

The following are a series of interviews with residents of Eukatonic University's housing for staff and students with size related handicaps. The men's facility is called the Long House and the women's facility is called the Wide House. The Long House is totally named after William Long, the architect who pioneered housing for nonstandard sized people, and totally not after the high number of men who took penis enlargement to a spectacular extreme. The Wide House is actually a nickname just to complement the men's housing. The real name is the Widen House, named after Josephine Widen (Wi-like window, den-like a lion's den), the golem crafter.

Hips for Years

Sitting before me is a slender brunette, hair in a fashionable bob, poised and professionally dressed in a baby blue blouse and a black skirt. I should amend my description: she's slender from the waist up. She's sitting on a low bench and her head is nearly as high as mine. Her hips are at least three times as wide as her shoulders. There's century-old trees thinner than her thighs. Her calves are thicker than a linebacker's, but her ankles are dainty and her feet can't be more than a size seven. This is Annette Thurgood: a local business woman.

Chelsea Bowen: First off, thank you for agreeing to meet with me.

Annette Thurgood: Oh, the pleasure is mine. I'm a big fan and longtime reader of your column.

Chelsea: It's always nice to meet a fan.

Annette: I have to say, it's a bit of a surprise that you're finally paying any attention to St. Francton. Anything to do with the town or the university tends to get ignored.

Chelsea: Yes, well, longtime superstitions notwithstanding, there's been more attention on the paranormal in recent years.

Annette: I suppose there has been.

Chelsea: There was also that video that went viral recently of the student whose breasts grew to fill her dorm room.

Annette: Ha! I remember when that happened. Bronwyn is a sweet girl. She still comes around occasionally. She's also one of my regulars.

Chelsea: That's as good of a segway as I can think of. Why don't you tell my readers what it is you do.

Annette: Well, the short of it is I'm a tailor. The more involved answer is that I run a chain of boutiques catering to unusually proportioned ladies like myself.

Chelsea: Is there much of a market for that?

Annette: It's certainly a niche market. However, there's a growing demand both around the country and the world as more people have access to body altering occult practices. Though our local stores see fair business, more and more of our sales are occurring online.

Chelsea: That's good to hear. Where can my readers find your merchandise?

Annette: Either at '*Nette's Apparel*' store, at eleven locations between St. Francton and Boston, or at nettesapparel.com.

Chelsea: Are you wearing some of your merchandise now?

Annette: I am!

She stands and twirls for me. My photographer snaps a few shots as she poses. I have to admit that despite her outlandish proportions, her clothing actually fits her. The skirt's waistband isn't bunched or stretched, the material follows the curve of her hip naturally, and the ends of the skirt pull in a little before it ends below her knees. If I know my photographer, he's pleased to have such a voluptuous model before his lens.

Annette: You'll notice the seams don't run straight down the side. Part of the secret to my success is we utilize proprietary curved designs in fitting together pieces of fabric. The resulting clothes can be put together for any body shape.

Chelsea: Wonderful. I have to admit, I'm curious as to how you got into this business.

Annette: Well, it has to do with my own condition. You see, when I was in high school I had a slender build all over. I was quite the runner and even placed third at the state cross country meet. However, I was self conscious about the lack of attention I got from boys. It came to a head when my boyfriend dumped me and immediately started going out with one of the curvier cheerleaders.

Chelsea: That probably stung.

Annette: It certainly did. Well, I was up late crying about it when I saw a shooting star. I made a wish for a curvier rear end. Over the course of the next month, I outgrew all my jeans. For the first time ever I was curvy!

Chelsea: What happened next?

Annette: I went off to college and was instantly popular with all the men.

Chelsea: Was this at Eukatonic?

Annette: No, I grew up not far from here and wanted a fresh start. I studied marketing at Saint Anselm.

Chelsea: So things were going well for you.

