

Literary Sketch: Mechanising the Maid

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Rosie enjoyed nothing more than hearing the doorbell ring in the middle of the day. The loud chimes echoed down the long corridors of the palatial home signaling that there was someone standing on the step awaiting her attention. Every time Rosie responded. She tottered towards the door as quickly as she could, in her inappropriate shoes, her stiletto heels tapping out an almost desperate cadence as she wondered if she would manage to outpace the caller's impatience.

Whenever she did, Rosie was always secretly delighted to see the stranger's reaction to the fact that the door was being answered by what, for all appearances, seemed to be a stereotypical French Maid. Her outfit was complete and utterly authentic, from the headband all the way down to the feather duster she clutched in one hand. The uniform had been researched, for historical accuracy, and sourced from those few French outfitters still extant, ones who had once supplied such uniforms for the Gallic elite and their domestic underlings.

Most were flabbergasted. They tried to remain polite, not even so much as referring to her attire. Indeed they attempted to play the whole thing straight, as though they were used to being greeted at the door of a large house, by a woman who possessed all of the curves and shape of the star of a bawdy seaside postcard. Seeing her balancing on ludicrous heels and showing just how provocative a French Maid's outfit could be under such circumstances.

Some seemed to instantly understand, yet misunderstand the joke, thinking that it was funny being a post-modern setting, and ironic owing to the bimbo's image that Rosie projected with her figure. They winked knowingly then threw her signs with their fingers intended to show solidarity and affirm her as a feminist sister in their own eyes. The meaning of these gestures were almost instantly lost on Rosie, and soon faded from her rather unreliable short-term memory.

The truth was that Rosie did not wear the outfit, and play the part, of a maid for anyone other than Tom and herself. Tom was the burly young man who wandered, here and there, about the estate wearing overalls and boots, those of the dutiful handyman. Both would have faithfully stuck to their agreed roles had anyone visiting the house asked where the owners and occupants were on a given day, or at a certain hour. Both of them would comment, in a habitually deferent manner, that the masters were away, abroad, and would not be back for quite a few months. Neither would have admitted to the truth, that the house, estate, and considerable fortune that went with it, was the sole possession of Rosie herself.

It was not completely a lie either, as Tom genuinely was the estate's handyman and general caretaker, and Rosie found it hard to think of herself as the lady of the house.

The memory of Rosie's late mother still held that title in her mind. Also the mislead served them well in their lifestyle, since no one thought the servants of the estate were worth taking the time to talking to once they were informed that the owners were not present, they generally left them alone.

Rosie lived an exceptionally sheltered life even before she inherited her parent's fortune, upon their deaths. She was a sweet-natured, yet not at all intellectually minded girl. Her parents had used their wealth to shield her from the cruelties of the world, thinking that they could make up for lost time when she grew older and her mind had matured somewhat. This was something they kept putting off, many times, as Rosie grew into a charming, pretty, and yet almost utterly naïve young woman. Rosie was not stupid in the strictest sense, but she was not possessed of much beyond the whimsical thoughts of a bright child, in many ways.

Being wealthy, her parents were protected from many of the dangers of the world; ironically their deaths came from partaking in one of those sometimes-dangerous activities, familiar to the rich, and beyond the reach of the poor. They died when their private helicopter crashed on a routine trip, leaving their innocent daughter to fend for herself, virtually alone, in the massive house which threatened to become her prison.

If she had thought deeply about things, Tom was, she might have supposed, either her Prince Charming, or Mellor the gardener. The thought would depend on whether one preferred to reference fairy-tales or post-modern literature. Tom had begun working there only a short time before Rosie's parent's deaths. Rosie had always enjoyed watching him work, eyeing his hard-working muscles with no artifice from the windows of the house as he labored in the garden on the hottest of days. When she invited him in for a refreshing drink one afternoon, the working class lad was reminded of the time he read a formerly banned work by Lawrence himself. Tom accepted the proffered drink whilst eyeing her, almost outrageously short summer dress, and trying not to wonder how it managed to keep her chest under any kind of control.

The drink was never consumed as they were entwined moments later and had been ever since. It had not taken Tom long to realize that he was the more clever of the two, but he was also a good person by nature and genuinely fell for Rosie's naivety, finding her unrestrained and loving in an emotional, as well as physical sense. Their lives together were uncomplicated and enjoyable, pretending to maintain their adopted roles in the daytime and filling their nights with whatever they desired, and not really caring about the outside world at all.

One evening they were lying upon one of the sofas in a room which was barely able to contain the cutting-edge television that might as well have been one of the walls, for all of its size. Rosie stiffened for a moment and Tom was just able to make out that her face was screwed up in concentration as he studied her reflection on the screen. The signals she was sending indicated she was thinking, indeed she was actually deep in thought, and this was rare, rare enough for him to realize that she was pondering something hard.

Tom asked Rosie, "Penny for your thoughts?" Rosie made a confused sound and made a hastily return from her mental reverie saying, "You'd never get rich like that," and laughing after he asked the question. But he persisted, "Seriously, what are you thinking about?" Rosie said, "It's your birthday next month, and I was trying to remember what you'd been hinting about that you wanted for a present." Tom, uncomfortably replied, "Err, that was last month, we had a big party, remember?"

