweet voice lowered, becoming a husky growl as rippling muscles exploded into being across her form.

"Nngh! Aaggggghghghh! UUGGGHH!"

It was hard for Nate to watch his crush shift and change, bones extending, tissue forming rapidly across her body, giving her bulk. Jill herself was astounded at the alien and discomforting sensations of being changed; it was like she was being actively *pumped*, inflated with muscle. Her clothing stretched, and to her embarrassment and shock, it actually *shrunk!* Her pale form expanded, and her winter skirt retracted, fusing with her panties and turning red-brown, becoming an animal fur loincloth that covered her woman hood and part of her hips, but not much else. Her shirt receded, shrinking and tightening to form a wrap around her breasts, which were starting to grow.

"F-fuck!" she cried, not being one to swear often. "Speak of the devil, I am growing boobs!"

It was a small compensation within all the strangeness. Her breasts, once flat little A-cups, were bulging and pushing form, becoming large, firm E-cups that stretched the fur

wrap tight. Over her shoulders a furry cap flowed into being, and her hair extended with it, maintaining the same braid but ushering down to the small of her back, becoming even more brilliant, Jill's curls and frizziness reappearing a little to give it a wild, free look that suited her. She gasped as her core tightened, and an impressive eight-pack of abdominal muscles formed there. Her thighs similarly swelled, and her calves became shapely and defined. Her hips widened further, but not so much she looked ridiculous; it was clear she was becoming a beautiful yet incredibly powerful woman. Her biceps erupted, her arm muscles looking strong enough to hold back an ox, yet once again her feminine beauty was somehow only enhanced.

"Oh my God, Jill, you look awesome!" Katy exclaimed, again thankful for the armour that hid his penis away. She was becoming quite a sight.

"It f-f-feels really g-good!" Jill exclaimed, her voice now husky and low, almost sultry. "Like I'm b-becoming more p-powerful!"

"You certainly are that! Lucky!" Gary pitched in, placing her hands on her exaggerated hips and frowning.

Nate simply stared. A silver circlet with a central emerald gem formed upon Jill's head, and a large greatsword in a sheath at her round hip, with a hunting dagger on the other side. Upon her feet were fur footwraps, and between them, the loincloth, the breast wrap, and the cape, that was all she was wearing. She did indeed look like Sonja, and she must've been at least 6'3 in height. She rose to it, standing on two powerful legs, looming over everyone.

"Woah, woah. This is weird. I feel huge. And my muscles!" She actually giggled a little. "I feel kind of confident. I think it's part of the cards, but it's also me too. Man, I could get used to this!"

Nate was struggling to meet her eyes. She looked astonishingly beautiful, a true barbarian warrior princess come to life. More than that, she was also revealing a lot of her muscle-bound body with its perfect curves. She caught him looking, and actually smirked.

"Not so *cute* now, am I?"

"I'll say," he said. He shifted, trying to conceal his hard-on.

Jill decided to not tell him she'd noticed. It was weirdly flattering, and it felt good to actually be sexy. She'd always dreamed of being more attractive, though it was at war with her own nerdiness and work focus, and she'd never found the time. And while she'd never imagined feeling beautiful and sexy in *this* particular way, it was actually empowering. She wished she wasn't so scantily-clad though. She expressed this.

"I feel a little . . . exposed."

"I'll say. You look *hot*," Katy said. "I always had a thing for muscly women, and it appears that male me does too."

"You liked well-muscled men too, now," Gary said in his high tavern wench voice.

"Yeah, but you're lacking in that department now."

"Yeah, yeah, don't I fuckin' know it."

Curious, Jill strutted over to the shelf, where an impressively heavy cabinet sat, piled over with thick books. She leaned down - it was more of a journey to do so now that she had grown ten or more inches in height - and grabbed the shelf.

"Uh, those are expensive!" yelled Katy, standing to attention in his knightly costume, but then his voice went silent: Jill had lifted the entire thing with practised and powerful ease, the books wobbling on top but kept in place. She lowered it, guiding it back down. The whole thing hadn't even caused her to break a sweat. She turned back to the others, hands on her hips, and bellowed a bit of a laugh.

"Wow! Okay, that feels amazing."

"You've got brains *and* brawn," Nate marvelled.