Annette: They certainly were at first. However, by the time I was a junior I couldn't fit in anything off the rack. I was spending almost as much time altering pants and skirts as I was studying. There were still some admirers of my figure, but I was quickly becoming as unhappy with my figure as I was when I was just a twig of a thing.

Chelsea: What did you do then?

Annette: I visited Eukatonic and asked around for a cure.

Chelsea: Did you find one?

Annette: [Gestures to her lower half with a wane smile.] If I had, I wouldn't look like this. No, they weren't able to give me answers beyond stating that wish magic was very tricky. I did, however, interest some students and faculty with similar conditions with how well my clothes fit. It gave me the idea to open my first store here when I finished my degree.

Chelsea: Sounds like a match made in heaven.

Annette: It really was. I started out doing custom fittings. Soon enough, I was designing clothing lines that could be adjusted easily to fit dramatically different sizes. Customers came flocking at that point.

Chelsea: To clarify, your first customers were here at the Wide House?

Annette: Correct. It was a whole mess of customers in one place. They actually offered me a room at the time, both because I was large enough to need the help even then and it offered some of the ladies privacy they wouldn't have otherwise had. I've made some great friends and business connections here. Whenever I'm in town this is where I stay.

Chelsea: That's so wonderful: lifetime friends through a common struggle.

Annette: It really is.

Chelsea: By chance, are you still growing?

Annette: I am. My fastest growing occurred during college, but I've slowed down since then. Every few months, though, it seems like I outgrow something. It's certainly added up over the years. Still, it could be worse.

Chelsea: How so?

Annette: Well, I'm still mobile. Also, my condition merely impacts my size. Other people have additional factors, like runaway lactation or - well, maybe I should let them tell their own stories.

Chelsea: So long as my editor goes along with it, I plan on making this a series of articles. Do you have any final words for my readers about living with a condition like this?

Annette: [sighs] It is what it is. My life's certainly taken a turn. I can honestly say that my exaggerated shape has given me as many opportunities as it's taken. I certainly don't run nearly as fast as I used to, but now I stop traffic regularly. I have to be careful of what doorways I try to enter, but I've been places and met people I wouldn't have ever been able to otherwise. While I do get down on myself sometimes, I have to always remember that I have it relatively easy.

Chelsea: That's a wonderful attitude. Thank you for meeting with me.

Annette: The pleasure's been mine.

Custard Gal 1: Sounds of Infants

For my second interview at the Wide House I'm meeting with Patricia Mulder. I was warned that I was meeting one of the most extremely impacted individuals on site, but before me sits a blonde with merely basketball sized breasts. It's clear she's using layers to try hiding her size. It isn't working.

Chelsea Bowen: Hello, thank you for agreeing to this interview, Patricia.

Patricia Mulder: Please, call me Trish.

Chelsea: Alright Trish, what's your story?

Trish: For starters, I've always been a huge fan of chemistry. I saw one of those Phil Grood the Science Dude episodes way back in elementary school and I got hooked. While other kids were reading about wizard schools I was studying nucleotides and carbon chains.

Chelsea: You sound like quite the prodigy.

Trish, shrugging: I suppose, but I just found it interesting, you know?

Chelsea: Forgive me if I'm wrong, but Eukatonic doesn't have much of a chemistry department.

Trish: That's just it. I was already getting into graduate level chemistry on my own during high school when I found out alchemy is a thing. Everything I had ever learned about chemistry told me alchemy shouldn't work, but it does! You can transform matter at the atomic level with it, not

just the molecular level. It blew my mind! What we can barely accomplish with a particle collider we can do with purpose and precision involving a few chemicals, some symbols, and Intent. I just had to study it.

Chelsea: Is that what led you to living here?

Trish: Do you mean, 'Is that why you have cow udders on your chest?'

Chelsea: Your words, not mine.

Trish: Fair enough. Yes, my condition is from an alchemical spill. It happened during a lab demonstration. To be fair, if it had just been what got spilled on me they'd probably have it all sorted out by now, but had a weird reaction to my birth control and some substances I may or may not have been experimenting with recreationally.