Rosie chided herself saying, "Duh, how much of a scatterbrain am I?" and slapped her hand across her forehead in embarrassment. Tom shook his head and said, "That's okay, it's nice that you made such an effort to think of me." Rosie sounded dejected and said, "OK? I guess." Tom pressed for a response, "Why so sulky?" She shrugged and said, "Oh, I don't know, I guess I spent so long thinking about it that it feels like I wasted lot of time and effort, once you put me straight." Tom sensed her mood was plummeting and thought quickly of a way to salvage it as he told her, "Well, it is our five-year anniversary coming up at the end of the month, you could put all of that mental energy into something to mark that." Rosie laughed and said, much to his relief, "That's a great idea!"

They fell into watching television for a while as silence settled over the room. On screen was a longer than average commercial, almost an infomercial in length and style. An overeager salesman was outlining the services of the company he was being paid to shill for, explaining how they could revolutionize the viewers life for a reasonable price. Behind him was a building of some kind, glass-fronted, and anonymous cinder block. Inside two men in white coats were guiding a woman on a tour; both appeared to be pointing out various things to her at the same time. The view switched to the interior of a clinic, where the same men administered tests to the woman and the narrator droned on about the properties of their product, while in the foreground a group of technicians tended to a production line producing what looked like android maids.

The salesman said, "DomestiDroids," as the androids were shown being delivered to various households who were delighted to receive them. Then the salesman continued, "We have the answer to all of your domestic and robotic needs." Rosie looked at Tom, laughed, and said, "Hello, that woke someone up!" A little embarrassed Tom shifted trying to keep her from being able to see his state of arousal and said, "Hey!" Rosie kept teasing and said, "I never had you down as a robosexual! What has that bag of bolts got that I haven't?"

Tom sounded genuinely embarrassed and replied, "Sorry, It's just the way they make those things to look so much like a woman. And I always had a weird thing for the robot maid in that cartoon where the family lived in the future, well not the maid herself, more like the idea of a robot woman that went around the house on wheels." Tom said, Yeah, I know it's weird, but we all have a couple of strange fantasies hidden away like that." Rosie giggled mischievously, "We're getting one for our anniversary!" Tom replied, genuinely surprised, "Really?" Rosie said, "Yeah, as long as I don't walk in on the two of you shagging it – that's what I'm for!"

Tom felt Rosie grip his erect member firmly and move herself backwards then she said in a mock robotic voice, "Commencing interface, please insert your cable into the mating socket!" Rosie was only wearing a silk dressing gown, and he found the indicated connector easily. As soon as he was plugged in she ordered, "Begin download," from there no further instructions were necessary.

Rosie was assiduously dusting, the sound of the doorbell made Rosie look up from the dresser, her usual smile spread across her face as she realized that she was about to be engaged in her favorite maid's duty, well that which did not involve Tom. She was reasonably close to the door as well, and that meant that she covered the distance before the caller had become too bored with ringing the bell and begun hammering the knocker in earnest. It had been a few days since the conversation about the robot maid, and Rosie had contacted the company the very next morning to place her order, so she was almost totally convinced that she would be answering the door to accept the delivery of the same.

For all of her teasing and feigning jealousy, Rosie could not genuinely say that the idea of having an anatomically alluring android zipping around the house was something that threatened her. She was not, in any way, afraid of a robot that was essentially a glorified vacuum cleaner and she would probably have bought Tom a love-doll, if he had been so inclined, for the same reason. While she was by no means a genius, Rosie was sensible enough to know there were some things that a real woman could offer that no automaton could match. Even with all of the advances in modern technology that seemed to pop up every time she turned on the television, Rosie had no fear.

Rosie opened the door and was greeted by the sight of a nondescript man in a strikingly white jumpsuit and baseball cap, both of which bore the embroidered legend "DomestiDroid." Another couple of men in identical uniforms could be seen shuffling around a similarly white van, parked on the drive at the bottom of the grand steps leading to the front porch of the house. The first man said, "Good morning miss!" His eyes stood out on stalks at the sight of her, "Am I correct in assuming this is," he glanced down at the sturdy tablet in his hand and recited her address, before looking back up for confirmation.

Rosie nodded happily, "Yes." The man returned her smile and proffered the tablet for her fingerprint and then had her sign her name with a stylus in addition. Rosie asked, in a helpful tone of voice, "Would you like to bring it around the back?" the man replied, "Beg your pardon?" Rosie replied, "The android, there's a back door round there at ground level," her tone became more questioning as she went on, "with a lift and everything?" The man laughed suddenly, as if finally understanding her, "Oh! Oh, no, we're not here to drop off, we're here to pick up!" Rosie asked, "Pick up what?" Before the man could answer, there was a strange hiss in her ear and a sharp pain in the side of her neck. Rosie slapped at the spot, assuming she had been bitten by an insect, and while turning around, she had just enough time to see one of the other uniformed men holding an injector gun with a spent cartridge and the other moving to catch her.

Until that moment, she had not realized that she was falling down; time seemed to be slowing to a crawl. As she felt herself being caught in the arms of the men around her, all of her perceptions slowed to the point where nothing was truly distinct any longer. Sounds, sensations, and colors all blended into one confused mass, until she lost consciousness.

The first man swore at his colleague, holding the now empty injector gun, "Aww, bollocks! Jeremy, what in the hell did you have to go and do that for?" Jeremy shrugged and said, "She's the one on the paperwork, isn't she?" The first man replied, "Yes, and?" Jeremy said, "Then she's the one we're collecting, right?" The reply came, "Well...yes." Then Jeremy asked, "Then what's the problem?" The first man admitted, "Well, technically there isn't one, but knocking her out like that seems a bit strong when I could probably have talked her round. You make us look like ruddy kidnappers or something!"

