Admittedly not too many big and tiny interactions. This is mostly me attempting something scary? Sorta? For Halloween after I saw a prompt on twitter merely saying Russian roulette but with shrink ray… sooooooooo here we are. A short quick 3,500 words where I attempt to be clever and probably fail miserably. Oh well, I had fun

Shrinking Roulette

“Enter the chamber.”

Six people entered a chamber. The place was dimly lit, and bare save for a round table with six seats and a Fischer price looking toy gun at its center. They could already guess what the voice wanted before it spoke again, but none moved without its permission.

“Take a seat. I’m sure all of you are familiar with a classic game called ‘Russian Roulette.’” They all swallowed lumps in their throats. All eyes were on the gun, but given it wasn’t just some revolver there was curiosity mixed in with the fear. What did it do? Many also started wishing they’d never signed the waiver promising good fortune if they came to this shady place, but when you’re desperate and living on the streets you take any offer given.

“For those that might not, it's simple. Pick the gun up, one by one, put it to your head and pull the trigger. Fret not, while it is loaded, it will not kill you. Do not interrupt another’s turn. Do not attempt to cheat. Anyone doing anything we don’t like will be properly punished. I hope you all understand.” If the gun didn’t kill you then what did it fire?! Mere blanks? Was this all some sick prank?

“Now, at your leisure someone pick it up and do it. Once it’s done, the game continues counter clockwise.”

A jackal made a mad dash for the gun. His hand, at the speed of a cobra strike, grabbed it up. “There’s no way it’ll be the first shot!” He sneered, smiling as he put the barrel to his head. Without hesitation he pulled the trigger and then was simply gone. The breaths of everyone in the room were seized as the man was just… vaporized. There was seemingly nothing left. The gun without a hand to hold it clattered to the table. On its side a screen showed displaying -cooling- then followed with -cycling chambers- and finally -Ready-

A guard appeared from the darkness. He moved to the seat the disappearing man had been in. Those closest watched him grab something in the chair, their eyes wide. The rest of the table would join them once the guard set a small glass box on the table then dropped something inside.

The man hadn’t just disappeared. The piece of monstrous technology had shrunken him down instantaneously. He stood only two inches tall, weeping and screaming at how much larger his world was. At least, that’s what the remaining contestants assumed. Small and in a container like he was, it was hard to hear anything.

“Th-This is sick… twisted!” One bunny woman shouted at the guard. He paid her no mind and simply returned to the darkness awaiting the next shrinking.

“Rachel, is it?” The intercom spoke again, using her name she’d signed. “The paper you signed was very clear. Anything we ask. Then you attain wealth as a reward if you win.  You all agreed to -anything- if anyone is twisted it’s you.”

“You know people like us are desperate to escape our lives in cardboard boxes! Don’t you try to pin this on us!!” A border collie jeered.

“Ah, but maybe if most of you hadn’t ruined your own lives in the first place you wouldn’t be here? Tell me Alex, what’s it like to just drink away a small fortune passed onto you by your parents? We know all your histories too. Rachel the gambling addict. A couple of you drank yourselves into this position and another couple thought a life of crime would payout until it didn’t. Really only one of you here was dealt a bad hand and doesn’t deserve this. Not that I care… but it’s interesting to note.”

“Before we finally continue, let me explain your prize. The winner will be given the promised wealth along with the other contestants.” All eyes snapped to the tiny man as they all realized what the intercom was saying. Money and possibly five tiny anthros to be friends… pets… even slaves to the most depraved. Complete dominance over another anthro to do with as they pleased. To be as kind or terrible. “That is, unless you try telling the general public about any of this. Then you will join them and all of you kept for future experiments. In a way I didn’t lie. At least if someone nice wins. I’m sure life tiny with them would be better than a box… well unless of course a more sadistic individual wins? Maybe if you don’t like who you’ll end up with we can make an arrangement to be our Guinea pig till your expiration? For now though…. Enough jibber jabber, let’s continue the game. We’ll move on clockwise now. Any of you may pass if you’d like, but the consequence will be you getting shrunk anyways.”