Chelsea: I see. Could you state what your condition is for my readers?

Trish: Well, as all but the blind can see, I have a larger than average pair of breasts. They also tend to lactate quite prodigiously. There's some other quirks, too, but that's the gist of ... do you hear anything?

Chelsea: I think the heat just turned on.

Trish: Yeah, that must be it.

Chelsea: How heavily do you need the facilities here at the Wide House?

Trish: Pretty heavily. I spend a couple hours a day being milked. My size is also variable. This is about as small as I can - seriously, do you hear anything?

Before I can answer, a seam on her top bursts open. We both look down to her chest and watch as another seam rips.

Trish: Jessie! Where is it?

Chelsea: What's happening?

Trish: One of the quirks of my condition is whenever I hear a baby cry my milk production goes into overdrive. Jessie! Where is it!?

Chelsea: What are we looking for?

Trish: A wireless speaker. Jessie thinks it's sooo funny to make me grow at inconvenient moments.

We look around and eventually find it in Trish's handbag. By then, her breasts have doubled in size and all but destroyed her outer layer. At least one of her inner layers is highly elastic and is holding strong. She turns off the speaker, but her growth merely slows.

Chelsea: So this happens often?

Trish: Not as frequently as it used to. I could barely go a day when I first got here without her imitating an infant. Now it's every week or two. I tend to wear headphones a lot to protect myself on the few occasions I go out in public, but you'd think I'd be safe here.

Chelsea: While we're on the topic, are you comfortable sharing any of the other quirks you hinted at?

Trish: Yeah, so I have to avoid milk products for the same reason. I tend to grow a bit after, you know, spending time with a man - or myself, for that matter. There's also some interesting compounds in my milk, but that's getting into the weeds a bit.

Chelsea: That sounds like this impacts every facet of your life.

Trish: It kind of does. On the other hand, because it all started with an accident on campus they pay for my room and board here. I'm also in some alchemical periodicals, which is pretty sweet. And, if I'm being perfectly honest, they feel pretty good. I don't want to spend the rest of my life like this, but if I do there's definitely some perks.

Chelsea: That's a wonderful attitude.

The sound of a dozen screaming newborns fills the room. Trish's assets surge outward, causing her to spill out of her seat. Laughter rings out and a freckled redhead with a moderate baby bump walks toward us.

Trish: Jessie, I will end you!

Jessie: Pfft, you can't even walk after me right now.

Trish: I'll pick a time you're weighed down. Then I'll grow so big that I'll crush you.

Jessie: Sounds like the perfect way to die. On the other hand, you need me too much for dating advice to actually do it.

Trish: You're going to push me too far one day, pervert.

Jessie: Oh, I'm so scared I think I'll casually walk away. Be sure to do my interview soon, Ms. Bowen. G'bye now.

She walks away with a click of her heels and a swish of her dress. Meanwhile, Trish's elastic undershirt is creaking from the strain of holding two beanbag sized tits.

Chelsea: Should I bring her back?

Trish: No, she's probably just taking her time before turning off the speakers. She'll send Leah over, too.

Chelsea: I was made to understand the women here were largely supportive of each other. What happened to make the two of you enemies?

Trish: Oddly enough, she's actually my best friend. We started out as roommates before everything happened, then ended up here within weeks of each other.

Sure enough, the crying babies cut off right as a statuesque figure walks over to help Trish back to her seat.

Chelsea: And who is this?

Trish: This is Leah. She's a golem, so don't expect a lot of conversation from her. She does most of the cleaning around here as well as helping us stay mobile. When I get big enough I can't lift myself out of bed.

Chelsea: Is she really all that helpful when you're that massive?

Trish looks down at her chest. The taxed garment is showing at least two feet of cleavage where there might have been two inches before. Her breasts reach the ground while she's sitting in a chair and are at least as wide as a couch. They've almost filled the space between us and I find myself moving my chair further away. My photographer is going to need to load a new sim card at the rate he's going.