"And boobs," she said cheekily, looking down at the peak of cleavage showing above the fur wrap. "I feel a bit more aggressive too. I don't like competitive games, and this one terrifies me, but is it weird that I kind of feel an urge to win now?"

"Sort of, given the loser could be trapped, unless we figure out something else," Nate replied.

"Hmm, you're not wrong there. I'll make sure to keep this barbarian aggression in check. I might have to lift some things occasionally, though."

It was at this point her stomach gurgled fiercely, growling with hunger. Nate felt similarly; he was also quite hungry.

"Oh . . . I think the change took a lot out of me."

The others agreed, beginning to think on how to order food, but it was then that Gary shot to her feet.

"Oi! I'm a tavern wench, ain't I? Least I can do is rummage up some food, even if it is fucking embarrassing."

"Really?" Katy exclaimed.

The beautiful busty woman blushed. "I got this weird compulsion, alright? Feelin' the need to make us some good hearty stew. Can I see what you got in your kitchen?"

She moved before she even had permission, shuffling down the hall, and capturing the attention of her former girlfriend, who admired the way Gary's bouncy behind swung from side to side in her skirts.

"Okay," Nate said, thinking. "We've got a barbarian from the mountain wood - that's where you landed, Jill. We've got a tavern wench from the small village where Gary ended up. You're a knight, Katy, because you landed near the garrison. I'm seeing a pattern here, maybe. If I can roll a six or seven or eight, I think I'll be okay, and -"

“What the shit! What’s this now!?”

The three of them took to their feet, and Nate was left behind as the valiant knight and speedy barbarian princess thundered ahead. It made him feel a little emasculated, though the sight of his crush now as a busty mountainwoman was making him feel all sorts of thoughts. It was only when he ran much further than he thought he had to that he realised the building had grown. It was bigger now. Katy was astonished as he pulled up to the kitchen, where Gary was surrounded by hanging meats, piles of vegetables, cauldrons and stew pots.

“It’s - it’s like a medieval tavern in here, or something.”

“It’s a lord’s kitchen,” Gary said, looking around. She had a strong urge to use as many ingredients as possible.

“But - how could this be? Has the entire house grown?”

It had, and an exploration by Jill and Nate together quickly confirmed it; it had tripled in size, if not more. It had grown a dancing hall, a series of guest rooms, even an empty stable outside. The technology had also regressed in many places; stone arches and older wooden panelling was evidence, and there were numerous paintings depicting great ancient battles and mighty dragons. There was an enormous room dominated by a lord’s bed, and even a room high up, a rookery for messenger pigeons and ravens.

“How can this be?” asked Katy, astonished, when they all returned. By this point Gary was neck deep in ingredients, working hard with her old-fashioned white apron and tied back hair to make them a lamb and vegetable stew.

“I think it was the earlier card you drew,” Jill said, her mind still sharp even in her barbarian body. “It was something about riches.

“Yes!” Nate exclaimed. He retrieved the card and bounded back up the hall, showing them.

*‘Roll again on doubles, in order to stay mobile,
For doubles sixes gain riches, worthy of a noble’*

“Worthy of a noble. You’re not just a knight, ‘Sir’ Katy - you’re a lord as well! This is your estate. Your manor. Your - well, if it changes much more, it might be your castle!”

Katy didn’t know what to say. His stomach said it for him. With a grin, he looked over to the busy tavern wench making up food.

“You, wench! How long till supper, eh?”

She shot him a dirty look. “Don’t even start, Katy.”

The woman rounded about to continue working the stew, and Katy took a moment to slap her on her nice ass. She squealed, and fumed silently.

“Just wait till your next change, love. I’m gonna mash you with a soup ladle when I gets the chance.”

Between them, Jill and Nate just chuckled. It was hard not to, in such a ridiculous situation. But Nate still worried about his turn.

*'A short and green aspect you shall bear,
To toil away properly in your underground lair!'*

Nate sighed. They were back in the living room, which had expanded appropriately to double its size by the time they returned. They had feasted well on Gary's rather excellent stew, and she had even served them fine mead, which was wonderfully sweet. Jill had managed to restrain her impulse to eat the side sausage with her fingers like a good barbarian warrior, but she had attacked the food with a knife and fork as if it were an enemy. Katy, usually pretty laissez faire when it came to eating habits, was extra mannerly. They had all changed so much, and it made Nate nervous as to what he was becoming. More than once, Katy and Gary had stated that they'd hoped he'd change a lot, just so he could get his just desserts for finding the game.