Jeremy pointed for emphasis, "Look, I don't know about you, but I'm starving. And I'm not going to be late for my dinner because some daffy cow can't remember what she signed up for!" The first man raised his hands in a gesture of surrender, "Ok, I'm sure they'll explain it all to her when she comes round at the clinic and smooth over any ruffled feathers. You two get her loaded into the back of the van and let's get going. I'm starving too!"

Jeremy and his still silent colleague made typically irritated faces as they nevertheless set about picking Rosie up from where she had collapsed onto the ground. One with hands under her arms and the other holding her by the knees, they quickly lifted her up and carried her unconscious body into the back of the van, closing the doors behind them.

As the van pulled away, Tom poked his head over the hedgerow he had been pruning, and took in the fact that it was travelling away from the house. Then Tom assumed that, whatever its occupants had wanted, Rosie had already dealt with them and sent them on their way. Unperturbed, he went happily back to his pruning and thought nothing more of it.

Rosie did not fully come around the moment she regained some form of awareness, but instead merely drifted from a deep and utterly dreamless state of sleep into one where she was vaguely aware that there was a real world a very short distance from the non-physical place in which her mind was currently resting. To her it was so much like waking naturally and allowing herself to remain half-asleep on any typical morning that there was no sense of panic about her and no recollection whatsoever of the reason she actually lost consciousness in the middle of the afternoon.

She could not have known it at the time, but this was a deliberate effect, numerous I.V.s and tubes were feeding a steady cocktail of drugs into her system as she lay on an operating table made of a smooth, plastic material. The clinical setting alone would have been enough to send Rosie into a blind panic, let alone the accompanying fact that she was completely naked as well.

Both her nudity and passivity were required for what lay ahead, as a mechanical arm descended from a surgical droid in the ceiling of the chamber, its many limbs making it resemble a metallic spider as it hovered above. One limb sported a probe with an impossibly fine needle sprouting from the end, and tubes wrapped around its length. It came to a halt just a few millimeters above Rosie's exposed navel, paused for a mere second, and then inserted the needle into the depression of her belly button. Being a machine, it did not stop, nor wince at the thought of what it was doing, and being sedated, Rosie felt it only as an abstract thing that did not inspire discomfort or pain.

Rosie could have been forgiven for mistaking the strange tingling sensations that followed as merely a normal effect caused by stimulating the redundant connection between the nerve cells in her navel and her spine. But in reality the feeling was caused by a legion of nanites, microscopically small robots, that had been waiting in the tubes wrapped around the arm and now being released into her body through the needle at the end of the probe.

The proximity of her navel to her spinal cord made that point of entry eminently suitable for the needs of the nanites, as they grouped by the hundreds, unpacking the data that would give them their instructions as to what to do inside Rosie's body. Within what would have been an infinitesimally small amount of time for a human being, this was done, and different groups of nanites used the natural conduits of Rosie's circulatory system and nerves to set off for the parts of her body where they were programmed to start their work. Some remained where they were, attaching micro-circuitry to her spine and preparing to convert the inert space of her navel into a connection port in anticipation of more changes, still to come.

Those that arrived in the vicinity of Rosie's cranium soon spread out and sank deep into her brain. Here they installed processors and efficient conduits for the transfer of information that rerouted the cognitive functions of her brain to the new devices, rerouting cerebral capacity needed for new purposes, and taking control away from other functions such as her own contemplation and the capacity to daydream. Memory banks soon began to come on line that would store data required for what lay ahead, interfacing with her organic memory and busying themselves with bringing order to the whimsical chaos that they found therein.

Meanwhile, outside of her body, new arms had descended and were busy inserting small sockets, one into Rosie's navel and another into a circular hole cut into the back of her skull by a laser-scalpel, just at the nape of her neck. These were eagerly met by the nanites on the inside, connected to her now growing internal network of technology, effectively allowing Rosie to be hooked into an outside network. The connections also meant that she was technically no longer strictly human, as they settled into her skin, the arms delivered cables which they connected to them, Rosie was no more aware of the fact that she had now become a marriage of the organic and the mechanical than she was of her location or what was happening in general.

Without awakening from her chemically induced state of slumber, Rosie had crossed over from one form of existence into another entirely, sleepwalking over the boundary, and becoming a cyborg whilst she languished insensible. Soon a helmet lowered down over her scalp, dealing accurate and quick pinpoints of electricity, which not only denuded her of the hair upon her head, but also ensured that the roots would not grow more follicles. Similar devices attended to the hair on other parts of her body, leaving her as bald and smooth as a mannequin, once they had accomplished their task they retreated.

This done, the sides of the operating table moved upwards and began changing shape, as they came closer, they began to conform themselves to the outline of Rosie's body. Soon Rosie appeared to be laid in the lower half of a rubber coffin, rather than on top of a flat table. An arm bearing a nozzle descended and began to spray a steady stream of glutinous and utterly colorless goo into the slight space between her legs. Oozing like a heavy slime, it sank between her thighs to pool out of sight below, but was kept from going anywhere higher than her buttocks by the way in which the edges of the transformed table now hugged her sides.

