## Levi's Quest – Preview Chapter

By: Indigo Rho

A symphony of typing, copying, and phone calls drifted through the air of the office—the sounds of profits and productivity. It was a thing of beauty to Rico. He could hear stocks rising and bank accounts growing by the second.

Employees darted out of the white lion's path. He adjusted his tie and the collar of his dark green suit, not slowing down at all. Appearances were everything in the business world. An executive of his stature wouldn't be caught dead with a creased outfit. Without an impeccable suit he'd merely be another of the nameless drones working away in the cubicles he passed.

Rattling from behind Rico made him raise a brow. "What are you riled up about now, Decker?"

The rattling ceased. A rattlesnake in a gray suit strolled up beside him, scowling. "I don't remember this damn lunch meeting being on the schedule."

"It's been on the schedule forever."

"Since when?"

"Since *forever*."

"Well obviously someone fucked up, because I didn't get the memo," Decker said.

"Save the hissing for later, we've got business to deal with," Rico said. Decker was a valuable asset, but his temper was disruptive.

They walked through a set of double doors into the conference room. Polished dark wood made up the walls and floors. Windows lined the far wall, providing stunning views of the city skyline. A horseshoe-shaped conference table took up the middle of the room. A single, white leather chair sat on either side, each positioned in front of a telephone and computer.

Rico took the seat on the far side of the table, his back to the windows. Decker sat across from him. The second they sat down their phones rang. The meeting had begun.

Rico picked up his phone. "Yes, yes, make the offer on Bounty Burger immediately. The fast food business is growing as much as everyone's waistlines!" He slammed the phone down and furiously typed at his computer.

"Quintuple our ad campaign for 10XL formal wear? We sell clothing that large?" Decker asked over the phone. "Oh. I see. Then yes, go ahead."

The doors to the conference room swung open. Three lanky maned wolf interns hurried in. One maneuvered a cart loaded with food through the gap in

the table and stopped at the end. The other two stood in position before the executives.

Two plates were placed on the table. A gentle humming heralded a conveyor belt turning on. The belt ran down each length of the table, passing in front of both busy executives.

Rico eyed the plate steadily heading in his direction like a hawk. It was a massive gourmet burger perched atop a bed of steak fries. The wonderful aroma had his mouth-watering by the time they arrived. The plate gently slid off the conveyor belt in front of him.

Rico picked up the large burger and chomped down, eating a quarter of it in one bite. The taste was heavenly. Their private chef was the best in the city arguably the best in the country. They were incapable of making a bad meal. In less than a minute, Rico had devoured the whole burger and most of the fries.

The intern attending to Rico removed the plate, just in time for a fresh one to roll off the conveyor belt, filled with a giant club sandwich. Rico wasted no time digging in.

The phone rang again. Rico answered it, balancing the phone in one paw and the sandwich in the other. "No, I want you to *triple* the size of the cafeteria, not double it! We need our employees too fat to wander from their cubicles!" The sandwich was wiped out by the time he put down the phone. A heaping plate of pasta had already replaced it.

"Wait, what was the point of investing so much money to fatten up the pitchers of the Columbia City Royals? Don't we own the team? Ahuh. No, I don't believe that's what they mean by an expansion team. Fine, fine, start on the outfielders next!" A hard slam ended Decker's phone call, while a belch ended his meal.

The food and calls kept coming. Rico wrecked an extra large pizza while sealing the deal with a national bakery. Chicken and mashed potatoes didn't last his order to triple the amount of catering at the office. A steaming lobster was reduced to a hollow shell in the time it took to arrange for soda dispensers to be placed on every floor of the building.

The filling work caused the lion's flat middle to balloon outward. His suit covered his swollen belly admirably, feeling only a little snug. There was a hint of strain around the buttons, but Rico believed it to be a welcome addition to his look. Those standing atop the peak of the business world deserved to eat well.

As the last plate was taken away, Rico leaned back and sighed happily. "These lunch meetings never cease to amaze me. Or fill me up!" The lion laughed and slapped his gut.

"I think they're too damn filling," Decker grumbled from across the way. The rattlesnake's belly was as large as Rico's, though his suit didn't fit quite as well. The gaps between buttons were wider, and the jacket seemed to dig into his middle uncomfortably. Decker had been in the business longer, but his grasp on style left something to be desired.

"Only you could complain about the bounty of food at our disposal," Rico said, shaking his head. "If anything, I wish we had even more."