"I wish I never did," he bemoaned. But it was too late now. And so he had drawn the next card, and found the above writing.

"What's it mean, then?" Gary asked, batting his fiery hair aside and setting his heavy tits wobbling by accident. It was a continual source of frustration for him.

Nate sighed a second time, resigned to what was about to come.

"It means I'm about to become a goblin. A female one. Look, see, I landed in the Jagged Mountains. Goblin territory. At least I moved seven places."

He didn't double over when the changes came. He simply awaited the strange tenseness that followed them.

"Oohhh . . . ahh God this feels weird!"

His body shrunk down, deflating. His skin crawled as hair retracted, but itched even more so as it slowly turned a yellow-green colouration. His spine retracted, and he tensed as each of his limbs became briefly oversized, then reduced down also.

"Holy moly," Katy gasped, "we've all had it weird, but you're literally becoming an actual fantasy species!"

"I kn-know!" he grunted, his nose pulling like taffy forwards, his ears wrenching out to become long and fanned and pointed. "I can f-feel it!"

It was, he thought, perhaps deserved. Goblins were known to lie and steal, and he'd done exactly that to Mr Satler. This was his just desserts. The chickens coming home to roost. He whimpered in a somewhat nasally voice.

"Ohh . . . yep, becoming female alriiigggh!"

The last part was accompanied by a lifting octave as his genitals were absorbed back into his body, replaced by a dark green womanhood. Small breasts pushed from his chest, roughly B-cups in size, but they looked much bigger on his frame due to his general shrinkage; Nate felt as if the world around him was getting bigger as he lost half of his entire height. His brown hair remained, but it spilled out a little longer, before a set of brown leather armour encased his form. His fingers extended, growing talons, and his feet were bare like Jill's.

"God, I've turned into a fuckin' shortstack," he whined, now fully female. "I'm a goddamn she! Fuckity fuck!"

"Um, are goblins known for swearing?" Jill asked, staring down at the little goblin warrior woman. Indeed, she did have the shape of a shapely but incredibly short woman, albeit with a pointed nose and large ears, and green speckled skin.

Nate considered. She *did* feel like screeching invectives. Her voice sounded like that of a heavy cigarette smoker.

"I guess I fucking do," she said. "Damn it. I feel like thieving shit as well. I'm like a walking stereotype."

"OH! I can't IMAGINE how bad that would be!" Gary declared.

The others assented.

"You do look sort of adorable though," Jill said, getting to her knees. Nate embarrassingly realised that even though she was kneeling, she was still easily taller than him. She extended a powerful hand and patted Nate's green hit. "You make a cute goblin woman."

Nate batted her away. "I thought you didn't like 'cute'? Thought it was weak shit."

She shrugged her powerful shoulders. "I don't know, I'm getting a different perspective now, maybe."

"Fucking great. Sorry, that's the goblin swearing."

"Don't worry, I'm pretty sure I can kick your ass."

Nate laughed in response, and realised that his teeth were now all pointed. "Wow, okay. This shit is going to take some getting used to. Let's keep it going so I can change back, or at least into something else!"

With that, Gary took the dice and rolled them.

"Woo! See that? Ten!"

His figurine moved ahead, the miniature grey tavern wench now in the lead, though only four spaces ahead of Katy, who hadn't even had her turn yet. It landed upon another castle.

"C'mon, king maker!"

"The king is in the capital of Erutell, idiot."

"I thought the whole place was Erutell?"

Jill sighed. "It is, but the capital is also called Erutell. It's the final goal."

"Whatever. It's all progress, innit?"

The card slotted up. It was red, the second of its kind after the one that made Jill change her hairstyle. Nate had to hop up onto the table just to see what was happening; Jill helped lift her, much to the new and green female's embarrassment. Gary took the card gingerly, and began to read it aloud in her peasant wench voice.