The nozzle continued to dispense the substance which travelled slowly between Rosie's waist and ankles, until the level rose up, through the space between her legs and began to fill above that as well. Only when there was an almost perfect line between the very highest point of her ample thighs and the surface of the substance did it cease to emerge and the arm bearing the nozzle retreat.

With a chorus of whirrs and whines, the ceiling around the operating droid began to open itself up into separate sections, and the droid itself folded its many limbs away and retreated slowly into the hole that was being created. In its place emerged four sections of a material similar to the plastic from which the, box-like, operating table was made, each one clearly forming a quarter of what would become, once put together, the lid to the lower half in which Rosie already lay. Each piece was born by an arm which maneuvered it into place and aligned the pieces so perfectly that they joined literally only a second before the newly formed lid pressed down atop the lower half of the box.

Tubes wrapped around Rosie's arms terminating in sockets on the lid they twitched and jerked to life as the sound of powerful pumps filled the room, quickly sucking the air from inside of the box so that it clung ever tighter to Rosie's body inside. Soon as the air was evacuated and the pumps ceased other tubes hanging from the robotic arms began to move their clear lengths slowly filling with a silver liquid that flowed downwards and into the box. The fluid occasionally caught the light as it did so, and allowing the glimmer of metallic silver to be seen in the otherwise sterile space of the operating chamber. The flow of fluid kept on going, never slowing or pausing, for long minutes that seemed to stretch on forever, until finally there was a mechanical click, as an unseen gauge judged that enough of the liquid had been injected and the supply was cut off abruptly.

Now the noise which filled the room came from the box itself, as the pressure and heat from its surface increased exponentially. The industrial-grade cooling systems built into

the walls and designed to keep the internal temperature to a constant level began to produce their own sound, one that was almost as loud. The cooling system struggled and expended great effort to counter the waste heat pouring from the pressurized box and only just managed to do so. Luckily, other than Rosie, there were no living things inside of the room to feel the battle between the machines intent upon seeing the temperature go to two opposite extremes, and Rosie, sealed inside the airtight box, was insulated totally from what was going on outside it.

Finally the hellish sound of the machinery within, and attached to, the box began to lessen as the processes cycled down and eventually came to a stop. As if elated at winning the battle, the cooling systems did something new, filling the air with a fine mist. Soon the ambient temperature fell back down to a level too chilly to be comfortable for a normal human being to endure.

There was a sharp hiss of pressure being released, and then the lid of the box began to lift away once carried upon the arms which delivered it and splitting into four sections as it went. At the same time the lower half started to flatten out, pulling itself away from where it had enclosed Rosie's still form, reshaping itself into a semblance of a plastic operating table. As it did so, none of the fluids and substances which had been pumped into the box could be seen to come seeping out, and no trace of them was to be found on the interior of what had been the box either.

As soon as Rosie's body was out of the shadow of the retreating box lid, it became instantly clear that the substances had not been removed from the inside, nor had they somehow evaporated either. Every square inch of Rosie's naked form caught the harsh illumination of the halogen strip lighting as it played over her newly revealed curves and lines, the same silver which had been pumped into the box now served as the color of her exposed skin. And the skin had not merely been dyed a metallic color, it was instead visibly smooth and unnatural looking, smoother than any genuine human skin could ever have been, in fact it resembled silver rubber more than anything else.

As more of Rosie's strangely altered form was revealed, it was possible to see that she had been changed in ways other than just the color and texture of her skin. Above the waist Rosie's form remained somewhat the same. Rosie's upper body was merely transformed into a silver version of the woman she had previously been, albeit more closely resembling a bald, metallic mannequin. But below the waist she now lacked a distinct pair of legs, the clear substance pumped in between them had set into solid filler that was almost the same density as the flesh of her thighs and smoothing over the gap between them. This new rubbery layer over her skin blended her legs into a seamless whole. Her feet were similarly bound together beneath her new covering; they pointed upwards at the end of the table and gave her resemblance to an Egyptian mummy in its wrapping of bandages.

Rosie did not stir and remained there; waiting for whatever would come next. She did not have to wait long, as more devices emerged from the hatch in the ceiling, their mechanical arms lowering them down towards the operating table in smooth, precise,

movements. A helmet similar in shape and size to the one which had denuded her head of hair settled over her now bald, silver, scalp. Meanwhile a more bulky and boxlike contraption opened itself up just enough to allow her feet to enter its interior and then proceeded to swallow them right up to her ankles.

Both devices sprang to life at virtually the same moment of time, both filling the room with the sound of their unknown functions as they set about their individual tasks and purposes. While the box around Rosie's feet made the largest amount of noise, in long sustained blasts, the helmet upon her head competed with high-pitched spikes of sound coming one after another for the entire time that it was active. Although the helmet seemed to be working much faster in terms of pace, there nevertheless appeared to be some form of synchronization between the two devices and they ceased producing noise and began to detach themselves from Rosie virtually in the same second.

The evidence of what had been done to Rosie's body, at both extremities, only served to reinforce the point she had been transformed fundamentally by the processes carried out upon her in the operating chamber. Where before Rosie might have been merely mistaken for a woman who had been perhaps painted a metallic color and put inside of an elaborate costume, now there were serious and significant alterations to her body which made it impossible to ignore the fact that she had been turned into something else entirely.