A tingling sensation startled Rico. He looked down and saw his belly begin to shrink. As it did, he felt the rest of his body grow. His butt swelled to fill more of his chair, while his tie loosened around his thicker neck. Everything he'd gorged on was being converted into fat. When the fattening stopped, the lion found he'd gone from slim to plump.

Two more food carts arrived to replace the first.

"More?" Desker asked in exasperation. "I think I've grown fat enough already."

"A belly's good for business, Decker, so eat up!" Rico bellowed.

The plates started coming down the conveyor belt in pairs, crammed with more food than ever. Rico greedily shoveled everything that came his way into his mouth. He barely had time for the calls pouring in, simply responding 'yes' or 'no' between bites.

Triple the calories of the cafeteria salads? Yes! Sponsor a professional eating league at Columbia State University? Yes! Equip every chair in the building with feedbags? Yes! Introduce diet sodas to the vending machines? No!

Eventually he began answering in belches alone, which got his point across more eloquently than any words could.

Decker's dealings were as hesitant as Rico's were decisive. "Quarterly feeding sessions?" A pause for a gulp followed by a reluctant yes. "Replacing the fall lineup with gainer sitcoms?" Frustrated munching and a sigh of agreement. "Pay raises for weighing over a thousand pounds?" A sloppy belch echoed out. "No that wasn't a...whatever, approve it!"

Rico's belly swelled over his lap and against his desk, pushing him away from the conference table and his plate. He grunted, paws reaching desperately for more food. He hadn't had enough—he could *never* have enough.

The tingling returned. Rico's latest feast swiftly digested into fresh layers of doughy pudge. A double chin formed as his cheeks puffed up. He'd gained moobs to accentuate his pillowy belly and thick love handles. The lion was fat, twice as

heavy as when he'd marched into the conference room, and happier than ever. And his suit still fit perfectly. He looked better in it larger, and he had plenty of room to grow.

More plates came down the conveyor belt. Decadent desserts covered them. Pastries stuffed with so much filling they looked about to burst. Donuts double-dipped in frosting. Entire pies, fresh out of the oven. Triple decker cakes. Giant scoops of ice cream. Everything imaginable coated in chocolate.

The calls ceased but Rico didn't care. Lunch meetings were meant for eating, and he excelled at it.

Driven by insatiable hunger, Rico crammed all he could into his open maw. He swallowed desserts whole, taking only a moment to catch his breath between gluttonous gulps. He grew fatter by the second, everything he ate digesting instantly. The blubbery sides of his gut pressed against the arms of his chair. They bent, before pushing away, the chair growing along with Rico.

Occasionally the hefty lion glanced at his friend across the way. Decker frowned while stuffing himself. The rattlesnake's claws shook as he resisted every bite. His suit squeezed his massive middle tight like a girdle. One button popped off, then another. His gut ballooned out with enough force to rip a large hole down his dress shirt, exposing scales beneath.

"This is—*uworrrrrrp*—ridiculous!" Decker fumed. He shoved a slice of pie in his mouth. "Where is all this food—*braap*—coming from?! Rico we're blimping up!"

Rico ignored his friend's silly complaints. Being huge felt incredible. He was finally a true fat cat, a literal titan of industry, someone who could bury the competition beneath his gargantuan gut. The fatter he grew, the better he negotiated, the more he profited. His wealth and waistline grew with each other.

A plate shattering drew Rico's attention. Decker had pushed away from the table and was struggling to stand up. The huge rattlesnake jiggled as he slid free of the chair. His eyes widened as he looked over his voluptuous body. His belly hung to his knees, swaying gently with every breath. His arms moved sluggishly, so blubbery they could barely bend. Normally his tail would flick about, but now it only wobbled, a beached serpent in its own right.

Rico's heart skipped a beat as he watched Decker. He'd always thought the rattlesnake was cute, but the impressive gains had him feeling lightheaded. Past bickering between the two was quickly forgotten. His eating slowed as the sight of the handsome rattlesnake vied for his attention. He wished more of their suit had ripped open while they'd gorged.

"This is wrong, everything's wrong! Rico, stop eating!" Decker shouted. He jiggled as he did, causing Rico to blush.

Decker lumbered around the table. He huffed and puffed as he waddled over, his large tail trailing him like a ball and chain. He stopped to catch his breath halfway, before continuing the arduous journey.