*'After a day's long adventuring, handing monsters their defeats,
A knight will take a busty wench for a tumble between the sheets.'*

"I don't like the sound of that," Gary mumbled. But already a strange flush of heat was coming over her. She felt drawn to Katy, somehow; his handsome face, his strong muscles, his knightly demeanour. It made her flush, feeling awed for his presence, and she could feel her breasts tingle, her nipples beginning to harden and throb with desire. Her feminine loins began to lubricate, an incredibly lust overcoming her.

Katy, for his part, felt much the same. Whereas he had already felt the oddity of his new penis going hard earlier, now it was practically attempting to buckle the codpiece off his armour. He couldn't keep his eyes off the beautiful and heavy tits on the tavern wench, or the way they were constrained and lifted by her bodice. She had a magnificent ass that he wanted to grope and fondle, and he was overcome by the need to spill his seed inside of her, making a woman of her and a man of himself.

"Shit, I'm feeling real - oh fuck!"

"Me too," Katy said. "I - wow, you look gorgeous. A real lusty peasant beauty."

Jill and Nate looked on in astonishment.

"Er, what the flying fuck is going on?" the goblin questioned.

"It's the damned card!" Gary groaned, drawing closer to the armoured knight. "It's making me horny as hell. Ohhhh, my pussy feels wet and ready as hell. I need a big manly knight to fill it! I need deflowering!"

Katy grabbed her, and the two pressed together, feeling more needy for sex than the two ever had in their lives. Their bodies were almost on remote control.

"I'm sorry, Gary, but I really need to take you!"

He placed a hand around her soft waist, amazed at how much smaller the former alpha male was, and how impressively busty she was; her breasts squished against his armour.

"Oh fuck, this is so wrong. But I need it, *milord*. I need your big sword!"

Neither of them could control exactly how they spoke, but the sentiments were real, though the magic drove their lust. Before Jill and Nate could act, the two of them drew closer, pressing their lips together. Gary was astonished that she had to lift her head to

match her lover's lips, and even more so that his beard hairs felt wonderfully bristly against her soft skin.

And suddenly they were elsewhere, disappeared in a flash of light, leaving Nate and Jill scrambling to find them.

Gary and Katy found themselves in the stable's, lying against one another on the straw. The lust was still high, the heat in their bodies driving them forward.

"Ohhh - God! This is crazy! We should stop!"

But even as Gary said that, she was expertly unbuckling the armour, tearing it off piece by piece and throwing the metallic parts to the ground, before working on the undergarments. Katy, for his part, pulled at the wench's clothing, undoing the ties of her corset, allowing those big beautiful melons to go free, bouncing with each movement.

"I know . . . but I want you too bad. My 'sword' is too hard, and it needs its sheathe!"

Despite how corny and ridiculous the lines were, it made Gary's loins feel as if they were on fire with need. She worked even faster, removing the last straps of armour and dinging them against the wall.

"I don't wanna be fucked like a woman, but I want you to fuck me, *milord!*"

And with that, he was upon her, pulling up her skirts and kissing at her magnificent breasts as she lay back against the straw pile. Katy nibbled at the flesh, and in her throes of bliss Gary pulled her corset apart, allowing her fat nipples to experience the open air, right before the powerful knight began suckling upon them.

"A maiden's chest like a cow in calf!" he exclaimed, repeating his earlier commentary. Each suckle made them both even more aroused, and Gary found herself anticipating the moment the large cock that was snaking out of Katy's trousers to enter her. It felt wonderfully appropriate that they were in a stable, not only for the classic imagery of the tavern wench being taken, but because their shared lust was so animalistic. She wanted a strong beast to suckle on her big teats.

"Katy! I need you! It feels good but I want you to plough me, like a field! Shit, this wench talk is weird but it's making me so horny!"

"I as well, maiden. Call me Kade. Sir Kade."

"I will, Sir! Please! Get in me!"

Their flesh pressed together, 'Kade' now shirtless, enjoying the way his hardened muscle pressed against Gary's supple skin.

"But what to call you?"

"I don't fucking know. Please, the magic is making me need this. It's embarrassing! Just fuck me and get it over with. I need your noble seed inside me!"

Kade smiled, enjoying the flush of heat in her loins, the raw power in her body as she loomed over Gary, who was already spreading his perfect olive thighs, her red hair spilling across the bed in a pose of absolute femininity.

"I think I like you as a Gwynn," Kade said, resting her against a large shawl on top of the straw, to aid in both their comfort.