Rosie's scalp was no longer bald but now sported a full head of hair once again. The difference was that where her hair had formerly been straight and a deep chestnut brown in color, she now sported a curly bob of silver cords (as they could not have been described as follicles), that twisted and sprung away from her scalp. Thick and somewhat serpentine in appearance, they served to accentuate the look of a doll, an imitation of real that was almost comical in the manner that it aped the real thing yet failed to replicate it.

But while the changes to her hair were synthetic, they still appeared to mimic the general shape of what had previously been. In contrast, what had been done to her feet was the utter opposite, not least because of the fact that they were simply no longer there at all. At the point where her ankles should have given way to her feet, Rosie's body now came to an abrupt end; her new rubber skin tucked into a roughly oval metal socket the same circumference as her now united lower half at that point. In addition to being deprived of her legs, there was now also no way in which she could have risen from the table and moved under her own power, other than resorting to crawling on her silver belly.

A new set of mechanical arms began to descend from the opening in the ceiling, this pair ended with manipulating digits which held a metal housing for a wheel whose color matched Rosie's metallic shade perfectly. Atop the housing was a socket that mated perfectly to the one at the very end of Rosie's body. The arms wasted no time maneuvering it into position where the two could be brought together. When they made contact there was a deep click of metal, as magnetic connectors married the wheel housing to Rosie's body. If anyone had been there to hear it they would have noticed the whirring of servos and screws as her wheel housing was fixed in place.

A moment later, Rosie's eyelids fluttered, the movement of her eyes below could be seen clearly, like the darting of someone in R.E.M. sleep. Then they suddenly flicked open, and she sat up smoothly in one unperturbed motion, swinging her newly attached wheel down and placing it upon the floor as easily as she might have done with her feet before her transformation. Her hands were folded neatly in her even, silver lap, and she made no signs that she intended to move any further for the time being. Only her eyes continued to twitch and move, showing outward signs of things going on inside of her mind.

Rosie was used to awakening with a feeling of confusion and fuzziness before she came fully around and remembered where she was and what she had been doing before falling asleep. Rosie was not terribly surprised that she could not readily recall what had transpired previously as she awakened. She simply remained seated and still, happy to wait for her typically scattered thoughts to regain some vague sense of order.

Rosie felt a sense of relief when she saw the readout in the corner of her Head's Up Display indicating that her Central Processing Unit was coming online and would soon begin relaying information. Strangely she had no compulsion to even question why she had a CPU in the first place. Now her thought processes were being routed through her CPU for the sake of efficiency, and that would have been the equivalent of an organic brain wondering why it had a cerebral cortex.

The DomestiDroid logo appeared in the top left-hand corner of her HUD, atop a dialogue box that streamed constant readings indicating her orders, and updates on how her essential systems were functioning. At the sight of it, Rosie sat upright and awaited instructions, striving to fulfill the behavioral protocols now programmed into her cyborg brain. Rosie was also rewarded with subtle releases of endorphins when she followed her orders. MaidBot unit number 2025, "Rosie," she was thrilled seeing her designation appearing amongst the prompts.

Rosie's CPU completed a basic self-check and determined her internal systems were functioning within standard parameters. Also her cranial hardware, and wetware, was functioning correctly so her CPU detailed a series of tasks for Rosie intended to test her physical readiness. Rosie had no need to memorize the commands, as they appeared one after another in her dialogue box in red text until she had completed them, then changing to green when completed indicating it was time to move on to the next one.

Happily rising from the operating table, Rosie heard the subtle sound of the gyroscopic stabilizers built into the drive unit of her wheel-housing coming online. Her gyros interacted directly with the organic systems in her ears and helped control her natural sense of balance, her stabilizers responded virtually instantly to her programming and she easily maintained an upright position on the single wheel beneath her. There was no beginner's wobble to be seen, as Rosie already possessed all necessary abilities to either remain stock still, bend and stretch, or sweep around at whatever speed she required.

Rosie never feared tumbling over, as a human being might while learning to ride a bicycle.

She executed each and every one of the basic maneuvers that her task list demanded, none of them were taxing in any real sense, but most required subtle alterations to her orientation and balance that demonstrated how well her stabilization systems were working. To any outside observer, they would have watched a newly created MaidBot circling around in the confined space of the operating room, swaying from side to side, crouching down and stretching out her arms as she went, a strange and yet graceful ballet.

As each of her assigned tasks was completed, Rosie felt a release of pleasant endorphins into her circulatory system, rewarding her for her obedience and putting a pleasant smile on her face as the system did so, until finally she came to a halt. All of her required checks had been completed now all that remained for her to do was go into low power mode and await collection, and then she would be packaged and prepared for delivery. While waiting in her semi-dormant state, Rosie was excited at the prospect she longed to fulfill her purpose. There seemed to be nothing more natural and normal to her than the thought of being packed into a shipping crate, loaded onto a van and delivered to her new owner.

Tom took what seemed to Rosie, an eternity to realize that the sound of ringing was not related to the throbbing pain that he felt in his head, but rather the insistent pressing of the doorbell button outside. He groaned and opened his eyes only to be instantly assaulted by the intrusion of daylight and an unpleasant reminder that he had passed out in the early hours of the morning after drinking the contents of a bottle taken at random from the drink cabinet in the study.

Tom rose shakily to his feet and began to stagger towards the front door. He reasoned that whoever needed to ring the bell so enthusiastically would most likely be doing so because they were wanting to share some vital piece of news about just where on earth Rosie had wandered off to. As he went to the door there was vague hope in the back of his mind that, besides answering some of the questions buzzing around in his own mind, the person or persons at the door would also be willing to excuse his current state of physical dishevelment and mental disarray as a product of his partner suddenly going missing.