"I said stop eating you gluttonous idiot!" Decker smacked the donut out of Rico's paw.

"What the hell was that for?!" Rico demanded. He reached for another donut, but Decker swept all the plates off the table. They crashed on the floor, sending shards of porcelain and chunks of pastry flying.

"Snap out of it before you become a damn blob!" Decker hissed. "None of this is real! Remember the mansion and that demon who fattened us all up! Stop playing his games!"

Rico's head suddenly ached. Glimpses of rain and an old mansion flashed before his eyes. They didn't make sense. He was an executive, his life was all lunch meetings, conference calls, and more lunch meetings. "Decker the meeting...we have to keep eating or else everything will fall apart."

"No it won't! What does blimping up have to do with business?! This isn't how lunch meetings work, and this isn't who you are, damn it!" Decker grabbed Rico by the collar and gave him a weak shake that barely jiggled him.

Rico looked around the room. It looked almost too nice, like something he'd seen in a magazine. No, he'd worked hard for the decadence that surrounded him. Right?

A dozen maned wolf interns stormed into the office, surrounding Decker.

"Sir, try these donuts!"

"This cake is too good to pass up!"

"You look emaciated, please eat this pie!"

"Have this gallon of chocolate milk to stay hydrated!"

Decker slapped the food from their paws and shoved them back. "Fuck off drones! Eat the food yourselves if you care so much, we're getting out of this damn fattening nightmare!"

A cupcake was pushed into the rattlesnake's mouth, silencing him. Decker swung at the intern who'd fed him, leaving himself open to a stuffing from a different one. His bulk prevented him from fending off the hoard of feeders. For every intern he kept at bay, two more would make sure something fattening entered his mouth.

Rico watched his friend get force-fed in silence. He knew he should be

helping, but his body refused to budge. His gaze locked onto Decker's massive belly as it continued to grow. He wanted to see how fat he'd get.

Decker's arms puffed up and lost their flexibility. His counterattacks became lethargic flailing. His gut hovered inches off the floor, as large as a boulder. The rattlesnake's cheeks were nearly big enough to press his snout shut, yet the interns forced it open with ease. A shove threw Decker off-balance. He fell on his enormous ass, the force sending ripples across his blubbery body and shredding the seams of his pants.

Seeing his friend swelling out of control caused Rico's memories to flood back to him. Getting lost in the woods and finding the mansion. Meeting the demon Levi, who forced them to play a game to earn their freedom. Being attacked by magical fattening food in the kitchen, and fleeing right before his friend Jonah had filled it up in a ravenous daze. And of course, putting on the suit that'd turned him into an immobile blob whose thoughts were only on business.

He didn't work in an office and feast at lunch meetings. He wasn't a powerful executive. The world around him was fake, just as Decker had said.

The doors swung open. A short, white goat waddled in. He wore a red suit with black pants. A small pair of round, silver glasses were perched on his muzzle, behind which were brilliant red eyes. He was fat, with a sizable ball belly that strained the buttons of his suit some. Rico didn't have to look long to recognize the goat as the demon who'd captured him and his friends.

Levi shifted a cigar from one side of his mouth to another as he surveyed the conference room. "I heard someone was trying to sneak away from the most important lunch meeting of the year," the goat said. The interns swiftly scattered, forming a line along the wall. The goat waddled leisurely around the table to where Rico and Decker were. "You're so stubborn, Decker. Instead of enjoying the fantasy you resist it and throw a fit. Why not take a break and be *happy* for once?"

"Becoming a blob over and over again isn't my idea of a good time. It isn't anyone's idea of a good time!"

"Now, now, that's not true at all. Rico's having a good time," Levi said, pointing at the hefty lion as he waddled over.

Rico blushed. "I mean, it's kind of nice feeling successful and in charge for once."

"And big?" Levi asked, grinning.

Rico remained silent.

"Don't think I haven't noticed. You're in my world—no secret can be kept

from me." Levi blew a puff of smoke at the lion's face. Rico coughed once on impulse, before realizing the cloud wasn't smoke, it was chocolate. With one sniff he started swelling again. His belly and butt filled out the rest of his chair as he gained another couple hundred pounds. The chair groaned beneath him, but held. "Not a single complaint or whimper."

"Rico I don't know what the hell he's doing to you, but fight it! This isn't you!" Decker shouted.