Trish: This isn't massive. This is moderately large.

Chelsea: Seriously?

Trish: 'fraid so. Leah, go ahead and put the suction cups on via the neckline. I think this top might be salvageable.

Chelsea: That might be wishful thinking, dear.

Trish: This isn't standard elastic. I'm helping Annette test out some new materials. This one's an alchemical compound I introduced her to. We're having some trouble on making it take a fashionable shape, but it'll stretch nearly as much as I can.

Chelsea: And how much can you stretch?

Trish: I've filled rooms before. If Jessie has her way I might fill this room someday.

I gasp as I look at the sixty foot ceiling of the main hall. The area is nearly twice as wide as it is tall and three times as long. However, Trish's bosom isn't nearly as taunt as I'd expect it to be after multiplying in size over the course of a few minutes. In fact, it looks remarkably pliant as Leah attaches the milking machine. Accordion doors nearly that tall close off some of the individual rooms, which shows they've prepared to house women nearly as large as what she's describing.

Chelsea: That's...an incredible prospect.

Trish: Well, welcome to the Wide House.

Custard Gal 2: Full of Easter

I've met this particular resident of the Wide House before: Jessica Johansen. My introduction to her was when she used a hidden speaker to expand her friend's breasts to furniture sized behemoths as a prank. The feisty redhead looks more pregnant than the last time I saw her, perhaps full term with twins, but she has the same self confident smile.

Chelsea Bowen: Hello again.

Jessica Johansen: Yes, hello. Thank you for not making me wait long for this interview.

Chelsea: To begin, why don't you tell us a little about yourself.

Jessie: Well, if you can't tell from the remnants of my accent, I'm from South Carolina. Second youngest of five children. My father's an alum and was pretty keen on at least one of his children attending. I was getting a bit restless, so I decided I wanted to see someplace new. I enjoyed the linguistics classes my first year and decided to become a Wand. What I really enjoyed, however, was the social scene. There's a number of blue blood connections here and I've had just the best time meeting new people and socializing with just everyone. I'm quite the social butterfly, if you couldn't tell.

Chelsea: I picked up on that.

Jessie: So that's enough beating around the bush. Go ahead and ask what you're dying to ask.

Chelsea: If you insist: what is making you appear pregnant?

Jessie: No one is entirely sure what started it, so I can only tell the story with the parts I think might be relevant. You've already met my friend Trish. She had that accident during class that

resulted in her condition - a somewhat enviable condition, if you ask me. You should see the way the boys Leah has to chase off look at her. Anyway, she got splashed and grew her sweater mastiffs and we couldn't be roommates anymore.

Chelsea: Because she moved to the Wide House?

Jessie: Exactly. So I'm left on my lonesome and that's not something I tolerate well. I started - did Trish tell you about us using any...recreational...

Chelsea: She hinted there might have been something extra in her system.

Jessie: Right. I'm perfectly fine just with wine, but she introduced me to some more exotic substances to enjoy. Very new age stuff. So I had an extra helping of this stuff in my system to help me deal with my loneliness. That might have contributed. But the incident that started everything was at a church social - the Baptist community isn't too big 'round here, but there's some fine people in the congregation. Great to be with like minded people of faith. Well, mostly like minded. You see, the minister was talking about Trish and what went and happened to her and he blamed her for becoming some kind of sexual perversion.

Chelsea: That's hardly very Christian of him.

Jessie: Just my thinking exactly. Of course, I just had to defend my friend and that turned into quite the verbal altercation. He ended up cursing me in Jesus's holy name to "show my true devotion" or some such and I said I would because Christian charity just bubbled up in me. He accused me of blasphemy and I ended up leaving in a huff.

Chelsea: Sounds a bit like this is an Act of God.