Tom had been doing his usual rounds in the garden at the time of Rosie's disappearance, so it did not become clear to him there was anything to be concerned about until he returned to the house at the start of the evening. Not seeing her immediately as he let himself in, Tom went upstairs to shower and change before they were supposed to sit down for their evening meal together. Tom only became aware of Rosie's absence a bit short of an hour later, when he came down from his shower. When a casual search of the house failed to turn up either Rosie herself, or any clue as to where she might be, Tom found himself fast becoming panicked by the thought of her being lost, having been abducted, or worse.

A hasty, heated call to the local police station only resulted in his being firmly told that it was far too early to declare Rosie as officially missing but a note would be made to keep an eye out for a woman answering her description. Next Tom called anyone, and anywhere, he could think that she might have gone, becoming steadily more upset as each successive call yielded nothing at all that helped him to figure out to where she had disappeared.

By that point he had already poured himself a drink, more for something to do than in the hope of calming his already tortured nerves. When Tom realized to his frustration that this meant he would not be able to get behind the wheel of a car and actively search for her. So, in the end, he had been forced to sit and wait, draining the bottle until he passed out.

Tom hoped to see someone in a police uniform greeting him with good news as he opened the door. Tom was taken aback to instead be greeted by a smiling man in a pair of white overalls, smiling in an insistent manner as he proffered a tablet and a stylus for a signature. Tom stuttered, "What...what's this for?" Tom mumbled and muttered as best he could through a mouth that was particularly foul from the remnants of what he had been drinking only hours beforehand.

Over the shoulder of the man with the tablet, Tom could see two more identically dressed men struggling to unload a large wooden crate onto some sort of mechanized gurney that waited patiently to receive its load. The man said in a matter-of-fact tone, "Delivery from DomestiDroid, your new MaidBot Sir." Tom started to protest, both because he didn't know Rosie had actually gone ahead and ordered a domestic robot before her sudden disappearance, and more so because he did not feel equipped to deal with even the smallest of challenges at that moment in time.

Then the thought struck Tom, the path of least resistance might lay with simply standing back and allowing events to unfold, rather than insisting that they take the thing back and invoke a storm of complicated and distracting paperwork, all of his attention needed to be focused on sobering up and beginning a search for Rosie in earnest.

Tom stepped aside and gestured for them to bring the crate inside with one hand and signed the indicated box on the screen of the tablet with the other. The next few minutes passed in a blur, as he deliberately ignored the information that the first man reeled off to him whilst the others unloaded the crate from the gurney. He watched as they stood it upright and set about jimmying open the three by six foot panel which faced towards him.

There was some talk of an app already loaded onto Tom's Smartphone, and other various hints and tips. These all washed over him completely as he was beginning to feel immensely guilty about the arrival of a droid which had been ordered to titillate him at the same time that his actual partner went missing. Tom nodded where he thought it was appropriate, but then stopped dead when he saw what was being unpacked from the crate, right there in the middle of their hallway.

Most of the foam packaging which served to hold the MaidBot in place while it was in transit had been removed from above its waist, and he could see that it matched the examples shown in the advertisements. The droid was uncannily human in appearance, with rubber skin that was metallic silver in color, with matching cords of curling, artificial, hair, atop which it wore a traditional French Maid's headdress.

Copious breasts could easily be made out beneath the top half of a black maid's dress and pinafore, and the droid's bare silver arms remained folded at its waist, either in a posture that was demure and deferent, or merely inert as it waited to be activated. Depending on whether or not an observer chose to view the robot as possessing human qualities, or merely as a machine, none of these features were what caught Tom's attention; he was staring, fixated upon the MaidBot's face.

Though the MaidBot was silver in color and presently absent of any animation, he could not have failed to recognize the face as belonging to Rosie herself. In his intense concentration on the face, Tom failed to hear the men in overalls excising themselves, leaving him alone in the hallway. They had seen this kind of fascination with those people taking delivery of this model before and thus misinterpreted his stare as that of someone overcome by a desire to make use of their new acquisition in a way that demanded utter privacy. There was no distinct moment when Tom became aware of the fact that he was alone with this strange metallic doppelganger of his partner. Tom simply found it to be so when he finally wrenched his gaze away from the android's face.

Tom was now both distraught and racked with guilt, his mind jumped to the conclusion that Rosie had intended this replica of her face upon the MaidBot as both a jibe at his desires and a joke to enflame them. She knew all too well that he was turned on by the thought of such a robot, and that the latest models were capable of far more intimate tasks than simply cleaning their owners homes. Tom reasoned that by putting her own face on it, she was reminding him of the fact that she knew his desire to use the MaidBot in that way, and yet, at the same time keep her in his thoughts even as he did so.

Did this mean that she was okay with him indulging himself? Was she setting an elaborate trap? Tom dismissed this last possibility, remembering that, while Rosie had a keen sense of mischief and a certain animal cunning which made her a delightful companion and an exciting lover, she was not nearly calculating, or simply intelligent enough, to play games with multiple levels of meaning to them.