"Maybe I don't want to be me anymore!" Rico yelled back, surprising himself as much as Decker. "Real life hasn't exactly been going great for me. You've got a whole fucking career waiting for you, I've got nothing! All I do is help stuck-up rich people pick out clothes I could never dream of affording. Why wouldn't I want to stay in a dream where I can live a life of luxury?!" He thought of the dark green suit, and how good it looked no matter how fat he became.

"And how long do you think the dream's gonna last?" Decker asked. "We're at the mercy of a chubby-chaser demon for God's sake!"

"What's so wrong about liking heft?" Levi asked.

"Everything when you're hell-bent on fattening people to immobility against their will!" Decker hissed. He jiggled whenever he yelled, which Rico couldn't help but find delightful. How long had he had a thing for Decker? Or for fat? He'd dated larger guys before, and while snuggling with someone softer had been nice, he'd sworn that hadn't played a big role in hooking up with them. And he'd certainly never been fat himself. Was Levi controlling him still?

"I'm simply giving people the gift of a new perspective. Sometimes that affirms their convictions. Other times it awakens them to feelings they hadn't been aware of." Levi smiled at Rico and ate his chocolate cigar. The goat's belly ballooned out a few more inches.

Decker raised a brow at Rico before directing his anger toward Levi again. "Congratulations, you've convinced me I hate being too fat to move. And that demons are fuckers. So why don't you let us off this stupid, fattening ride and play with someone who cares?!"

"I'd never toss aside new players so soon," Levi said. "We have so many games ahead of us, and you haven't even met any of your fellow players yet."

"My friends are the only people I care about right now. People will look for us if we go missing. Search parties will comb the whole damn forest if they have to!"

Levi laughed. "Wrong, and on so many levels. Even if we were still physically in the forest—which of course we're not—there's nothing a plain old search team can do to a demon. Fun fact, there are very few people in the world legitimately trained to deal with my kind. The profession died out centuries ago, well before I became a demon myself. I've been told they were never all that effective, anyway." The goat shrugged, the gaps between his suit buttons widening briefly.

"No one will report you missing, either. When a person falls under the sway of a demon, they're mostly forgotten about by the rest of the world. You'll all continue to exist as memories of those closest to you, but they'll feel compelled to never seek you out in any way. They won't go to your empty homes, won't call you or send you a text. They'll come up with excuses as to why they haven't contacted or seen you, even after years have passed. You decided to travel for a while. You moved to a different part of the country. You talked with them a couple of weeks before, right? Bosses will swear you put in your two weeks notice. Landlords will remember you deciding not to renew the lease. It's already happening as we speak. No obligations tie you to your old lives anymore, so you're free to enjoy your time with me," Levi said cheerfully.

The fury in Decker's eyes had turned to worry. Rico thought of himself fading from the thoughts of everyone he'd ever met, of his family being comfortably oblivious to his fate. It didn't hurt as much as he'd expected it to.

Levi clapped his hooves together. "Now, while our little office roleplaying session has been fun, we do have real business to take care of. Contracts need to be made so that we can decide what you'll have to do before I consider freeing you of your obligations as my players."

"Don't think I didn't notice you adding the word 'consider' to all that bullshit," Decker said. His voice had quieted a bit.

"Yes, you're quite sharp for someone with so many curves," Levi said, earning him a hiss. "Completing your end of the contract is no guarantee that I'll release you right away. I have trouble letting favorites go, and there are times when I feel a player could use a longer break. But rest assured that when you are inevitably released, you'll be able to slide right back into society as if you'd never been gone. Your old positions at jobs will miraculously reopen, your old homes and apartments appear back on the market. Everyone will happily welcome you back, and you'll have no memories of your time with me at all. Some nostalgia for odd things and passing familiarity for others, but nothing more. It's a pleasant deal, don't you agree?"

Decker shook his head. "No way. I'm not making a deal with someone holding me hostage. Fatten me all you want, I'm not playing your games anymore." "An expected response, but a shame nonetheless. You're not my first stubborn player." Levi turned from Decker to Rico. "And what about you, my portly exec friend? Do you wish to hold out in hopes of a better deal like Decker, or are you ready to sign on the dotted line already? I promise it'll be worth it."

Rico understood Decker's reluctance, but he didn't see any other way out of the situation. He watched Levi's smile grow wider. The demon had read his mind when they'd first met, so it made sense they were doing so now as well. But before he could agree to the deal, a thought came to him. "You mentioned *becoming* a demon. How did you do it?"

