

Closing time at Morgan's Pub came around rather soon for Brad and Khaled. They had downed 6 pitchers between them, and they sure acted and looked like it. The sudden turning on of all the lights in the place was the indication that it was time to get out.

They had been lucky enough to find parking behind the building rather than out in front on the street. Their cars would still be there for them to pick up the next day. Feeling ready to pass out into sleep at any moment, Brad pulled his phone out and called for a cab. Khaled leaned his own tired body against a streetlight so his fogged-up mind didn't have to worry about keeping him upright and balanced.

Brad clumsily paced around as they talked and waited. It wasn't long before the cab showed up to whisk them away. The driver made sure he was quick in dropping them off, as Brad was looking a little pale now. He got dropped off first and gave a ten to Khaled as he said goodbye. He yawned and staggered toward the door of his house as the taxi pulled away and disappeared into the quiet suburban night.

He was anxious to get out of his work clothes finally, and more than ready for bed. He decided to go to the guest room again so he wouldn't wake Pam. As quietly as he could in this state, he unlocked the front door and stepped inside. He got out of his shoes and went to use the washroom, then retreated again to that spare room.

He layed down on his back and immediately got the bedspins. The room seemed to twist and rotate around him, causing him to get nauseous fast. He got up and bolted across the hallway to the washroom. He closed the door behind him and got to his knees in front of the toilet bowl. Into it he retched the contents of his stomach, and heaved some more after for good measure. He knew he had tried to cram too much fun into his stolen night of freedom. There wasn't a chance in hell he'd make it into work that morning.

He stood up after he was sure he was done and washed his hands and face again. The android in the next room heard and recorded the sounds. Her AI could easily decode the story being told by this particular sonic sequence. Brad had come home drunk like this before, and spent the pre-dawn hours puking into the toilet a few times too. She compared probability calculations and decided that for her own good it was best to just stay away from the human until he woke up several hours from then.

He staggered back to the guest room and layed down again. This time, he took some advice from his drinking friends and rested with one leg off the bed. The effect of having one foot grounded might have been purely psychological, but it seemed to help. The spinning effect wasn't nearly as bad, and he could now coax his mind into shutting down for the night.

It was a fitful sleep for him. He heard Pam get up, then the kids. He got up too, and pulled his phone out of his pants on the floor so he could call in sick to work. As he layed down again, he heard his family prepare for and eat breakfast. Their talking was thankfully at a minimum, and he drifted again into some much needed rest.

Later on, Pam had sat the kids down in front of the quieter than usual TV for some electronic babysitting. She had some needs of her own to attend to now. She walked quietly up the stairs to the bedroom again and closed the door. She locked it too, then went over to close the window and shut the blinds. When she computed that the possibility of being watched or seen was minimal, she sat down at the dresser in front of her makeup mirror.

She looked at her reflection as her hand reached up to grab the sides of her face. Her interlocking mechanisms released it, and she pulled it away from the rest of her head. Now the video cameras behind her eyes made some detailed scans around the edges of the oval-shaped device. Some of the contact points weren't connecting, and that could cause big trouble if it wasn't dealt with soon. Point by point, the voluptuous fembot scanned the connectors and logged the details to a file on one of her hard drives.

After two minutes of that, she turned her attention to the complicated machinery perched atop her neck and shoulders. She looked at the mirror and leaned in close to make the same kinds of scans to her opened head. While bright LEDs of many colours flashed around the complex circuitry and electronics, she recorded a high resolution video stream of all those matching points around the edges where her pretty silicone face clicked in. She held her bangs out of the way with her other hand as she scanned the top portion of the rounded edge. A second file of confusingly detailed results got written down for the Master Computing Device to read later.

When she was done, she kept holding her hair out of the way and clicked her human-looking face back over the purely artificial one. Her round glass eyeballs were once again framed by natural looking eyelids and eyelashes, and her naked magnetic speaker was once again hidden by her full red lips. She looked at her own perfectly empty expression as she received and recorded more data on this latest connection. 21.7% of the extremely small but important connection points had again failed to properly connect. Her stay at Marcia's house today would have to last longer than planned.

When she computed that she looked fully human again, Pam rolled up the blinds, opened the window and unlocked the door. She went downstairs and waited for Brad to get up. The kids were again mostly ignoring her. Marcus was watching action cartoons while Jessica was laying on the floor in front of an untouched colouring book. She kept looking under the table where little Charlie used to hide.

Pam sat silently too. There wasn't much for her AI to make her speaker say. Almost an hour went by before Brad emerged from what was becoming his room. Pam's microphones recorded the sound of him walking slowly to the washroom and closing the door. She stared out blankly as she waited, but now at least she wasn't so dumbly smiling. She would wait for him to come out before telling him she was on her way out again.

He took his time in there. He emptied his bladder once more and swallowed some aspirin from out of the medicine cabinet. He came out at last and went straight to the kitchen to get some more beer inside him fast. The old 'Hair of the Dog' cure still worked the best. Pam stood up as he was walking down the stairs. He didn't look at her. She followed slowly as he went into the kitchen. She waited with automatic patience as he reached inside the fridge and cracked open a cold one.

"Brad honey, I need to go shopping again." she said, using the excuse that was most likely to be believed.

The man finished gulping until he needed air, then closed his eyes and hoped the alcohol would reach his brain fast. His bloodshot eyes looked at her as he kept the can near to his face.

"Sure." was all he said.

She leaned in close and set her digital voice to whisper mode. "I'm gonna pick up Marcus's jersey too."

That reminded Brad about what had happened with his son the day before. He set a major frown on his face and took another drink.

"So that should take you, what.... five hours?" he asked, being as cynically sarcastic as he could be.

"About that." she said, totally missing his point.

"Whatever." he said. He knew exactly where she'd be going. He had a phone call to make now to make sure her movements were recorded. He wandered slowly around her sexy plump chassis and went to go sit down on the couch.

Pam watched him leave the kitchen and made a series of calculations. Still, there was nothing she could figure out for herself. She went to the washroom just for a realistic display of humanness, then said goodbye and left the house.

Brad listened for her to be gone finally, then went to phone Colin.