

Virtual Succubus

[Download File](#)

Thus, when I first met my lover, he was a female grad student called Cindi. Also a professor in a virtual classroom. Also a man called Rhyys. Also a top-level university administrator. Also a cyborg called Plex. Also a devout Catholic. Also a sadist called Gandore. Also a devoted husband and father. Also a very sad, very frustrated small-town inadequate person with a need to exploit and control. For more than three years I was mesmerized by him despite the open bewilderment of friends and family, who couldn't imagine what I saw in such a homely character. But none of us guessed the truth: that I had given three years of my life and promised the whole of my future to a sociopath who preys on others for his own gain without regard to the consequences for his victims. Another description would perhaps be "succubus," a demon who assumes female form to have sexual intercourse with men in their sleep, though in his case, it is in order to have sex with men online. He is a shape shifter who molds himself into whatever is needed and constantly searches for new forms to take. Although a familiar type in the flesh, his ease in setting traps online makes him something new: a cybersuccubus. And the peculiarities of his practice make him very hard to accuse. In 1995 I began researching a novel set in the online community of LambdaMOO, a virtual space in which several people in different locations can talk to one another online by typing simultaneously, creating a constantly moving screen that shows short, abrupt sentences that manage to convey personalities and emotions at a surprisingly complex level. In a MOO (a multiuser domain that is object oriented), words are all you are -- and so the more adept your language, the more effective your presence. In this setting, on a day in November 1995, I was type-talking with a female postgraduate student bearing the fanciful online name of Cindi and a description to match. ("A 5-foot-10 green-eyed redhead with a runaway imagination and a fuzzy idea of the line between virtual and real. She runs five miles or so every morning to make sure all the pizza she eats doesn't take up residence. Her hair is short enough that her earrings can dangle when she walks.") She introduced me to one of her friends, a middle-aged chemistry professor recently promoted to a powerful administrative position at his private Connecticut university. "All his students love him!" she told me enthusiastically. His online name was Rhyys. The powerful effect that Rhyys had on me was his apparent presence in my previous books. In my first novel, "Correspondence," a woman is transformed into a software virus permeating her cyborg lover's body. In my second, "Water," the main character imagines a man into existence with the power of her desire. In another, the characters are attracted to each other purely by the power of words, just like the text interface of MOOs where words are all you are. Thus, I felt that I had written this man several times already, and now here he was manifested in the sometimes-virtual, sometimes-real flesh. My new novel turned into a mixture of invented and real online experience. Rhyys (not, of course, his real name) and I were leading a heady life, logged on for hours every night, type-talking endlessly, exchanging histories, exchanging intimacies. We experimented with programming new environments and other

personas. I recorded our often bizarre interactions, writing them into my book, and if they sometimes seemed pretty strange, they were real for us even if nobody else would ever believe them. We exchanged genders. We invented new genders. We created virtual cyborg bodies and played in them. We built laboratories, caves and whole sequences of rooms, all programmed into the ever-changing textual interface of a MOO. By now, I was absorbed and obsessed by him: his imagination, his eroticism, his intensity. When we were together in the flesh and I looked into his face, I could see it shifting from male to female, from softness to hardness, from dream to reality. I could not get enough of him. He had become my only muse. I dedicated my novel to "My Beloved Technician." I wanted to be with him and write about him forever. Dan focused on keeping calm as he moved further inside. He knew it was just a game, just virtual reality, but at times like this it seemed so damn real. He shrugged to wipe away the sweat trickling down his neck. There, the light source - some sort of glow stone, set into a torch bracket in the wall. And there was another one further down, next to an old wooden door, casting yellowish shadows down the narrow hallway. Dan closed the distance, glanced behind him (just to double check), and put his ear up against door. Nothing. Maybe the place was abandoned? Or better yet, a treasure stash? Could he be that lucky? He eased open the door, straining his eyes for any signs of movement. I'm impressed by both the thoughtfulness of the author, meshing the VR-game and the real sensations of the protagonist into a blurred combination, and by the author's vision of the succubus and her temptation. Before this story, I'd never even considered how, while the physical effects of a game could be simulated by VR and not carried over to the real world, the mental effects on a person's personality are distinct to that person, and unaffected by whether it's a game or it's real. The succubus, too, is written expertly. She is disarming from the very start, suggesting innocently that the protagonist tell her about himself, subtly interrogating him for all the information she could use to further bewitch him and use him for her ends in a way that to him seems comforting and lovingly inquiring. Her running her fingers through the protag's hair (both at the middle and end) is an affectionate and disarming motion whose comfort helps clear one of his own thoughts, and it has a hint of dominance to it, the way a mother might lay her boy's head on her lap and stroke his hair to keep him calm and complacent in a hospital waiting room. She rewards him for obeying and pleasing her by stroking his ego (very good, good boy). When she understands that she can use him and his knowledge for her own ends, she ramps up his arousal to blend his mind into a suggestible mush, offering him gentle affirmations that this is how it feels when he pleases her and submits to her, convincing him that only she can give him this, and convincing him to keep her and this memory in his thoughts all the time, effectively using his extreme arousal and comfort to hypnotize him into addiction and pavlovian submission to her. In Virtual Succubus, you enter a contract with a dominant succubus and offer her complete control over your urges. She'll learn everything about you and deice what you will have to do to earn your release. This is an AI-driven jerk-off-instruction game. The AI will direct you to jerk off even if you're allowed to blow your precious load. You are in total control of the succubus and everything, including when and how you jerk off, is up to them. Earlier in 2000, we signed our biggest deal with Succubus Corp., a major gas utility. Phase I would be implementing existing functionality. VPC had helped as a reference, but I'm guessing it was the wildly optimistic promises, timelines, and budget-friendly price of Phase II that sealed the deal. The thinking was that we might not make any money, but they'd cover the development costs. Then we'd starting making the big bucks, or at least that was the thinking. Weeks earlier, we had an event to celebrate the "merging and e-merging" of our company. We would be joining forces with a virtual company that controlled our IP and was bankrolled by a real estate company. Hedley would leverage the parent company's credit to swing a sublet of Alcoa's former headquarters on the 52nd floor of the second-tallest building downtown. The mayor, who was on hand to say a few words, seemed to be a bit suspicious of our projected revenues of \$250 million in just a few years, and paused a moment for a sideways glance as he spoke the numbers. A number of recently bestselling books will attest to the many pitfalls of scaling up even the most successful small companies. But reality was never a significant input to planning decisions, so why should we let it start interfering now? A number of authors,

including John Covach and especially Edward Macan, have investigated the links between art music and progressive rock. This article builds on and extends such work by positing, defining, discussing and dissecting a hybrid genre I term virtual opera. Exemplified by such albums as The Who's Tommy (1969) and Quadrophenia (1973), Genesis's The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway (1974) and Frank Zappa's Joe's Garage (1979), each of which is subjected to detailed examination, virtual operas find their ideal site of performance between the ears of individual listeners, rather than on stage or screen. In each case, the aural and visual dimensions of the albums combine to create multi-layered musico-dramatic narratives, freed from the usual performance constraints associated with either opera or rock.

Virtual Succubus

21f597057a