Decker and Levi both seemed surprised. "It's a rather long and quite frankly personal story, but I was turned into a demon by a demon. That's how we all came to be, from what I can tell."

"Then you could do the same to others?"

Levi's smile returned. "I know how, though I admit I've never had the opportunity to do so."

"Would you turn me into a demon?"

"What the hell are you going on about?" Decker asked in disbelief. "You're joking, right? Tell me you're fucking joking!"

"I already told you my life wasn't exactly perfect. Becoming a demon sounds a lot better than hoping a lucky break comes my way in the real world," Rico said.

"So you're literally gonna sell your soul to the Devil instead?"

Levi raised a hoof. "The Devil doesn't exist, actually. Though I know a lot of demons who get a kick out of pretending that's who they are. We don't really have any fancy hierarchy."

"I'm not seeing any downside to this, Decker," Rico said. "But Levi, would you be willing to turn me into a demon?"

"Hmm, it's a very interesting proposition. One worthy of a private chat." Levi snapped his fingers, and the intern army bolted to attention. "Roll Mr. Decker down to the cafeteria and make sure he eats until the sides of the building are bulging out."

The interns dutifully surrounded Decker. They pushed the immense rattlesnake onto his back. He wobbled helplessly, waving his doughy arms and hissing at the interns.

"Don't be an idiot, Rico, don't make any deals with him!" Decker shouted as the interns lifted him off the ground. They began carrying him around the table and towards the doors. "Don't listen to him, I'm begging you!"

The interns filed out of the room with their blubbery, cursing boss. The

doors shut, cutting off all noise from the outside and leaving Rico alone with Levi.

Levi stepped up to Rico. "You fill out a suit *very* well." He gently patted the lion's side. "You know, when you were playing the game in the mansion I expected you to resist the cursed suit's allure. Gain a hundred pounds or so, sure, but not give in to the fantasy it provided. Only Jonah proved easier to fatten up, though I admit the kitchen was a doozy of a trap. Even if you'd managed to drag him out of there before he was immobilized, he'd have likely remained in a daze until being inevitably caught by another trap. I get a little carried away when it comes to magic food." He bleated sheepishly.

"I apologize for not having much experience resisting magic. I didn't even know it existed until...today? Yesterday? Whenever," Rico said. With how omnipotent Levi's powers appeared, he wouldn't have been shocked if he could manipulate the flow or at least perception of time.

"Today. And just perception," Levi answered, reading his mind.

"Ah. Thank you. I *was* trying to win, by the way. But since I lost, I'm choosing to remain positive and consider the benefits of the situation. I, uh, admit my friends probably aren't seeing things the same way." He thought of Decker being carried off to another fattening, shouting and cursing the whole time.

"They aren't quite ready to accept things yet," Levi said. "I believe Jonah and Nash will come around soon, and Scott shouldn't be trouble. Decker will be a challenge, but I like a challenge now and then. But, on to the business at hand, big shot. I can tell your desire to become a demon is genuine. It's not a desperate attempt to escape me, either."

Rico nodded. He felt his belly jiggle a little, and his face twisted into a slight smile. Being fat hadn't gotten any less enjoyable.

"However, it's a rather big request to make of me. You don't even know what being a demon entails," Levi said.

"I'm willing to learn. It's not like I'm going anywhere," Rico said, wobbling in place. His chair creaked in protest.

Levi chuckled. "True. At that size, you're only technically mobile. You can waddle around on your own, but you need others to help you get up. And it'd only take a few solid VIP dinners to make even that impossible." He poked Rico's belly, his finger sinking in. Rico couldn't stop blushing. "But enough about your gut filling your lap, let's talk about the questions filling your head. Demons are immortal, but we're not truly invulnerable. The odds of us dying are minuscule, though."

"We do require souls to survive, but we don't drain them. Think of it like

sipping at a cup that's constantly overflowing. A single soul is more than enough to sustain a demon, though obviously most of us like having a collection for various reasons. I'm not telling you how many I have." Levi laughed. "No, we aren't *all* fond of fattening mortals. But I'm certainly not the only demon out there with a passion for pudge."

Rico did his best to keep his thoughts focused so his questions weren't wasted on trivial things. He didn't know how long Levi would entertain his request, and needed to make sure the demon knew he was being serious.

