

Digital Destiny - Part 2

By TheSpiralledEye

In a world run by a huge AI that predicts the compatibility of two individuals on a quantum level everybody simply waits to meet their perfect match, rather than wasting time dating. But for Victor things take a strange turn when he is paired with another, straight man. The AI refuses to believe he is wrong and so to 'fix' the problem, transforms Victor into a woman so he can be with his 'soul mate'.

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The world outside the train was rushing past as Victor stared out. His hands were curled into fists, no matter how much he cut his new nails they always seemed too long and sharp compared to what he was used to. Or maybe it was just that his palms were softer now; he couldn't be sure. After three weeks as a woman and too many doctors to count he was at the end of his rope. Not a single one would consider changing him back.

"According to CogniPlex you're in denial."

"It's only been three weeks, maybe come back and apply in a few years..."

"CogniPlex wouldn't have changed you if it wasn't the correct thing to do..."

None of them would even put him on a waiting list! All because CogniPlex insisted he was supposed to be a woman. All so he could be with Charlie, his "soulmate" who he'd not even spoken to since walking out of his apartment that first day.

Because what was he supposed to do? They had basically decided they weren't going to let the AI mess with them anymore. CogniPlex may have been in charge but it wasn't against the law for people to date other people or not stay with soul mates if they didn't want to. Sure, he'd never heard of it happening but it must, right? If this had happened to them they couldn't be the first.

He could see his face half reflected back in the glass of the train window; he would look pretty if he didn't have such a bitter look on his face.

"Excuse me, miss. Are you alright?"

It took Victor a moment to realise the person was talking to him; that had been happening a lot lately. At first he'd bitten back but now he just accepted it; he was too tired to argue with a stranger right now.

"Fine." he sighed. "This is my stop."

It wasn't, but he didn't care. He felt like walking anyway, he needed to burn this frustration somehow. His heels clicked on the hard ground as he did so; like the world's most personal and irritating metronome. Crates upon crates of female clothes had arrived at his apartment three days after the change; a gift from CogniPlex no doubt. The delivery notice said the outfits were free samples organised by the government for his recent transition, to help him find what he liked.

He'd thrown the note in the garbage and staunchly ignored the clothes for almost a week until he finally caved and started using them. He hated to admit it but he needed the support of a bra and wearing his old clothes was just making him depressed. Taking off his shirts every day to find the chests stretched beyond repair was wearing on him.

He hadn't quite worked up the courage to try any dresses or skirts yet; the truth was the idea was more intimidating than it should have been. Wearing the tight fitting jeans and tank tops CogniPlex provided felt nice. Really nice actually but the last thing he wanted was to start enjoying being in this body. He refused. He didn't want to give the AI the satisfaction; if it even felt emotions, which Victor doubted.

He was so caught up in his thoughts he didn't realise where he was until a voice called out.

"Victor?"

He froze for a moment before turning, Charlie, holding several bags of groceries, was in the middle of the sidewalk blinking at him in shock.

"Charlie." He said dumbly, before looking up and seeing a familiar apartment.

He hadn't even noticed he was walking here till now.

"...Did you want to come in?"

"Yeah. I think I do.

~

Charlie didn't know what to do. Victor was sitting in his living area again, drinking a cup of coffee and looking damn near radiant. It seemed almost cruel, how the AI had turned him into his ideal woman right now to the pert mouth. Was CogniPlex hoping that if it made Victor into his dream girl physically they would just fall in love?

They had joked about him finding Victor attractive but jokes were one thing, reality was another. He had to keep reminding himself that Victor absolutely did not want him and was still not attracted to men even if his body had been changed. Even CogniPlex had its limits. It could change Victor physically but not deep down.

“And none of them will listen.” Victor continued. “I just...I don't know. Everybody is treating me with kiddie gloves, like I'm some poor, repressed woman who hasn't accepted herself yet when I'm not!”

Charlie desperately wanted to say the right thing but had no idea what that was. So he did the same thing he always did when he got nervous; he cooked. By the time Victor was fully done venting they had a proper feast cooked with an odd mix of Japanese sushi and pasta, because that's what he'd reached for while only half paying attention.

“Marinera and California rolls, odd mix.” Victor joked.

He had a cute smile, Charlie wondered if he'd always had that dimple on his left cheek or if that had been part of the change. Either way it was endearing. And he couldn't help but burn with pride and Victor ate the odd mix of dishes with gusto.

“How the hell did you make these two work so well together?”

“Talent.”

“That's not an answer.”

“That's all you're getting.”

“Oooh, I do love a man of mystery.”

Victor giggled and Charlie bit the inside of his cheek to try and stop from blushing. Dammit! Stop being so damn attractive!! CogniPlex had gotten one thing right at least, their personalities seemed to be a perfect match and now that Victor was physically female it was damn torture having him so close and being unable to take the next step. All Charlie wanted to do was lean over and kiss him. He chanted a mantra in his head.

'Victor doesn't want you. He's a man.'

He just had to keep reminding himself of that and they would be fine. The smooth sound of his letter flap opening made them both turn as several bits of mail gently landed on the doormat. The one on top caught both of their eyes; it was stamped with CogniPlex's symbol of woven wires.

Charlie walked over and held the envelope in his hands nervously; it wasn't every day you get a letter with that stamp. For most, it was their summons to the matchmaking centre or to tell them about their perfect job. But since both of those things had already come to pass for him, Charlie was at a loss.

"Well?" Victor said expectantly, "Are you going to open it?"