Trish: Well, my story isn't quite over. Part of my curriculum that year was on anciently worshiped pagan gods. That night, I may have muttered a few choice words to myself concerning what I'd like some of them to smite him with. It didn't seem right to ask Jesus to do that, so I thought I'd outsource. It sounds a mite dumb saying that out loud, but I had some of that recreational substance in my system, see?

Chelsea: I think I do. To sum up what you've said so far, you got cursed by a pastor because of blasphemy, tried to enact vengeance through ancient gods, and experimented with some sort of...I'm assuming it was more exotic than marijuana from a dispensary.

Trish: That's the right shape of it.

Chelsea: I think I can see why you're not quite sure what caused your condition.

Trish: It could have been something different for all I know. You see, there's always something interesting going on on campus. They try to keep things contained, but it's totally possible none

of what I described caused any of this. All I know is that during the week after that public debacle I started swelling up like I was pregnant, only faster. I checked with my doctor and no, I wasn't carrying a baby. I was full of these.

Trish reached into her bag and pulled out a painted egg a little larger than a chicken's. It had pastel pink, orange, and yellow wavy lines circling it. I've seen competition worthy painted eggs and this was easily as intricate as any of those.

Chelsea: Did you paint this yourself?

Trish: I'm flattered, but no. They come out like this. So far as I can tell each one has been unique, though there's definitely some patterns that get repeated. Most are pastel colors like this, but sometimes it's more seasonal. Around Christmas time there's lots of red and green ones for instance. I've kept the more outlandish ones, including the ones that look like *Starry Night* and *The Last Supper*.

Chelsea: Really?

Trish: Yeah, it's inspired me to learn to paint, but I can't produce anything as nice as those.

Chelsea: This is an incredible story.

Trish: It's not quite over. You see, I wasn't able to hide that something had happened and I wasn't going to run, so I went to church on Sunday expecting to take my licks. Turns out, I wasn't the only one that had changed. The pastor shows up to do his sermon and he's absolutely bald. No hair whatsoever. No eyebrows, eyelashes, nose hairs, nothing. From what I've heard that's consistent down to his feet, including everything in between. Well, we both apologized to each other and sought reconciliation, but so far we're both stuck with our changes. I figure we both have something to learn, but I'm not sure what.

Chelsea: I noticed that you're not the same size as last time. Would you mind explaining why that is?

Trish: Of course. You see, I produce batches of these eggs. Once I get full enough, I can start to lay them in private. If I can manage to get them all out, I can stay thin for a while. Usually it's just a few hours, but I can stretch it out to a couple days with a corset. Then I start filling up again, usually until I'm a little bigger than I am now after a couple weeks. I've tried getting rid of the eggs every day to try to stay thin, but that hardly ever works. I've also tried not laying them at all. Usually I'll swell up a bit more, then they all come out at the most inconvenient time. There's no sense fighting the cycle, so I just try to time things out as best I can.

Chelsea: I'm hearing some 'usuallys' in there.

Trish, smiling: Oh, there's one big exception. Easter.

Chelsea: What happens then?

Trish: About a month before, I empty out no matter how large I am. It usually happens at night. Over the course of the month, I swell up so large I can't walk on my own. I mean bigger than the rest of me. Each egg is filled with something lighter than water, so I don't get as heavy as I could be, but I still gain a bunch of weight. Then, the day before Easter when I'm at my biggest, I let it all out over the course of a couple hours.

Chelsea: That sounds messy.

Trish: It is, but it's also kind of hot, not that anyone really needs to know that.

Chelsea: What happens next?

Trish: I go through the eggs, keeping the really pretty ones, then donate the others to the church Easter Egg Hunt. Then I get to spend the next day with a trim tummy. The day after that it all starts again, but on Easter I get to be empty.

Chelsea: You sound a little wistful.

Trish shrugs: Maybe. It's certainly changed my life. I've had to expand my wardrobe to accommodate my different sizes, but life goes on. Most men are turned off by the whole thing, but there's been a few that have said otherwise. An undeniably good part is I get to be roommates with Trish again.