"Interacting with the mortal world is easy for us. I can materialize on a city street without notice, and leave as suddenly. We're forgotten by all past associates of our mortal lives, though, just like the souls we hold captive. But unlike them, there's no going back. Once you've become a demon, you're one forever."

Rico thought of what he'd lose by becoming a demon. He still had family and friends out there, people who had made life worth living. He'd miss them. But the comfort they provided wouldn't be enough to wipe away the uncertainties in his life. They wouldn't fill his barren bank account or create a perfect career out of thin air. They wouldn't make going to work any easier, or rid him of the oppressive feeling he was barely scraping along.

Becoming a demon would rid Rico of his burdens. No rent. No bills. No job. He'd have complete control of his life for the first time and be able to make his wildest dreams come true. He could be the person he'd always dreamed of being, albeit in a form he'd recently assumed to be mere fantasy.

The pros of the new life Rico sought overwhelming outweighed the cons. Adventure and bliss awaited him. He couldn't imagine regretting the decision.

"I know I never have," Levi said. "It's everything you imagine it to be, and so much more, Rico. Are you willing to take the plunge?"

"Yes!" Rico's enthusiasm jiggled his doughy body.

"Perfect!" Levi smiled wide and wiggled his fingers. "I've honestly always wanted to turn someone else into a demon, but no player ever showed interest. You'll need to fulfill a contract with me first, one that'll change you from a player to a full-fledged demon. I admit it's not a rule, just a personal preference. Think of it as a training opportunity."

"Fine with me. What do you need me to do?" Rico asked.

"Simply help me with another game I plan on hosting soon. Perform the role I have for you well, and I'll consider the contract complete and turn you into a demon. If you don't meet my standards then...well, we'll keep trying until you

finally do," Levi said.

"I'll do it," Rico said without any hint of hesitation. The lion's spirits had never been higher. He only wished he could see Decker and the others one last time.

"Done," Levi said, snapping his fingers.

Three screens flickered to life, floating in front of Rico. In the first, he recognized the scaly mountain that was Decker. The rattlesnake had filled half of the cafeteria and was steadily growing in every direction. Tables and chairs collapsed beneath his blubbery bulk. Pneumatic tubes launched a never-ending stream of pastries into his partially buried snout. Rico couldn't tell if his constant wobbling was from struggling or eating. Probably both.

"Putting him through office scenarios is fun, but I'm thinking of moving on to baseball next," Levi said. "Have him pile on the pounds as he tries to run the bases after a home run. Get stuck in the dugout right before he's called up to bat, with his belly on the jumbotron. Maybe something with a fly ball hitting his middle and causing him to balloon in size until he fills the whole stadium."

Rico knew each scenario would infuriate Decker, though he couldn't help but find them all amusing himself. His old irritations and budding crush were blending in odd ways.

On the second screen, Scott filled an Olympic-size pool. The enormous zebra's gut spilled over the pool's sides. Thunderous belches shook him like earthquakes. One knocked the lifeguard tower over, which bounced off his belly. His eyes wandered, the zebra in some sort of powerful daze.

"Scott was the last player standing. He did a phenomenal job and came close to escaping. Got too fat in the end, though." Rico swore he heard some disappointment in Levi's voice. Had he wanted someone to win? "I always do! The games would get boring if I won *all* the time. Scott endured a trap I was certain he'd fail at, which forced me to come up with a final challenge on the fly. Still, I wanted to see how things would look if he hadn't been able to resist an entire pool filled with chocolate milk. Zebras make wonderful blobs."

Rico assumed Levi thought *everyone* made wonderful blobs. A devilish grin from the goat confirmed his suspicion.

Nash dominated the final screen. The maned wolf was wider than he was tall, and covered a bed that seemed about to buckle underneath his heft. He was blushing a deep red. Jonah lay atop his gut, massaging the doughy mountain. While not nearly as fat as his boyfriend, the fox had to have been at least twice his normal size, his large rump sticking up in the air. The scene brought a smile to Rico's face.

"Your friend Nash and I happen to share a love of heft. Jonah's not yet sure about it, but he didn't complain when I reunited him with his freshly fattened boyfriend. He had some rather amusing thoughts regarding role reversal," Levi snickered.

The three screens vanished one-by-one.

"Your former friends are in good hooves," Levi said. "Their time with me will be far from torture, despite Decker's inevitable protests. Now the two of us have work to do. What do you know about tabletop roleplaying games, Rico?" Levi asked.