"Gwynn it is!" she rasped, breathing heavily, her mammoth chest rising and falling. "Just fucking fuck me! The game is making it impossible not to want it!"

"I know!" Kade said, and with that, he fully unbuckled his trousers, letting loose the immense cock. "I can't believe I have this cock, but I am absolutely going to use it. Bet you never thought we would . . . *lie together* this way, did you, Gwynn?"

But Gwynn was already salivating over the incoming manhood, and she reached out her soft hands, gripping its fantastic girth, and pulling it forth against her lower lips. She moaned, feeling its fat head against her sensitive lips, and the moan turned to a wail as Kade surged forth, sliding his impressive dick deep into her slick depths. It was utterly strange and unrecognisable to Gwynn, who had never imagined she would be a woman, let alone one with such massive and sensitive melons in need of a good fucking. She rubbed her bare chest against Kade's, salivating at the sensations of her hard nipples against his pectorals. He in turn began to rock, thrusting slowly in and out of her, grunting in a deep, manly voice.

"I can't . . . stop," he stammered, lost in sensation. "The magic is making me . . . do this."

"S-same," the wench cooed. She was hoping against hope for her friends to barge in and save her, but at the same time she couldn't help but luxuriate in the pleasure. Being penetrated was something entirely different, and yet the build, the sensation of being *filled*, was greater than any pleasure she'd had as a man. She started to wail, clutching him helplessly, *her* knight, *her* Sir Kade.

"Oh! Oohhh! Ohhhh . . . f-fuck me! Don't s-stop! I know it's the magic but I d-don't want it to s-stoooooop!"

Kade grinned, and thrust even deeper. His balls ached with tension, demanding release, but it was much too fun to toy with his former boyfriend and friend, the one who was always so macho now reduced to a needy woman lost in lust.

"I'm going to cum!" he declared.

"Do it, *milord!* Spill your seed inside me! Give me one of your heirs!"

That made Gwynn pause. The magic had made her say it, but before she could even grapple with the terrifying implications of that statement, Kade gave another great thrust, and

she was sent utterly over the edge, climaxing terrifically, clutching her knight for dear life as orgasm after orgasm swept through her. She let loose a cry of ecstasy, feeling the warm jets of semen flooding into her womb, and Kade in turn gasped and grunted, the release coming in a great pressurised burst.

They collapsed against each other, panting, Kade's face buried in those perfect, bountiful tits. They had lain there for nearly ten minutes, unbelieving what they had done, when Jill and Nate burst through the stable doors.

"Finally found you - ah!"

Jill leapt back, nearly bowling over the little goblin woman Nate had become. For their part, Gwynn and Kade covered themselves up hurriedly, both blushing to the extreme.

"It was the magic!" the wench yelled. "The damned fucking curse, I tell you!"

"Gwynn's right, it wasn't - we couldn't - we weren't in our right minds."

"Wait, did you say Gwynn?" Nate asked, keeping her eyes averted despite the magnificence of those immense cow tits. "What the fuck is that about?"

"It's my name now, sort of," Gwynn said, feeling morose. "Kade said it, and now I can't *not* think of myself as Gwynn. I can't even say Ga - say Ga - see what I mean?"

"And I'm Kade, as she said," the knight stated, putting his leather costume on, but leaving the armour. "Erutell has affected us. I swear, as much as I'm enjoying Gwynn's predicament, and even some of this strength, I definitely wouldn't go so far as to have sex in a body like this! I've got this big appendage between my legs that has a mind of its own."

"It's okay, calm down" Liza said, extending her hands to gesture that very sentiment. It never usually worked, but now with her tall stature and commanding presence, they listened. "We all know it's the game. It's making us act our roles, at least a little. We're still us, but the event cards change us in some way. It makes us do things. You don't have to be embarrassed. I mean, my best friend just turned into a female goblin twenty minutes ago."

All eyes turned to Nate, who grinned sheepishly with his toothy maw. She'd been trying to ignore her femininity, but she was also learning that goblins were apparently even hornier than Nate had been as a man, and with more allowances too; she was finding everyone present a feast for the eyes.

"Yeah, it's fucking weird. At least you're still tall as shit," she spat.