"May as well."

Charlie couldn't be sure what he was expecting but it sure wasn't a travel itinerary and boarding passes.

"These are flights to Tokyo....then Osaka." Victor said.

"And hotel bookings for three weeks, and day trips." Victor added, "Cherry blossom viewings, a day trip to Mount Fuji, cooking classes, even a pass to Universal Studios."

"My dream trip to Japan..." Victor muttered. "That bastard Ai...do you think this is its way of apologising?"

"Maybe." Charlie shrugged. "Did you want to go?"

"Something tells me when I get home I'll have an email approving some leave I never applied for." Victor rolled his eyes. "So why not?"

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Of course the airline 'lost' his luggage thanks to a computer glitch. Of course they just so happened to have a near identical bag which they assured Victor must have been his, no matter how many times he insisted that the suitcase full of dresses couldn't possibly be his. By the time he gave up and took it his mood was thoroughly soured; if CogniPlex intended for this trip to be an apology it has certainly soured the waters already.

"I'll buy you new clothes." Charlie promised as they made their way to the hotel.

"But I am sweaty from the flight." Victor pouted, "I really just wanted to change."

"It's pretty warm for spring in Tokyo, why don't you just pick the least offensive dress and wear that till we can go shopping?"

Victor sighed; Charlie was right. Even when they hopped off the train and started walking in the open air he found himself too warm in the jeans and blouse he'd worn on the plane. He hated to admit it, but having the freedom to wear something as light and flowy as a sundress without judgement was tempting. They checked in and Victor opened the door to their hotel room and swore.

"That son of a bitch!"

"Some of a motherboard?"

"Stop being funny while I am trying to be pissed off."

The room was obviously a honeymoon suite; one giant bed, a bottle of champagne in a silver bucket of ice, roses on every surface. It was the single most romantic room Victor had ever seen. The two of them shared a look.

"What's the bet every other room is booked out?" Charlie deadpanned.

"Oh it's not even worth trying."

Victor hefted his suitcase up onto the bed and flicked it open, grabbing the first dress that looked comfortable along with some fresh underwear and headed for the shower. The

bathroom was just as romantic as the bedroom, with a huge spa tub obviously designed for two. Thankfully, there was also a normal shower for him to use.

Even after all these weeks Victor hadn't gotten used to showering as a woman. He seemed to have all these cracks and crevices that he wasn't used to. Every time he stepped under the spray and felt the water running between his ass cheeks he would shiver; surely the skin there wasn't as sensitive before.

After the usual awkwardness of drying his oddly sensitive body and fiddling with the bra he slipped into the white and pink sundress and sighed in relief. It did feel nice; having the soft fabric swishing around his ankles felt oddly freeing. He walked back out into the room and found Charlie standing by the window.

“There is a sushi train just down there! We could try some authentic Ja-ah...wow.”

His words trailed off and Victor blushed watching the man looking him up and down for a moment before averting his eyes. Victor wasn't sure how to feel; flattered that Charlie was attracted to him, or weirded out. He leaned more towards the former and that only made him feel more confused.

“Should we go for lunch?” He said and Charlie snapped out of his stupor.

“Yeah let's!”

The sushi train was actually a lot of fun. The awkwardness of the hotel room was forgotten as Charlie began to excitedly explain each and every roll and ingredient to Victor. He had such passion in his voice Victor couldn't help but get swept up in it; there was something so fascinating about listening to somebody talk about the things they loved. The fact that Charlie had such a deep, soothing voice only made it easier.

They ate and laughed, not noticing the time slip them by and the sun set. By the time they were on their third bowl of matcha ice cream and sake Victor realised that this was a date in all but name. The fact that they were returning to their overly romantic hotel room didn't help things either.

“...I can sleep on the floor?” Charlie offered.

Victor wondered if he only offered because he looked like a woman now, if they were both male they would have played rock, paper, scissors for the bed or something. There was a flash of irritation at the thought but he just didn't have the energy to maintain it.

“Let’s just share, we’re both adults. I refuse to let that AI run our lives...any more than it usually does.”

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“Alright, Charlie. Just sharing a bed with a woman. Platonically. Well a woman’s body. Just a body, remember that. Victor isn’t a woman he just looks like one. A hot one. Fuck. Right uhhhh, stop talking to yourself fuck.”

He was pacing back and forth in his boxers; holding a shirt in his hands unsure if he should put it on or not. Normally he slept in just boxers, so it would be weird to put on a shirt. But on the other hand, he didn’t want things to be weird.

The door to the bathroom began to turn and in a panic Charlie threw the shirt back into his suitcase and dove under the blankets, covered all the way to his chin. Victor stepped out of the bathroom in a slinky silk nightgown; Charlie could see his nipples pressing against the front; he wasn’t wearing a bra.

“Why are you rugged up like it’s winter?” Victor asked with a curious smile.

“I’m cold.” Charlie lied lamely.

‘Don’t get a boner. Don’t get a boner. For the love of all that is holy Charlie. No. No. Get. A. Boner.’

He turned his back on Victor and curled on his side just to be safe.

“Well...goodnight.” Victor said.

Charlie felt the mattress dip as he slipped into bed and got comfortable. They weren’t touching but Charlie swore he could feel the wheat from Victor’s back against his own as he flicked off the light from the bedside switch.

They were in darkness with the muffled sounds of Tokyo outside. Charlie could feel the blankets tugging and moving gently against him as Victor breathed.

It was going to be a long night.