The contestants all questioned why they’d even bother saying that then. Why not just roll the dice at that point?

The next man grabbed the device after long hesitation. He was a shaking, sweaty mess… and who could blame him? The heel turn came when he snapped it at the border collie who yelped in surprise. His hesitation was gone and he pulled. Many expected either one of two things. That he’d shrink him or that a guard would stop his actions. Instead the laser fired out the back hitting its wielder  and reducing him. Unlike the previous individual he didn’t stop. Those close by watched him just disappear from existence.

“Ahh, how nice to have such an early example of what happens should you cheat. While the gun will only fire if you pull the trigger here in the booth I have control of how it reacts and I’m as fast as any of you who might have a quick draw. I control its direction and how much it affects you. Hmm hmm, so unless you wish to know what it’s like to live on a planet sized atom do not break the rules.”

With two of six already eliminated, those remaining now felt they fully understood the rules. No matter what it was all going to be left up to chance. The gun cooled then cycled then reset once more. Hesitantly the sheep was next and took the weapon. She started to sweat, panting up a storm as she raised it to her head. She looked ready to puke when she finally pulled and sighed in relief as nothing happened. With the utmost care, as if fearing simply setting it down would trigger a reaction she returned the gun to the table’s center. For a while they all stared at it until the impatient intercom spoke.

“Next, or be shrunk anyways. I do not have all day.”

The bunny scrambled to pick it up since she sat next to the sheep. She’d rather take the gamble then just automatically lose. Yet at the same time she had a smiggen more confidence than the others. She took the shot at herself quickly and returned the weapon as nothing happened. Most everyone else now thought she was a bold, fearless one. Merely she knew who’d be the next victim.

Rachel once had made a living off of gambling and used her busty body to maintain that lifestyle if she went on a losing streak. Drooling males always loosened their wallets for a playboy bunny. This lifestyle though fell apart the older she became. In her forties the horny men would more often turn their nose at her, seeking younger bodies. She always believed it wouldn’t matter. That one day she’d hit it big playing slots.  Then she did… and instead of keeping it together she kept going, aiming higher and higher. Her gambling addiction consumed her… and condemned her. Now she sat here with everyone else in one final gamble. This time however was different. Not because her life of being at normal size was at stake, but because the house was in her favor.

All those at the table had enhanced characteristics of their respective animal. None of those would help here. Her hearing however was far better than theirs. When the gun first was sent into cooling she could hear the chambers as they rotated distinctively. When the second that fired tried to cheat she listened again and heard a more hollow noise and more so a thunk in the bottom of the reload chamber. She pictured it like a real revolver. Six chambers. If she were right then that thunk would be the third round. When the sheep and her took their turns they were duds. Now she watched the reindeer with ferocity. If he was shrunk and she was proven correct she could predict this game. It was still luck however. Depending on how the gun cycled its chambers when reloading it would decide her fate as a winner or shrinkee.

The reindeer grabbed the gun up and gritted his teeth. Pressing it against his head he let out a shout and pulled. That shout became little squeaks from his seat. Like before a guard came and moved him to the box with his fellow shrunken player. Three were left now. A sheep, a border collie, and a bunny.

Rachel beamed at the gun. The chambers cooled. They cycled and she waited with baited breath hoping they rolled in her favor because even if she could hear it if they came up bad her sensory prowess didn’t matter.

The thunk… sounded like it was the sixth chamber.

The bunny’s fur somehow paled. Despite having Snow White fluff she lost even more color. The order was currently the collie, the sheep, then her, meaning she’d be the sixth to fire after the first rotation. No matter what she would be set to shrink.

