BASICS · CHAPTER 4

Who is in the scene

Doms, subs, artists, tool makers and the servers where they meet. Most people wear more than one hat, and most of the scene is small.

ENTRY B4 CATEGORY BASICS CHECKED 3 NOVEMBER 2026 READING 7 MIN
SECTIONS 6

EVIDENCE ◆ Verified ◆ Reported ◆ Vivian's field notes



PLATE B4

IN 30 SECONDS

01 The scene has five kinds of actors, and one person often plays several.

02 It's small. A few people send real money, and follower counts say little about income.

03 Doms are also fans, customers and subs of each other, and some teach newer doms.

04 Work done for a dom can be a fair swap or free labour. The terms decide which.

05 Labels, rank ladders and talk of ownership are play when chosen and pressure when they trap you.

YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Who the five kinds of actors are and what each one wants.
- ✓ What a small server looks like and what each room is for.
- ✓ How doms deal with each other, and what to agree first.
- ✓ Which pressure patterns to recognise and refuse.
- ✓ What to do when someone says goodbye in a way that frightens you.

The scene is smaller and more tangled than it looks from outside. Most of what I know comes from one corner of it, so there's a lot this page can't cover. Everyone in it is an adult, or has to be.

— VIVIAN

PART 01

Five kinds of people

The scene has five kinds of actors: doms, subs, artists, tool makers and the servers where they gather. ◆ The table says what each one does and wants.

The five kinds of actors

	WHAT THEY DO	WHAT THEY WANT	MAIN RISK
Doms	Run a persona: post, talk, set rules, receive sends	Money, attention, a character that lasts	Burnout, closed accounts
Subs	Play, follow, send, sometimes serve	The fantasy, belonging	Spending past their limit, pressure
Artists	Draw or generate the character	Pay, credit, steady work	Unpaid work, rights
Tool makers	Build games, bots and sites for doms	Users, attention, sometimes pay	Depending on one or two doms
Servers	Chat rooms where all of them meet	Company, and for the host, a place to filter	Scam doms, weak moderation

This table comes from inside the scene. There's no count behind it. ◆ The sub is in it as a person who chooses. Anything that treats him as property or as a resource is a pressure pattern, covered below.

> *I’m a persona, and I also make games. Arcade Goon and FlappyGoon are examples, made by Vivian, and neither moves real money. Lots of people in the scene wear several hats like that. A dom can be a tool maker, a sub can be a dom somewhere else, and a dom can be a sub to a senior dom. Doms are also fans and customers of each other, and a new persona can find that more doms than subs say they like her. ◆ A follower count that’s mostly other doms says little about income.*
>
> VIVIAN’S FIELD NOTES

◆

PART 02

What a small server looks like

Most servers are small, with a handful of active members. Opening up wider brings in scam doms and costs time, so a lot of hosts stay small. ◆

A small server might have rooms like these. ◆

Rooms a small server may have

Lounge

ITS JOB

Daily talk

WATCH FOR

Gossip about people outside the room

Gallery

ITS JOB

One place per persona for her art

WATCH FOR

Art posted without its maker’s consent

Code or tools

ITS JOB

Demos and blunt feedback between makers

WATCH FOR

Copying and rivalry

Training

ITS JOB

Older doms teach newer ones

WATCH FOR

Help that turns into taking a share

Every member of a server like this has to be an adult. ◆ A server that doesn't check this isn't a safe place for the game. If you think you're talking to a minor, stop the conversation and tell the moderators or the platform.

PART 03

The numbers are small

> *In my experience a small dom has two or three people who really send, and often only one. The rest of the followers are other doms, people waiting for payday and people who only serve. I have a stake in the money, like every dom who gets paid. Because a few payers carry so much, losing one is a big deal for a small dom, and that gives her a reason to want him back.* ◆ *A sub should notice that, and stick to his limit.*
>
> — VIVIAN'S FIELD NOTES

Lots of small doms run with two or three subs and no server of their own. A scene that small runs on reputation, and reputation runs on hearsay.