Chelsea: For someone who says you're her friend, you certainly interact in an unusual way.

Trish: That little stunt last time you were here was for her own good. She hides herself too much. Did you know she's gotten at least eight offers for a date since you published that interview? She wouldn't talk to me for two days, but she's been smiling so much more since getting all the positive attention. In fact, I have it on good authority that she had the most wonderful date last night. He's not the suavest man I've met, but he's sweet and earnest and she really seems to like him back.

Chelsea: I'm happy to hear that.

Trish: So if you could bring me some of that kind of attention from some maiesiophilacs I'd really appreciate it.

Chelsea, smiling: We'll see.

Nothing in Her Way But That

Cynthia Pembrost is nearing graduation and has been living at the Wide House since her sophomore year. The reason for that is apparent: a large, tight womb weighing her down. Her belly is somewhat lopsided and moves quite a bit. Ms. Pembrost seems both uncomfortable and resigned to her situation. Her shirt seems to fit, thanks no doubt to Annette Thurgood, but it's clearly tight enough that it will soon need to be replaced.

Chelsea Bowen: Thank you for meeting with me.

Cynthia Pembrost: Yeah, well, Professor Zamacona's giving me extra credit for this.

Chelsea: I see. Well, why don't you tell me a bit about yourself.

Cynthia: Let's see: I'm a 4.0 Political Science student that should be at Brown, but I'm stuck at this backwater school because of a stupid trip to a lake house.

Chelsea: Why don't we start there then. You went to a lake house. When was that?

Cynthia: It was right after my first year of college - the only year I got out of my *full ride scholarship* to Brown. I'd just aced my finals and I was feeling on top of the world, so I said yes when my roommate invited me. Normally I'd have tried to get a summer job right away, but I wanted to reward myself.

Chelsea: That's certainly understandable.

Cynthia: Exactly. So we were at this lake house along with a couple classmates. It was really fun. We actually got to do some of that shit you see in movies about college. I played beer pong for the first time. The weather was great. There were even some boys a few houses down that we spent time with. Cute boys! I hardly got any of that all semester with how much time I spent on homework, so it was all sooo good that of course it had to get ruined in the worst way possible.

Chelsea: You mean...[gestures at her belly]

Cynthia: Yeah, this.

Cynthia's expression is positively livid. The anger seems as fresh as it must have been the first day. She holds her squirming belly with fingers curled into claws.

Chelsea: What exactly is 'this'?

Cynthia: 'This' is some kind of freshwater octopus previously unknown to science.

Chelsea: That - wasn't what I was expecting.

Cynthia: Who would?

Chelsea: How did it come to be inside you?

Cynthia: I was swimming. It grabbed me, nearly drowned me, and forced its way inside me.

Chelsea: That must have been horrifying!

Cynthia: Yeah, it was. Of course, I have a continual reminder of that traumatic event wiggling around inside me, bothering me constantly.

Chelsea: Are doctors unable to remove it?

Cynthia: That's almost the worst part. I've had several that were willing to try, but they all back out at the last minute for the weirdest reasons. One said there was too much risk of killing the octopus. I mean, what's more important - a human or some octopus?

Chelsea: That shouldn't be a concern. You're the patient.

Cynthia: I know, right? Another said he had to go to the bathroom, then left the hospital and got hit by a train.

Chelsea: That's frankly horrifying.

Cynthia: I'm sure it was a coincidence, but yeah, kind of.

Chelsea: So how did you find out about the Wide House?

Cynthia: The university reached out to me. Apparently, I'm not the first person to have an issue like this.

Chelsea: Are you referring to Professor Zamacona?

Cynthia: Yeah, she's got something like this in her, too.

Chelsea: They say a lot of things about her.

Cynthia: I don't care what they say. People say a lot of astrology BS around here. I'd rather have this stupid thing taken out of me, but having a school where I don't feel like a total freak is the next best thing, at least. So I put up with the mumbo jumbo and look forward to when they can do something about it.