Looking at the other remaining two players besides her it was clear that the border collie was like her, an addict that’d thrown his life away except on alcohol instead of the slots. Even the loudspeaker had mentioned it, but even now he reeked of alcohol what little money he scrounged up only went to his addiction instead of bettering himself. If he won there’s no telling what he’d do to them. A literal mad dog… Then there was the sheep. A woman who despite their dirty appearance looked as soft as the fleece on their body. Looking only in her twenties and like she’d been given the worst luck in life. The odd one out the head honcho had noted back when this had begun. She listened closely, trying to discern the sheep’s heartbeat from her own. It didn’t follow the rhythm of someone filled with guilt. It had to be her.  Looking back at the gun she decided it was time to take one last gamble. This time putting her life on the line in hopes that even if shrunk it would be safe and comfortable. While the chambers might cycle in the sheep’s favor anyways after a recharge it was too risky. If she was going to shrink anyways why not see if she could force a favorable outcome?

“Play or be shrunk anyways Rachel.”

The rabbit paused, she hadn’t noticed it was her turn. Again without hesitation she grabbed the gun, fired, and set it back down. She heard the weighted chamber hit three. For sure, the next two empty slots would be stolen by the others.

Thinking back to how the “host” spoke about skipping… there had to be a reason he mentioned it. The two others took their turn while she tried to fathom why. Again it became her turn.

Unable to stall any longer she had to just roll the dice on it this one last time.

“I choose to skip,” Rachel sighed, hanging her head paws clasped praying she was making the right move.

“Those rabbit ears truly are more than show…” the loudspeaker announced. Rachel flinched fearing now she’d be called out for cheating and would be reduced to an atomic size, but nothing happened. Only silence. As she’d hoped she hadn’t broken the rules and furthermore a guard came from behind and somehow without the gun made her shrink. Confirming all her suspicions and guaranteeing the sheep’s victory. She was collected and dropped into the tiny box with the others. Inside with them she could hear them murmur about her decision, but chose to keep her focus on the remaining contestants. Gaze upon their now massive size in awe… and fear.

“Mr. Alex, it is your turn.”

“What the fuck?! No! What’s going on?! There’s clearly some bullshit happening here! She cheated! She knows the next shot is going to be a shrink! You even fucking know!!! Why else speak?!” He snarled, bearing ferocious fangs at the loudspeaker.

“Maybe I do… maybe I don’t? I can’t really prove it. We’ve been watching and listening and there’s no obvious signs. Only a theory and regardless of what you think of me I am fair. Without blatant, obvious visuals of illegal play I cannot act on mere… speculation. Contestant has skipped. It is your turn next. You must go or suffer penalties. Skipping is pointless as it automatically would declare the sheep the winner.”

Not liking that answer Alex went into a frenzy. The guards began to jump him the moment he tried to stand up from his seat. His goal was to grab the box of tinies. Giving Rachel a frightening glimpse into a future that could have been. Maybe he hoped they could be used as a shield for bargaining, but these well trained watch dogs already had him restrained and the only thing allowed to be left running was his mouth as it shot slurs and screams. The tinies and the last contestant watched until a new sound was heard. High heels clacking on the floor. They all gasped seeing a coati anthro scientist holding a briefcase walk out from the darkness. Laying the case on the table she grabbed up the gun and pressed the muzzle into Abbot’s forehead.

“Goodbye Mr. Abbot, thank you playing, enjoy the vast expanse of the atomic realm for not finishing,” she said with a devilish smirk and a trigger pull. Like always it was instant. One moment he was there… the next gone. If the scientist was good on her word he was lost on an atom sized planet. A guard took the gun then. The scientist took her seat at the table across from the sheep. “Now let us talk with you… winner, or shall I use your name instead, Amber?”

The lamb fidgeted in her seat. Clearly this was the announcer on the intercom and her physical presence didn’t sway any fears… only heightened them. “T-Talk?”

“About the reward of course! Oh and the strings attached,” pulling the case over she popped it open revealing… a spray bottle? Picking up the box she dosed its now squealing contents with a few shots before handing it over to the lamb who looked at them concerningly. The tinies were choking on the fumes made by the liquid, said liquid was being absorbed into their very skin. “Fert not. That makes your new toys much more durable. Wouldn’t want to accidentally squish them after all! Unless you do want to then enough force will pop them like-“

“I-I Uhm g-get it, th-thanks?” Amber whimpered not wanting anymore of those terrible visions in her brain.

