

Tammy laughed lightly again, but inside her chest she was as stressed as she could be. This whole scenario wasn't about sexual enjoyment for her. She knew how Robot Control operated. Anya had given her all the information she had gleaned from the tight-lipped technician over in her lab.

Tammy, that sexy black-haired sentient android, was worried sick about Mike. She knew that Robot Control had him somewhere, probably with Byron. Heather was on her mind too.

Anya smiled at the completely inert Maria unit for a little while longer. When she realised the technician would take no action she said "How 'bout you, Maria? Do you want me to produce love for you?"

Maria waited for the Main Computer to fill her chest with word she could pump out of her speaker. "I am not programmed to want." she said.

Tammy snuggled right up close to the unmoving fembot and stroked her hands down her front side. "I've never made love to a Maria unit. But I've always thought that particular model was very sexy."

She walked around to Maria's back side. "I like these always exposed recharge ports." she said. "They make your butt look so much nicer with a touch of circuitry showing above your buns."

Tammy squeezed the technician's silicone buttocks and looked at the charge indicating LED that showed through the rectangular hole in the skin. "Mmmmmmm...." she moaned as she rested her chin on Maria's shoulder. "This could be fun."

Maria did not once move, even as Tammy's soft hair tickled her sensitive neck, ear and shoulder. She stared ahead without a mind of her own, waiting for the Main Computer to calculate the meaning of the sounds coming from Tammy's speaker.

Tammy got tired of waiting. She walked back around to face Maria. She held the technician's hand with both of hers, pressing her warmth into that permanently manicured swiss-army-knife of a repair device. She hesitated. "Maria..." she said as gently as she could, "where's Mike?"

Again the scene inside Tammy's CPU didn't match her calm exterior. She was genuinely feeling anger, frustration, desolation and despair all at once over the unknown fate of her lover and master.

Maria continued to aim her eyes ahead and said only "Access denied."

It was then that Tammy's emotional facade started to crack. The desperation came out first. "Please!" she said, raising her voice and looking pained, "Tell me where Mike is!"

Anya walked forward. "Maria, what you are observing is real human-like emotion. The Tammy robot is sentient. Sentient beings tend to form emotional attachments to other sentient beings. The Tammy unit has formed a substantial emotional attachment to the human unit Mike."

Maria turned her head to look at Anya, as if to signal that the supercomputer around them was processing her statement.

"Maria, please give me my facemask." Anya added.

The nude technician said nothing and raised her other hand out to give the part to Anya.

"Thank you." Anya said, and reattached her pretty silicone face.

Maria looked back at Tammy. Her video cameras detected the tears that had started coming out of her eyes. To the Main Computer, these tears were just another formulation of the standard saline solution it used in many of its agents. To Tammy, these were her emotions made tangible, and a plea for help from one machine to another.

"PLEASE Maria!" she cried. "Let me see Mike!"

Maria was silent for a long time. Then the Main Computer's next contribution to the conversation came wirelessly into her antenna. "That does not compute." she said.

Tammy's tear ducts pumped out more salt water as her emotional simulator programs started to hang. Her CPU was a bottleneck for her feelings and thoughts, for her calculations and computations. If it could have burst it would have.

"Let me see him!" she pleaded one more time as her face reddened with patterns of sadness. She couldn't hold back her emotions any further.

The Main Computer watched all of this and inserted values from its latest batch of recorded data into its ongoing calculations. Tammy's behaviour had given it the impetus to act decisively.

Maria got the words to speak and wasted no time in relaying Robot Control's judgement. "The Tammy robot is too unstable to sustain in its current configurations. The Tammy robot's hard drives will be erased."

Longing and sadness turned to shock on Tammy's facemask. "NO!" she cried loudly.

Anya could only stand by helplessly as she watched the ultrarobotic maids seize the frightened fembot and forcefully shut her off.

Tammy's last scream was cut short by the sudden absence of power to her speaker. Her face remained hauntingly frozen in the most wretched grimace of horror she had ever used.

Calmly and without external emotion, Anya turned to Maria and said. "The Main Computer's decision is illogical. Please reconsider the fate of the Tammy unit."

Maria didn't answer. The Maids picked Tammy's stiff form off the floor and put her on a nearby table. With cold efficiency, she was plugged into the soulless terminal again, but this time it would not try to read the data that made her a person.

The Main Computer took the only step it could take without Tammy's cooperation. It erased her.

In seconds, everything that was Tammy was gone. All of the traits she had learned from her human companion, all of the quirks she had developed on her own - all gone.

The empty shell of a mechanical woman was reset and given the barest of programming - a new serial number and the ability to follow orders. Her body went straight and her face went blank.

Anya watched, but couldn't reconcile the data. She couldn't believe they had really done it. Having no emotional programming to act upon, Anya simply made her logical point once more. "The

Tammy unit was a sentient being. Robot Control could have gained many advantages from further study of her actions."

Maria just stared back in her stubbornly senseless way. One of the maids unplugged the former Tammy unit from the console and wheeled the table out of the room. The other three maids followed, and Anya watched them all disappear as the sliding door closed after them.

Anya wished she could cry.