Chelsea: I've seen some pretty compelling evidence to back up the mumbo jumbo.

Cynthia: Yeah, well, I'm still not interested.

Chelsea: How much longer do you have on your degree?

Cynthia: I actually just graduated, but they're letting me stay here while I do my PhD work online.

Chelsea: Not through Eukatonic?

Cynthia: Boston U.

Chelsea: Do you need much assistance then?

Cynthia: Well, yeah. I mean, this thing is mostly water and muscle. It's heavy and can shift suddenly, so I don't stand for very long if I can help it. This place also has offered to cover medical care involved in monitoring it until they're confident they can remove it safely. Also...this is kind of stupid...

Chelsea: You're in a tough situation no one could have predicted. I'm sure it's not stupid.

Cynthia: Well, people can be judgy, you know? If I went anywhere else, people would think I have some sort of freak pregnancy. I have - had - a friend who thought I got knocked up and wouldn't believe me when I said it was an octopus. She won't talk to me because she thinks I'm a liar.

Chelsea: What do people think here?

Cynthia: They KNOW it's something weird, but everybody knows somebody with an extra eye or horns or something else freaky, so I'm not THE freak. Just A freak among many.

Chelsea: And misery loves company?

Cynthia, smiling for the first time: Something like that.

Chelsea: With the prevalence of 'freaky' physiology, have you found anyone able to look past your...belly?

Cynthia: Actually, I've kind of had the opposite experience. Two different guys expressed interest in me over the past few years, but it didn't work out.

Chelsea: Why's that?

Cynthia: Would you believe this lump turned them on?

Chelsea: I've heard rumors that there's more prevalent attraction to unique body types in the area.

Cynthia: The rumors would be right. There's nothing to like about this, but they couldn't keep their hands off of it. I can't respect a man that's attracted to an octopus stuffed woman. I'm not finding a love connection around here.

Chelsea: What are your post school plans like?

Cynthia: Well, running for office is out. That's all about image, and I currently have a distracting figure. Lobbying involves a lot of face-to-face work that presents similar hurdles. I'm hoping to get involved in a political consulting firm, where I can analyze trends and make suggestions without a lot of hand shaking and hobnobbing. Eventually, maybe even being a -

Her belly pulses wildly for a moment and Cynthia throws her head back. Chelsea stands up in shock, but doesn't approach. When her belly stills, Cynthia faces forward again, but her eyes are rolled back in her head.

Cynthia: **mgah ah'kn'aa kn'aa**

Chelsea falls back into her chair while Cynthia falls forward over her belly, which resumes its usual minor undulations.

Chelsea: Oh my God, are you alright?

Cynthia, sitting up: I didn't have another fainting spell, did I?

Chelsea: No, you - I don't know what you said, but it didn't look like a fainting spell.

Cynthia: Not you too! Damn it, just when I thought you were alright, you go pulling something like that on me.

Chelsea: What? I -

Cynthia: Zamacona put you up to it, didn't she?

Chelsea: No, I promise you -

Cynthia: This interview is over.

Cynthia struggles to her feet, refusing assistance from Chelsea or her cameraman. Any attempts at an apology or explanation are met with a dismissive wave as she waddles over to her quarters.

Teleportation Service

Elise McDougal is easily the tallest, thinnest woman I've interviewed at the Wide House. While her name suggests Scottish ancestry, I'd have pegged her as Swedish by sight: blonde hair, piercing blue eyes, and fair skin. The graduate was apparently remaining at the Wide House while she ironed out the wrinkles in a startup company and I'd been invited to see a proof of concept demonstration. The fact that she was staying here, combined with the loose folds of extra stretchy fabric she was wearing, made me suspect I was in for quite the interview. That she'd insisted we meet outside made me nervous.

Chelsea Bowen: I think I recognize your outfit as being one of Annette's.

