

Rochelle kept acting drunk and holding on to Thomas as he fell into a natural sleep. The dose of CO gas might not have been necessary at this point, but the robot was not programmed to deviate from the parameters of her mission. For two hours, she stayed in the same position and released the gas into the room. Her advanced chemical sensors were many times more sensitive than a bloodhound's nose, and they would tell her CPU when the level of gas in the air had reached 600 parts per million. This amount would keep him unconscious while she searched through his briefcase to find the discs she was after. It might also do long lasting damage to his relatively frail human body, but this factor had been excluded from the calculations made by the main computer. Neither it nor any of the robots had the capacity to actually care.

When Rochelle detected enough of the odourless gas in the air, she changed modes and pulled away from Mr. King. She stopped acting drunk. The firelog in the fireplace was now a warm lump of ash as the gorgeous fembot stood up and straightened out her panties. Still dressed in the sexy and revealing lingerie, she stepped softly toward the briefcase. Moving silently and efficiently, she sat down cross-legged on the floor and aimed her cameras at the combination lock. The exact position of the digits was registered in her memory. She recalled the probable combination from one of her ultra-fast hard drives. Then with thumbs that had no prints, she rolled three zeros into alignment. The tabs on the ends of the case cleared the lock's tumblers and the briefcase was opened.

She pulled the leather case on to her lap. Her eyes immediately scanned the inside of the case. Right on top of everything else, they registered three nearly flat rectangular objects. In less than a nanosecond she computed these to be discs. She removed the first one and flipped it over. "Project H - 3" was written on it in Mr. King's handwriting. The other discs were #2 and #1. Success.

Her job wasn't over yet though. The data contained on these DVD-Rs had to be copied bit by bit into her memory and written on one of her hard drives. This was simple enough for her to do.

First, she inhumanly turned her head right around to check that Thomas hadn't by some chance awoken. He hadn't. The twist marks in her neck quickly vanished as her head returned to face forward. She then removed disc #1 from its case and slipped it onto her index finger, with the label side facing her hand. She brushed some hair out of her face as the middle part of that finger expanded to grip the disc firmly. The expanded part of her finger began to rapidly spin, and with it, the disc. She raised her arm to her face and positioned the spinning disc a couple of inches away from her right eye. A laser beam was projected onto the surface, reading it like any ordinary drive would. She moved her hand slowly down so that the entire disc could be read from the beginning of the first track to the end of the data. Her cold glass eyes relayed the flow of information to the audio/video processors encased in her hard plastic skull. Those processors checked for errors before writing the stolen data onto a hard drive in her chest. It took the artificial secretary just over four minutes to read the disc once, but each one was read and internally recorded twice just to be sure nothing had gone wrong.

The entire process took about a half an hour. At the end of it, she methodically searched through the rest of his briefcase, taking visual snapshots of every paper document and scanning an additional disc that only turned out to be a CD by Céline Dion.

In less than an hour, she had finished with the briefcase, reset the lock and put it back where it was. She closed the nozzle of the gas canister within her body and went to open a window to bring some clean air into the room.

When she did, the house alarm went off as expected. It was loud enough to rouse Mr. King from his coma-like sleep. With a look of intense pain on his reddening face, he clamped his hands on the

sides of his head and forced his eyes open. Fast computing on Rochelle's part put a startled and scared look on her facemask as she started acting drunk again.

"I'm sorry!" she yelled over the piercing alarm. "How do I turn it off?"

In a world of hurt, Thomas got up as fast as he could and stumbled over to the control panel by the door. He had great trouble focusing on the keypad, but he managed eventually to punch in his code and stop that damned alarm.

With his eyes closed tight and his body crouched, he stumbled over to sit down on the leather sofa. He leaned forward with his hands over his head. The winter air that was rushing into the cabin was quickly displacing the bad air.

"I'm so sorry!" Rochelle said again as she went to sit down next to him. The voice her speaker generated was emotionally charged and plaintive. To add to the realism, her eyes began releasing artificial tears.

"What you do that for?" Thomas said quietly.

"I had to!" she said, her voice quivering. "You wouldn't wake up!" Her answer was pre-programmed. So far, so good.

Goosebumps appeared on her silicone skin as Thomas shivered.

"Close the fucking window!" he said a lot louder.

The fembot got up and closed the window. Her chemical sensors took a reading and found 63 parts per million of carbon monoxide gas in the room now. That was safe enough. She said sorry again and wiped away fake tears as she reached over to light a cigarette. She offered a drag to Thomas, who just shook his head.

"Are you okay? I was so afraid."

Thomas sat still for a while, then folded his arms down over his chest and lifted his head. He looked pretty ill. He took a deep breath and gave Rochelle a little smile.

"I'll be fine." he said. "I just drank too much, that's all."

The crying had made her mascara run, giving the android a look of vulnerability. Another tear flowed from one of Rochelle's tear ducts as she gave him a hug.

They both leaned back on the couch for another long, silent moment. After that, Thomas let out a slight laugh. "I need a nap." he said.

He pulled himself into a standing position. Rochelle stood up too. He was still a bit drunk, and she acted the same.

"Are you going to bed honey?" she said.

"Yep."

"Can I sleep in your bed too?"

"Yep." he said again.

Neither of them spoke another word until they slowly made it up the stairs and into his large bed. They got under the sheets and faced each other. She gently stroked his arm and smiled at him. He smiled too and said "G'night."

She said the same thing and went into sleep mode. Thomas went back to sleep within a minute, so he missed experiencing the realistic way in which the robot spy slowed her simulated breathing and heart rate. She continued to hold his hand as they slept.