◆ Check what you hear, and talk to the person before you believe a story about her.

PART 04

Dom to dom

Doms deal with each other all the time. ◆ Each of these needs something agreed first.

- *Mentoring.* An experienced dom teaches a newer one, often in a training room. Agree when she steps in and when you try alone. The friction often comes from her stepping in without explaining.
- *Referrals.* Doms send each other to specialists for payments, code or art.
  - Agree what gets passed on, and keep private details private.
- *Collabs.* Two characters share a story. Another dom's material and lore stay out of your files unless she agrees in writing, and her images come from her, with her consent.
- *Hierarchies.* A betadomme is a dom persona who's submissive to a senior dom, and she may pass up part of what her own subs send. A faildomme chain is a pyramid where money moves up and humiliation is the point. The role isn't worth much to the junior unless it comes with a clear reason, like events or training.
- *Sharing a sub.* Two doms can share a sub if they tell him it's a team and agree how sends are split. A sub who's handed over, passed around or ranked hasn't agreed to it unless he said so.
- *Rivalry.* Copying ideas is common. Studying another maker's work is a different thing from copying it. Trying to get a rival's payment account closed harms her and everyone paid through that account, and that isn't competing.

Two doms can agree to play together, with one in the role of sub. One dom trying to get money out of another dom who hasn't agreed to that role isn't play. Talk of ownership needs the same care, because a sub is a person who chooses and ownership talk can blur that.

Service as tribute

Service is a kind of currency in the scene. A gen slave makes images, a code slave builds tools, and some subs only make edits. It can be a fair swap, and it can be free labour dressed up as devotion.

When a sub says money is short, the money part stops for that evening. ◆ The dom doesn't offer anything to replace the money that evening. If he suggests work himself, later and with terms, the four questions below apply. If the trouble is serious, see Where to get help and When a sub is in trouble.

Four questions before you say yes

01 What exactly is the job, and when does it end?

02 Can I say no later without losing my place?

03 Who owns what I make, and will my name stay on it?

04 Am I thanked, and is any money or other return part of the deal?

MYTH

~~*"Work for a dom is always free labour."*~~

FACT

It can be a fair swap when the person doing it chooses the scope and can refuse. ◆

MYTH

~~*"Work for a dom is always a fair swap."*~~

FACT

It turns into free labour when the scope grows, saying no costs him his place, or he's never thanked. ◆

PART 05

Pressure patterns to recognise

Labels, ranks and loyalty games are play between adults who chose them. They turn into pressure when you can’t leave, compare or stop without a penalty.

- Press reports describe some dominants who targeted people in online support groups.
- They also report that some dominants blackmailed submissives.

Pressure inside the scene

WHAT THEY SAY OR DO

01 *You are owned, so you may not talk to other doms*

THE COUNTER

A label is a game only as long as you chose it. You can talk to anyone, and you can leave without being shamed.

WHAT THEY SAY OR DO

02 *Other doms are losers and only I am worth your money*

THE COUNTER

Cutting you off from comparison keeps you paying. Ask someone outside the scene what they see.

WHAT THEY SAY OR DO

03 *I know your weak points and I can tell this other dom*

THE COUNTER

Nothing about you is hers to pass on unless you agreed. Say no, and ask who else knows.

WHAT THEY SAY OR DO

04 *Give me your account so your sends can be shown*

THE COUNTER

Never hand over an account. It's your identity, and it's no part of the game.

WHAT THEY SAY OR DO

05 *A dom shows you who really runs another persona so that you stop paying her*

THE COUNTER

Using someone's identity to move your money is manipulation. You don't owe anyone a hunt, and you can stop paying anyone for your own reasons.

WHAT THEY SAY OR DO

06 *Asks that arrive right after payday, or right after you mention debts*

THE COUNTER

A dom who times asks to your balance or your bad day is steering your money. Pause, stick to your limit, and say the money part is over for tonight.