“You’re welcome!” The scientist laughed without a care. Truly their lives meant nothing to her. “That’s the first, the next is on its way. A ride to your new home. You may keep it or buy another if you like. It’s even going to have a one to one real life like dolly house for your new dolls to live in. Unless you know, you wish to-“

“Thank you, I get it!” The lamb snapped, finally showing even she could have anger. She really just wanted to be far away from this monster already, and no doubt her new tinies did too.

“So testy! Fun to see even a little lamb can have a fierce side haha,” laughed the coati. Even now she was playing twisted games messing with the sheep’s emotions. “Let’s go over the strings… obviously you will not speak about this to anyone. Should you try to… believe me, we’ll not only find a way to silence it before it goes fully public but also capture you and anyone who knows. This shrinking tech is only a fraction of what we’re capable of. For your tinies you may do with them as you please. Eat them, crush them, make them pets… don’t, we could care less, but as for them, if you ever attempt to escape from your new lamb captor we will find you too. Your new, permanent size will not keep you hidden, are we all clear?”

The lamb and tinies nodded. Grinning from ear to ear the vile woman stood up and waved goodbye to them. “Then this is farewell for now. Please remain seated until your ride arrives to escort you to your new home. An assistant will arrive tomorrow to give you your new identity along with a bank account of a hundred million tied to it. I do hope you’ll use it wisely. If not, you and I can get to play science with each other again!”

The sheep tried to hide in her seat at that suggestion. No matter what she was not going to go broke ever again if it meant winding up in that witch’s care. At the very least she finally left, leaving her alone with her new tiny roommates. Carefully she tilted it on its side letting the tinies walk out onto the table if they wished. Only the bunny did, the others were still too afraid of their larger world. This Rachel was the only one she wished to fully talk to right now regardless.

“Why did you do that?”

The rabbit gazed upon her giant captor, marveling at her size. Up close now she truly felt how puny she was. Truly this was going to be her life now. It made her feel rather worthless. Still like gambling it looked interesting. Smiling, she answered, “I could hear everything. The rotation of the chambers. I knew which one was loaded. I knew who would be the next to shrink. That round, it was the sixth so no matter what I would be the one losing, so I do what I do best, gamble my life away. Sure things might have gone your way on the next cycle but… why not see if I could weigh things in my favor and guarantee your win? If this is going to be my life now why not make it as comfortable as I can? At least, I hope you won’t be cruel?”

“N-No! Never! I’d reverse this is all if I could. Even despite being considered nothing by others for so long I can’t wish something like this on someone, but I’m also not sure if I’m the best to take care of you. It’s a miracle I learned how to talk, I can’t read, I’ve been running around the streets since I was eight. I know so little…”

Rachel smiled again and walked over to sit on the arm the sheep had lain on the table. Her fuzzy fleece was indeed warm and welcoming. “Then in return for your care we’ll teach you. How old are you?”

“Twenty… two.”

“Hmhm, fascinating, I’m just old enough to be your mother. I myself am forty-four. You’ve really survived on those hard streets for a long time. It’s more a miracle you’ve retained this gentle demeanor. Though small and rather useless, it seems that despite our size we can still help you by teaching you many things. Little pocket encyclopedias about the world. How to read, and even what not to do so you don’t make the same mistakes we did.” The other tinies, the reindeer and the jackal finally exited the box to stand behind Rachel and nod. They agreed that they would help. Three lefts together could make a right.

Teary eyed Amber sniffed, “I just want to hug you all, b-but I think that might be scary…”

“Yeah, as comfortable as I am sitting on you, I don’t think we’re ready for that even if we are squish proof. You’re still a daunting person at this size.”

A guard approached, interrupting their nice moment. “Ma’am the vehicle has arrived , please collect your toys and follow me.”

Although Amber glared at the faceless individual, she didn’t waste her breath to correct him. Laying a palm down she allowed the tinies to climb aboard which they did without pause. Holding them close she followed the guard to an unmarked black SUV. Ready to go to her new home with a new family and see what the future would bring.