"That's true," Kade admitted. "Let's just pretend this never happened and -"

But he didn't finish his sentence. Already, Gwynn was stomping out of the stable and finding her way back inside, her shoulder still exposed much like the sexy game piece that was now hers. The rest followed after her, even mighty Jill a little afraid of her fury. She looked utterly indignant, humiliated that she had just had her 'field ploughed' and been forced to like it. In fact, the images continued to swirl in her head, the post-coital bliss still

present, and it was driving her mad. She was meant to be an athletic gym nut, not some curvy bird serving mead and showing off her tits. At least, that was her thought process.

“Gwynn. Gwynn! Gwynn don’t do anything stupid!” called Kade, and Jill and Nate joined the procession of voices.

Gwynn didn’t care. She stormed into the living room where the fireplace was still roaring, and wrenched the board from the table.

“Can’t destroy the board, eh? You would say that, wouldn’t ya? Well, try *this!*”

With one great throw, she hurled the board into the flames, causing the rest to elicit a yell. Gwynn grinned in triumph as the board was consumed by flames, disappearing from view.

“What the fuck have you done?” Nate said, feeling bolder than usual now that Gary’s male presence was gone. “You stupid fucking moron! We could be stuck like this.”

“Nah, I bet we go right back. Tis’ common sense.”

But the players didn’t turn back, and neither was the board destroyed. The flames parted, and the board was not even lightning up. Tentatively, Jill reached forward a hand, and found the surface cold.

“It didn’t work,” she said. “Nate, you’ve got small fingers, can you help me with this?”

To Gwynn’s disappointment, the two wrenched it out, the little goblin woman finding herself oddly comforted by the feeling of unearthing a ‘treasure’. They placed the board back on the table; nothing had changed.

“Well, it was worth a damned shot,” Gwynn protested, but the rest gave her glares.

“If we make a decision, we make it together,” Kade said, and the stern authority in his voice seemed, impossibly, to cower the busty serving maid, who looked down at the ground, and her own cleavage.

“Guys, there’s a card.”

“But no one rolled.”

“Still,” Nate said, “it’s here. And it’s *purple*. It had Gwynn’s name on it.”

There was a long silence, every eye turning to the maid. She rolled her eyes and picked the card from the slot, reading it to them all.

*‘While it is fun to roll in the hey, and to buck and breed,
Try to destroy the game, and you’ll bear fruit from that seed.’*

“Bear fruit?” she said.

Jill figured it out first, followed by Nate. The smarter pair bit their lips, not wanting to give voice to what they thought might be happening, even as Kade and Gwynn argued over what it meant. It didn’t take long to manifest anyway.

“Oohhhhhh . . . that felt right weird!”

There was a bubbling sensation in Gwynn's gut, down in her belly. It was little at first, but it began to grow, the contents feeling heavy as it developed, her skin feeling tight. She clutched her stomach, breathing heavily as she had during sex, but now in response to something altogether.

"Your stomach," Kade noticed, "It's growing!"

"It's - ahhh - it's getting tight!"

It was indeed. Her belly rounded out, expanding and becoming spherical. It rose and rose, becoming heavier and fuller, and her hips spread out slightly to accommodate them. An ache in both her breasts, and they expanded also, growing yet another cup size, and having a strange sensation of fullness within them. Gwynn seethed, sucking air through her teeth as her curvy body became more and more maternal, and certainly a lot heavier. Her clothing altered, becoming looser to accommodate her expansion in breast and belly, and soon she was lying back on the couch, rubbing her swollen womb, groaning.

"Oohh . . . the fuck is this! I'm gonna explode!"

But even as she said it, the growth slowed, stopped when she reached somewhere around the six month mark of pregnancy, a fact that was now obvious to everyone, including herself. Her breasts were even larger, and as she gripped herself, overwhelmed by it all, a spurt of milk ejected from her left nipple to soak her dress. She grunted.

And if there was any doubt as to her new condition, she felt a sudden shifting in her belly, the alien sensation of life moving within her, the still-developing product of the union between her and Kade. She looked up at him in fear.

"Oh shit! You've knocked me up!"

The group was silent, staring at that rounded belly. As if wishing to break the silence, the infant moved within the former man, and all of them saw her stomach shift to the kicks.

"I've - I've got a noble bastard in my belly!" the tavern wench said.

Still no one knew what to say.

To Be Continued . . .