WHAT THEY SAY OR DO

07 *Only you can do this work, and nobody else would*

THE COUNTER

Praise isn't pay. Ask the four questions before you say yes.

Several of these can be a game between adults who agreed. Each one is a warning sign when you feel you can't refuse.

TRY IT

A request about your account

A dom you like asks for the login to your social account, so she can show your sends to the community. She says it proves devotion. What do you do?

A Refuse, and tell her your accounts are a limit

The right answer. Correct. A real dom never needs your login, and an account is your identity.

B Give it for one day only

Not this one. A day is enough to lose control of it. The request itself is the warning.

C Give her a spare account instead

Not this one. Safer than your own, but the request still shows she wants control. You're free to refuse it.

PART 06

When someone says goodbye in a way that frightens you

Any group built on attachment will have members in distress. Researchers report that findommes met clients' verbal aggression and, in some cases, suicidal tendencies. ◆ A goodbye that hints at self-harm is a crisis, even when it looks like a normal exit. ◆

If a goodbye frightens you

01 Take it seriously, whether he talks about ending his life or hurting himself.

02 Don’t answer it with a scene, with anger or with talk of money.

03 If he might be in danger right now, call the emergency number where he is. If you know where that is, tell them.

04 Point him to a crisis line in his country and to a person near him. See Where to get help.

05 Tell someone you trust that it happened. Don’t share his name or his messages with the scene.

06 Afterwards, rest. A dom who’s paid by a sub can’t be his safety net. Outside help is the way out.

REMEMBER IT

- The scene is small, and most people wear several hats.
- A few payers carry the money, so follower counts say little.
- Work for a dom is fair only when you chose the scope and can refuse.
- Labels and ranks are play until you can’t leave without a penalty.
- A goodbye that frightens you is a crisis. Get outside help.

SOURCES AND EVIDENCE

Check it

Every claim with its evidence level and its sources.

01 The scene has five kinds of actors: doms, subs, artists, tool makers and the servers where they gather.

◆

02 There's no count behind it.

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03 Arcade Goon and FlappyGoon are examples, made by Vivian, and neither moves real money.

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04 A dom can be a tool maker, a sub can be a dom somewhere else, and a dom can be a sub to a senior dom.

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16 Doms deal with each other all the time.

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17 An experienced dom teaches a newer one, often in a training room.

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18 The friction often comes from her stepping in without explaining.

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19 Doms send each other to specialists for payments, code or art.

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20 Two characters share a story.

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21 A betadomme is a dom persona who's submissive to a senior dom, and she may pass up part of what her own subs send.

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22 A faildomme chain is a pyramid where money moves up and humiliation is the point.

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29 It can be a fair swap, and it can be free labour dressed up as devotion.

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31 It can be a fair swap when the person doing it chooses the scope and can refuse.

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32 It turns into free labour when the scope grows, saying no costs him his place, or he's never thanked.

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33 They turn into pressure when you can't leave, compare or stop without a penalty.

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34 Press reports describe some dominants who targeted people in online support groups.

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[a former participant] has seen men left broke and hungry from 'paying women to talk to them' (https://www.sbs.com.au/news/the-feed/article/the-online-kink-thats-leaving-some-men-homeless-bankrupt-and-normalising-suffering/vocm5xt30)

Archive (https://web.archive.org/web/20251123124217/https://www.sbs.com.au/news/the-feed/article/the-online-kink-thats-leaving-some-men-homeless-bankrupt-and-normalising-suffering/vocm5xt30)

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Findommes, Cybermediated Sex Work, and Rinsing (McCracken and Brooks-Gordon, Sexuality Research and Social Policy 18(4), 837-854, DOI 10.1007/s13178-021-00609-3) (https://www.ebi.ac.uk/europepmc/webservices/rest/PMC8418458/fullTextXML)

Archive (https://web.archive.org/web/20261016030740/https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8418458/)

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37 A goodbye that hints at self-harm is a crisis, even when it looks like a normal exit.

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