

With the right calls made, Byron had finally gotten the ball rolling on getting a scanner into the building again. And all it took was two hours on the phone.

Now, he had nothing to do. He strolled out of his office and looked for things that needed his attention. He found none. There were no visitors either, so he killed some time by talking to Agnes for a while. They were both avid lovers of classical music, with her leaning toward opera and him toward symphony. They laughed together at the new, popular forms of music and lamented the decline and probable demise of the city's orchestra. They talked for a long time.

Their conversations were rarely this long, but Byron was trying to spend more time with Agnes to make the time he shared with Heather look less out of the ordinary. When their talk did finally wind down, Byron casually went down into the basement - to check on Heather's progress, he told himself.

Down there, the fembot's AI was coping as best it could with the task of taking a long time to record the many numbers on the pad of paper. It was doing a reasonably good job, as Mr. Clarke noticed only the pleasing shape of Heather's thighs as he came near. He made a point of looking at her face when he spoke.

"How are you making out?" he said.

As soon as the waves of sound that made up his voice struck the diaphragms of her microphones, the current they recorded was fed into her processors. The spoken sentence was broken down into its elementary syntactic components and filtered through algorithms that identified structure and found meaning. Once understood by her software, the phrase was responded to by carefully chosen words, strung together in a grammatically correct way. These were sent as pulses of electricity to the high quality speaker, which rendered an audio signal that would be recognised by Mr. Clarke as Heather's voice. It all happened in an instant.

"Good so far, I guess." she said. She had straightened out her metal and plastic spine, and turned her head to face him. The whole time she looked at him, her electronic eyes collected data both inside and outside of the spectrum of visible light. Infra red scans revealed the temperature of his body parts. This simple android agent wasn't programmed to examine the data very deeply, but if she had been, she would have noticed changes in heat distribution that indicated sexual arousal.

Byron kept it hidden as much as he could. He was disappointed with himself for feeling this way about her, but he couldn't help it. She was beautiful, and as far as he knew, she was single.

"Would you like to take an early lunch with me again?" he asked.

"Sure!" she said with a smile. She got up and placed the clipboard and pen on a shelf.

"We can beat the crowd at the sub shop again, you game?"

"Game? I don't understand." she said, looking a little puzzled. The settings that made the mechanisms of her facemask configure themselves that way were pre-programmed and automatic.

"You wanna go there ore somewhere else?" he said.

"Let's go there. I like that food." she said as she walked past him with another type of smile on her face.

The simple answers her AI produced were all he needed. He didn't consciously notice their simplicity, or that they came from within a computer.

He followed the pretty android up the stairs, enjoying every second of the view. Heather's butt was very nicely shaped, and the way she was constructed gave her a sexy, womanly walk.

While he took in the sight of her legs pumping and her buns wiggling, he thought he'd better say something.

"I'll buy... again."

The processors inside Heather's chest computed the meaning while the battery packs in her thighs supplied the power for both her motion and her "thoughts".

"Okay. Thanks Byron." she said as they emerged from the basement. Had her programming been a little more advanced, she would have offered to pay this time.

It was certainly no inconvenience to Byron. His salary provided him with a very comfortable living, and a few lunches here and there wouldn't be any problem.

The two of them continued with a light conversation while they got their coats on and passed a grumpy looking Agnes on their way out.

The sun was doing a fine job of melting away some of the snow as they chatted and walked. Byron now noticed that some of the things she said made her look a bit simple. His own doubts nagged him too. Just what did he intend to accomplish by taking his young employee out for lunch so often?

He tried to shove that question to the back of his mind as they again entered the sub shop. Byron's mouth watered at the delicious aroma inside, while Heather's chemical sensors worked overtime sorting out and identifying the character of the air they breathed.

Phet looked their way and acknowledged their presence with a bright smile, while her own processors ran the data from her cameras and microphones through pattern recognition algorithms. The Robot Control agent was back.

A substantial percentage of Phet's computing power was set aside to monitor her android adversary. From behind the sneeze guard, she gathered all the data she could.

When their turn came up, Byron and Heather ordered something a little different from the day before, and watched as the amiable female robot behind the glass constructed their sandwiches. Phet was done quickly, and moved over to the cash register. She rang the meal through and announced the total in her synthesized, accented voice.

Byron paid and again they ate. He layed off the flirting this time, keeping the conversation safe and unstimulating. Although he longed for more, he could enjoy the company of a beautiful woman for what it was.

Meanwhile, Phet was busy making sandwiches for other customers while at the same time making detailed scans of the fembot and her human companion. On Friday, the Master Computing Device at her friend's house would decide just what actions to take.

After they had finished their meal, Heather excused herself to go to the washroom. She got up and walked down the hall, identifying the correct room by the skirt-wearing stick figure on the door. Normally, she would not have been very good at deciphering such symbols, but the meaning of those ones had been programmed into her at the time of her activation.

Inside the washroom, the brown-haired fembot entered the stall and performed yet another pre-programmed routine. The meal she had just swallowed was quietly minced by sharp blades and forced out of her body. She got up, wiped, and flushed. The process was designed and executed to look completely natural and human. Heather did it flawlessly.

She washed her waterproof hands and dried them with the available paper towels. After that she went back to where Byron was and the two Archive workers exited the restaurant. As they walked back the way they came, Byron decided to give her the rest of the day off again.

"You know, you're making such good progress downstairs that I think I can get away with letting you leave early again."

"Really?" she asked.

"Yeah. I hope you don't mind." he said, jesting with her a bit.

"Oh, I don't mind." she said, not computing his humorous intent.

He chuckled a bit, then said "Do you mind if I wait with you at your bus stop?"

"Not at all." she said.

The two of them talked for a few minutes while the sun warmed the air some more. The whole time he talked to her, he was continuously being impressed by how much she knew. Of course, the whole time he talked to her, she was downloading all the data she needed from the internet, and incorporating the appropriate information into her statements.

Smart women turned him on, but this one wasn't programmed to respond, or even to recognise that. And with her lack of will or self, it was doubtful she could make a fulfilling partner for him.

None of that could have possibly crossed his mind though. While he and she talked together, he could only wish that she was his type. And that type would be lonely enough to want to spend time with an aging loner.

Her bus came and it went, with her inside - making all of those complicated calculations that required the full computing power of her CPU. He turned around and walked back to work. He shook his head at himself. What were the chances that lovely Heather would want someone like him?