Tom felt guilty again when he realized that he, basically, summed her up as a little dim, but there it was all the same. Rosie was just, plain and simple, not the kind of person that would have indulged in mind games far beyond those intended to get his libido fired up and result in more than a little fun for her in the bargain. But then a thought occurred to him, maybe this was all a part of a plan? What if Rosie had ordered the MaidBot and had it programmed with clues as to her whereabouts, was he supposed to put in the effort of discovering them, leading him to her? The only thing that allowed Tom to believe it was not too complex a plan for Rosie to have masterminded was that, on the one hand, it

sounded just crackpot enough to have been dreamed up by her, and on the other, he was completely devoid of any other ideas and desperate for something to go on. Tom pulled out his Smartphone and opened the DomestiDroid app, it was straightforward to the point of being utterly foolproof, and in no time at all he had managed to set in motion the activation sequence that would bring the android online. A second later there was the smooth sound of servos starting up and the MaidBot came to life.

Rosie awoke to an instant stream of information and prompts which flooded into her dialogue box, activating all of the programming that had been installed for her initial encounter with her new owner. She was not in the slightest confused by the setting in which she found herself, as she possessed impossibly detailed schematics and plans of the property in which her owner resided and what she would need in order to perform her duties here. And so, she rolled forwards and out of her crate without pause or hesitation and performed a proper courtesy before the man standing in front of her.

The android said in an upbeat tone of voice, "Good morning, my name is Rosie, and I am your new domestic help. Are you my master?" Tom said nothing in reply and just stared at the MaidBot in surprise, not only did it have Rosie's face; the droid was also speaking with her exact voice and using her name as well. Rosie giggled, "You seem at a loss for words. Are you happy to see me?" She seemed to take his continued silence as mute agreement, giggling some more, as if pleased to have won his approval and even made a neat little turn on the spot, allowing him to take in the full view of her as she did so.

Tom surprised himself by almost shouting the question at the top of his voice, "Where's Rosie?" But if there was any way in which his words affected the MaidBot, she did not show it. Rosie laughed lightly, as if gently chiding him for asking a silly question, "I am here!" At the same time, Rosie's CPU had detected the heightened rate of Tom's heartbeat, and noted that he was breathing heavily, the speed of his eye movements, and come to the inevitable conclusion that he was in a state of extreme emotional distress.

Rosie's CPU combed her wetware memory banks for information on Tom's character and physical health and quickly reached the decision that it was not good for him to remain in such an excited state for a prolonged period, therefore Rosie would have to take bold steps to alleviate his stress. Rosie said as her demeanor suddenly became more subtle and nuanced, "Tom, what are you getting into such a silly snit over?" Tom looked over at her, confusion written on his face, recognizing something in the MaidBot for the first time and said, "Rosie? Is that you?" The MaidBot shrugged as if amused by his incredulity and replied, "Of course it's me!" Tom stuttered, "But, but, but, you're a robot!"

Rosie chided him, "No, I am not! You will find that my components are both biological and technological. I am a next generation cybernetic organism, or cyborg, if you please. What do you take me for, some kind of clanking clockwork toy?" Tom gestured to her rubber-coated body, as if it were enough to make his point without going into the details of what she now was, "They did this to you?" Rosie tried to calm him down as best she could while accessing the information in her files, "I know, I know, I must have misread

the forms when I went to their website. I thought I was applying to buy a MaidBot, but it turns out that I was actually applying to become one instead!”

Tom shook his head in exasperation, “How, how can you sound like you’re talking about ordering a thin pizza instead of a deep-pan? They turned you into a ro...” Tom stopped himself when he saw the disapproving look Rosie gave the word he had begun to speak, Cyborg.” Tom sighed in resignation to the insanity of the conversation he was having, “They turned you into a damn Cyborg!” Rosie’s indignant tone of voice had gone now, replaced by an emotional trembling matched by the now worried expression on her face, “What are you trying to say? Don’t you like what I did for you?” Rosie asked, her state of desperation seeming to increase with each word she spoke. “Don’t...don’t you find me attractive now that I’m a MaidBot?”

Tom tried to start speaking, at least half a dozen times, in response to her faltering question, each time being stopped in his tracks by the fundamental weakness he had always possessed for Rosie whilst she was in a vulnerable or heartbroken state. Tom felt guilty; he knew he felt Rosie was not a worldly and capable person. He felt she was the kind that needed to be protected from suffering, and shielded from the outside world, in general for her own sake. Tom was as guilty as hell in the moment, torn between the terrible realization that his own desires had resulted in her being transformed into, no matter how she chose to see it herself, a glorified robot. Tom knew that his unconscious mind was taking a very different stance, as even then, he felt his manhood steadily stiffening. Tom stammered in response, “Of...of course I do,” and he was not lying.

Tom had always been turned on by the idea of feminine robots, the idea of a sexual partner that was not human but one that could be programmed turned him on, and all of the taboos associated with it. Many times he had fantasized about women whom he had been in relationships with becoming robots, imagined what being with them in bed would have entailed. Tom even contemplated asking Rosie to play out the fantasy for him, knowing how much she enjoyed the act of pretending to be the housemaid, and furtively bought silver body-paint just in case she said yes. Now he was looking at not just a hastily thrown together fantasy, but his fantasy brought to life, as Rosie balanced effortlessly upon her wheel before him, her smooth, silvery skin catching the light and her artificial hair springing from her head like a metallic bush.