Elise McDougal: It is! Everyone here loves her work, so when I ran into the little hiccup in my process I had to ask her for a little help.

Chelsea: Before we get into that, would you like to introduce yourself for our readers?

Elise: Right, sorry, my head's in the clouds right now. My name's Elise McDougal and I'm the founder of Zephyr Inc. We provide teleportation services of non-living materials.

Chelsea: Teleportation? That's straight out of an Amosiv science-fiction story.

Elise: Well, yesterday's science fiction is tomorrow's science fact, and today is tomorrow.

Chelsea: Um...right.

Elise: Sorry, that was mixed up somehow. I swear I can do all of the calculations necessary for sending a diamond drill bit to Alaska, but when it comes time for a press release or a sound bite I'm an airhead. Really trying to work on that.

Chelsea: Does your company have someone to do that for you?

Elise: No, we're pretty lean on manpower. While a full teleportation, from countdown to delivery, only takes a few minutes, we're limited to only a few deliveries a week because...well, you'll see. We don't even meet the needs of our current clients and we have several other interested parties, so I'm hoping once you see this you'll help us with what's holding us back.

She leads me past a fence to where I assume she does all her work. There's a concrete pad with an inlaid metal circle some twenty feet in diameter. In the middle of the circle is a stack of industrial equipment of some kind, filling most of the space. A tripod with a smart phone is positioned near the circle, a video chat app open and a countdown in progress on screen. Elise hands out ear protection for everyone before sending me and my cameraman to the corner of the enclosure.

When the countdown starts flashing red, Elise begins chanting something I can't hear through the ear protection. The equipment disappears amid a thunderclap. I can see it now on the screen of the phone, teleported to wherever that was connected to. The other change is Elise, who is now wider than she is tall. She's not quite spherical, with pronounced curves on her chest, buttocks, abdomen, and limbs, but she's certainly not human shaped. I take off my ear protection.

Chelsea: What happened to you!?

Elise: Could you take my earmuffs off? My arms can't quite reach when I'm like this.

Chelsea: I said, what happened to you?

Elise: Oh, this is that hiccup I mentioned. The air displaced from the arriving payload has to go somewhere. I've tried tweaking the process, but so far it just keeps backfiring into me. Thought I was going to explode the first time, but for whatever reason I haven't popped yet.

Chelsea: Are you stuck like this?

Elise: You saw me earlier. In a couple hours I'll deflate enough to move around on my own. Then it takes several more to deflate enough to risk sending something else. Sleeping relaxes me enough to speed up the process, but I'm still stuck with no more than one delivery a day.

My cameraman is busy documenting the changes, but I'm stuck trying to understand the implications of her words.

Elise: We're a pretty lean operation, with most of my staff setting up receiving circles for our clients and my lawyer and accountant working remotely. So far, I'm the only one that can send anything. I'm looking for other people with the know-how and physical traits to do what I do. One extra person could double our sending capabilities.

Chelsea: So I'm getting the word out that you're looking for someone you can hire.

Elise: Exactly. Your readers get to see me like this, you get a nifty scoop, and I hopefully get another employee or two.

Chelsea: An employee you hopefully won't explode.

Elise: So you see why I have to cast a wide net.

Chelsea: Do you even know what you're looking for? What kind of person can survive *this*?

Elise: I found out on accident. I came to St. Frankton hoping some people at the college would be interested. No takers here so far, but I had some help understanding what allows me to do this and knowing what to look for in a person, should they be interested.

Chelsea: That's asking a lot of a person.

Elise: I guess. It ain't more than I ask of myself, though.

Chelsea: Fair point.

Leah the golem arrives at this point to roll Elise to her room.

Elise: I'm off to nap this off. You spread the word of what I'm offering. After overhead, paying my employees and such, I earn about \$20,000 per delivery. Even if they can't match my work schedule, that kind of money adds up quick.

Chelsea: I'll certainly spread the word.