In the worlds that she created in her spare time, armed with nothing but her keyboard and imagination, Darlene was any number of things. A wizard, a paladin, tens of rogues and bards that defied every stereotype and strummed every trope. Within the confines of her computer and whatever game she fired up on steam, she could be anything that she wanted to be.

But in real life, Darlene was a chubby accountant with low impulse control and a particularly persistent sweet tooth. And quarantine hadn’t done anything to dull her penchant for unconscious snacking.

Over the years spent at a desk job with nothing better to do with her Friday nights, Darlene had slowly begun an expansion outward, but it was her five months working from home that had finally kicked her over the edge. By the time her office was going back to communal work spaces, she was going to clock in at more than two hundred pounds of pure pudgy poindexter!

As much as she liked to blame it on the fact that she didn’t get a lot of exercise throughout the week, or much at all since they’d gone into lockdown, part of accepting the fact that she had a weight problem was reliant in her acknowledgement of the fact that she just ate like shit and hadn’t done anything about it.

Until now, of course.

Once she had split the seat of her widest pair of pants, she hadn’t been left with many alternatives *but* trying to diet. It was either that or resign herself to the fact that she would wind up like Fat Emma in accounting!

And what was the best way for a nerd like her to do something totally out of her comfort zone? Bring it *into* her comfort zone! Which is where she came up with the *brilliant* idea of—

*Diet RPG—the Official Game ™ !*

*NAME:* Darlene Dulling

*CLASS:* Information Technology Expert

*WEIGHT: 251lbs*

Writing out her character sheet had been the best way to get in gear for a campaign against corpulence. She was already off to a bad start, given just how heavy she was getting. None of her office clothes fit anymore. Her belly was too wide and thick, her lovehandles had gotten too meaty, and her ass had gotten too fat for her to squeeze into anything in her closet…

*ARMOR:* New Skirt (+2 legginess), New Blouse (+2 stylishness), Glasses (+3 perception)

It had certainly helped when she framed it this way. After all, she bought new armor for her characters all the time when they outgrew their old sets. Why shouldn’t she have done the same for herself? Even if she had “outgrown” hers in a far more literal sense…

*OBJECTIVE:* Complete 1st day back, eat only at lunch

Sure it seemed like a relatively simple campaign, but she was new at this. In time, she’d be able to handle much more complex and difficult assignments. But for now, just getting through the tutorial was all that she could hope for. She couldn’t level up her stats without beating Part 1!

Or… would she have leveled *down* her stats since she was losing…

Whatever, it’s not a perfect metaphor.

Despite the extra pounds, nobody could say that Darlene looked *bad*. If anything, the extra weight just highlighted how naturally curvy that she was. With her wide hips and flaring thighs, her new skirt was filled to the brim with her supple, lily white cheeks. Her tummy tucked underneath the waist but hidden by the manicured billowing of her purposefully loose blouse, to the untrained eye she might have just looked especially thick, which wasn’t a *lie…*

*ATTRACTION RATING: …6?*

It was always hard to do these things about yourself. But the new haircut had certainly helped!

All the way into the office, towards her long-abandoned workstation, she had been getting stares. Were they good stares, bad stares? The NPCs weren’t exactly going to tell her what was on their minds without engagement, but then they might have seen just how out of breath she was from the slight walk.

*ENDURANCE RATING: 2*

Finally, she’d made it to the IT Department. Checkpoint One accomplished, and now time to rest at a save point—her desk chair.

Darlene plopped down happily, eager to be off of her feet. The new shoes weren’t incredibly comfortable (-1 Speed) but they had gone well to completing the armor set that she’d decided to break out on the first day. After she’d gotten more comfortable, she could afford to switch it up a bit. But for now, it was important that she keep her head high and stay strong.

It was just one day. She could do *anything* for one day.

She played unmodded *Skyrim* for one day, and that had been *way* harder.

“Hey you, glad you finally joined us!”

Fat Emma was perhaps the tankiest character in the office building… by which to say that there was a reason that everyone called her that. With her kegger stomach that barreled out underneath her long dresses and her fat arms bulging through the sleeves in her sweaters and coats, there was little reason to wonder why.

*DEFENSE RATING: 8*

*SPEED: 1*

“It’s Darlene, right? Gosh, it’s been so long!”

>It HAS been so long—it’s so good to see you!

>Not now, I’m trying to work.

>>[PERCEPTION 5] What’s in the box, Emma?

“Oh these? The manager ordered donuts for everyone. Something like a welcome back present.” Emma shifted the pink box from underneath her meaty arm wing to out in front of her tank belly, “I got my box, but I don’t think I should eat them all—I don’t know if you can tell, but I put on the Quarantine Fifteen!”

Emma’s double chin rippled as her belly shook with laughter.

“Do you think you could do me a favor and split these with me? You’d really be doing me a favor!”

*SPLIT THE DONUTS WITH EMMA?*

*>NO*

*>>YES*

***—FAILURE—***