

With her posture perfect and her mechanical hands firmly on the steering wheel, Pam backed the large blue vehicle out of the driveway and started driving slowly down the neighborhood street. The scene recorded by her stereo video cameras got overlaid with a graphical display of the route she would need to travel. This dynamic map rotated and zoomed in as relevant data flashed quickly near the sides. All the while, she was able to see through it and operate the vehicle in an efficient and safe manner.

Once she had the route stored in her memory, she turned up the radio and began singing along. She did this by first identifying the song then downloading lyrics via her fast wireless internet connection. Her mouth mechanisms then moved in synchronisation with her synthesised singing voice as she steered the SUV through the intersections and playground zones. To other drivers and pedestrians, it would appear that she was just enjoying the music.

On top of all that activity, the processors inside her chest that acted as a kind of electronic brain were busy with separate procedures of their own. She was still trying to refine her calculations pertaining to the behaviour she had seen displayed by the human. She had to know what it all meant in order to function the way she ought. She also had to plan out the kinds of things she would talk about with the kids. Lists of possible statements were compiled in memory buffers to be used on them later - selected according to the situation and circumstances.

It was all a drain on her cognitive systems, but Pam was one of the most advanced computing machines around. There was at least as much raw computing power within her voluptuous frame as there was in some of the world's finest supercomputers - the ones officially acknowledged to exist, that is. Some things had to be sacrificed for the moment though, and those were low level bodily functions like simulated breathing and constant, minor movements.

Her modes of operation had to change though once she got to her first destination. Jessica's friend lived closest to Pam's assignment site, so she got picked up first. The pretty plump android parked the SUV on the street and went up to the front door to ring the bell. She chatted for a while with the mother of Jessica's friend while the girl got ready.

Soon after that, Jessica came over and gave Pam a hug. "Hi Pam!" she said.

"Hi sweetie!" Pam answered. "Did you have fun?" she asked, selecting the statement from one of those lists she had previously constructed.

She listened and calculated, and after a while said goodbye to the adult human and her child in the house. She led Brad's daughter back to the SUV and came up with more things to say as she listened to the child's words. Jessica was always easier for Pam to deal with than Marcus.

That boy was staying a few blocks away at his friends house. This other part of her duties went much like it had with Jessica, except Marcus was aloof to the robot as he usually was.

"Hi Pam." He said, without a hug.

The android reached out and tussled his hair a little. Marcus moved his head away and scowled.

"Don't!" he said.

Pam just smiled, and shared a seemingly-knowing look with the mother of his friend. Marcus was suddenly subdued now as he put on his shoes.

"Thanks for watching the little monster." Pam chuckled to the other woman.

"Oh, he was good." she said "Like I said, he's welcome here any time. So are you."

Pam looked at the other woman. That last statement had made her quickly calculate the possibility of sexual interaction with this other female human. As quick as a blink of her eye, Pam scanned the woman's image and processed her dimensions with sexual attraction algorithms. She computed percentages and probability rates and decided that this woman would make a fine sexual partner, but that was most likely not what she had meant.

"Thanks." Pam said without missing a beat. "Me and Brad should have you over for dinner some time."

The other mother shuddered a little at the thought. She didn't know Brad very well, but she got the impression that he was a little conceited and full of himself. She had spent much time with Pam however. Both ladies attended soccer games and practices to watch their boys play. That boy's mother did not like Pam.

"Well, I guess you're off now." she said, dropping a subtle hint to the realistic robot. "I'm on my way out soon too."

"Okay." said Pam. "See you tomorrow!"

"Bye!" she answered with a fake smile.

"Let's go Marcus." Pam said cheerfully as she grabbed the boy's hand.

He recoiled at her touch and slipped his hand out of her grasp as they exited. "Stop treating me like a kid!" he complained as they got back to the vehicle.

"You are a kid." she said after a very simple logical and syntactical operation.

"I'm almost a teenager!" he said defiantly.

"You're almost eleven..." she pointed out, "that's not teens yet."

Marcus huffed and frowned harder. He picked up the same vibe that most people did about that big beautiful black-haired woman. Something wasn't quite right about her, and people could spot that intangible uncanniness after a while.

The kid got into the back and sat next to his sister.

"Hey, Jessicrap." he said pointedly.

"MOM!" she complained loud.

Pam closed her door and turned to look at Marcus. "Stop calling your sister names." she said sternly.

"I don't have to listen to you!" he said. "You're not my mother!"

Pam made some almost instantaneous computations and answered "I'm your guardian. Besides, if you don't listen to me, I'll tell your father."

The kid returned Pam's annoyed look with one of his own. He was silent and sat back to buckle up his seat belt. Jessica began talking excitedly about her night as the blue gas-guzzler started up again and made its way back to Brad's house.

Over there, Brad was on the phone to Colin.

"She's going to get her hair done," he said, "she'll probably leave around quarter to 2."

"Okay, I'll be watching." Colin answered.

"She usually takes a long time, sometimes three hours for that."

"I'll check it out."

"Okay... will you be close enough to get pictures?"

"If I need to be I will."

"Alright." Brad said. He looked at the clock. "That's about all I can think of right now."

"Sound's good. I'll be sure you know what's going on."

"Thanks. I'll talk to you later."

"Okay, bye."

Brad clicked the phone off and went to the fridge for a beer. He cracked it open and saw Charlie get startled by the sound.

"Oh, poor little guy." he said as he put the can down. He crouched down to give the dog some attention as he stood in front of his kibble. He was eating more slowly as the days went by. It broke Brad's heart to see his health deteriorate like that. Still, he was over 13 years old. He was a senior citizen as far as poodles went.

Brad felt the animal start to calm down as he stroked him. After a few minutes, Brad picked up his beer again and went down to the basement to see what he could clean up.