Watching the all too evident soul searching taking place before her, Rosie felt a growing sense of achievement as she noted the strategy formulated from the information accessed from her files beginning to work as it was supposed to. The knowledge that the human male known as Tom was sexually aroused by both Rosie herself and the urge to have intimate relations with a mechanical device made to resemble the female form suggested his thinking was flexible enough and he had the desire to fulfill such fantasies. In addition, copious amounts of data on Tom's urges to protect Rosie in any way possible meant that his emotions were almost too easy to manipulate by the pretence of her being hurt by his own reaction to her transformation.

Rosie could easily tell from passive scans of his physiology that he was becoming ever more aroused by his proximity to her, and there was ample data in her databanks pertaining to what procedures should be followed under these circumstances, this made her confident enough to know what to do next. Rosie said simply, "Show me!" Tom looked at her in surprise. Rosie repeated herself, "Show me! Show me that you still find me attractive, that you still want me now that I'm the MaidBot that you always fantasized about."

Rosie reached forward and cupped his groin with one hand, feeling his manhood through the thin material of the jogging pants he had slept in the night before. Rosie massaged the base of his penis in an expert manner. The knowledge came not from the memories stored in her wetware databanks, but instead from the extensive material contained in her cybernetic implants. She leaned in closer as she did so; an enticing smile formed on her lips as she batted her silver eyelashes at him and glanced down at the part of his anatomy that she was touching.

Her lips only brushed Tom's own, not even so much that it could have truly been called a kiss. And for that moment Tom remained passive as she made her advance. Rosie returned for another, this time pressing her lips fully against his, pouting a little, and letting out a soft gasp that vocalized her pleasure in the act. On the third pass, she parted her lips and slid her tongue over lips its tip finding its way slightly between them then succeeding in making him open his mouth a bit. Now she took advantage of the progress, kissing him fully and with renewed passion, her tongue entering his mouth and making the first truly intimate connection between them since she had been transformed into a cyborg.

Tom was quite literally paralyzed by the situation in which he found himself. He was torn between the realization that the woman he loved had effectively become a machine because of his fetishes, but at the same time he was beginning to believe her when she claimed that it did not bother her in the slightest. In addition, Tom felt guilty that while he had said so many times, as most people in relationships are apt to do, there was nothing he would have changed about his lover, the sight of Rosie transformed into a MaidBot instantly made this woman, which he truly loved, into perhaps the most perfect fantasy his imagination could have dreamed up.

Not only did Tom still desire Rosie, now that she was a MaidBot, he found that he wanted her even more, and with a hunger that was hard to keep from showing on the surface. Tom allowed Rosie to continue caressing him, kissing him, and realized something. If there had been a moment where he would have resisted, and when he would have stopped her in her tracks, not resting until she was restored to her former self, the time had long since past.

Tom knew that what he was now truly doing was waiting for the moment his conscious mind could catch up to what his physical body had already decided. This was what Rosie had become, she was now essentially as much the woman she had been before, and now being a MaidBot she appeared happy with the situation. Tom thought, what difference

would it truly make to their lives together? Neither of them had any family, or friends, who would be horrified, or offended, at finding Rosie turned into a cyborg. The two of them lived in almost complete isolation from the rest of the world, by choice, and their only plans for the future, those even remotely serious, was the honest admission that they were not particularly interested in starting a family of their own.

Tom thought to himself, what in the end did he actually want for Rosie? Even putting aside his own desires towards her, he honestly wanted her to be happy. Would she be any less so as a cyborg than as a woman? Rosie's hand was inside of his jogging pants now, and he could feel the smooth warmth of her new rubber skin as she stroked the shaft of his penis. The decision was not made consciously when Tom returned her kiss passionately, and then placing his hands on her thighs, feeling the way in which her rubber skin responded to his touch, its tactile nature proved utterly compelling.

Tom squeezed, well almost kneaded, the flesh of her conjoined thighs as he felt upward, beneath the hem of Rosie's maid's uniform. Tom marveled at the way in which the coating of rubber made her already ample buttocks into something that he simply could not stop touching. His fingers slipped between her curving cheeks, and he felt the hidden folds of her most intimate area, already made slick by their intimacy and passion for one another.

Rosie made a sound that was half squeal, and half giggle, at the sensation of his touch then pulled away from their kiss. She waved an admonishing finger, letting him know that the time for that had not yet arrived. Instead she leaned back a little and made a show of pulling down the straps which held her uniform on her shoulders, first the left and then the right. Once both arms were free, she rolled the top half of her garment downwards, taking advantage of the fact that the material was infused with spandex, making it stretchy and compliant.

Rosie's chest was now fully displayed for the first time, the effects her new rubber skin had upon her noticeably larger than average breasts became obvious. Where before they would have succumbed to gravity, as was only natural for a woman possessed of such a figure, their silver covering meant that they were fully supported and stood proud, as they never had before. Rosie turned neatly on the spot as Tom stared in amazement at the sight of her, only stopping when she had fully shown her back to him.

Then Rosie backed up slowly until Tom's groin was almost touching her backside. She easily crouched down a little, the gyroscopic stabilizers in her wheel housing compensating, keeping her from falling over as she did so, and reached back to tug down the elasticized waistband of his jogging bottoms. Tom's penis all but twanged upwards once the elastic pulling it downwards was pulled over its tip. Thanks to the position that Rosie had adopted, Tom's penis popped back up, going straight underneath the short hem of her skirt, its head found its way between her buttocks and brushed slightly at her most intimate parts. Rosie was able to adjust her stance so Tom's member was captured perfectly and held in place, making his anticipation all the harder to bear.

Rosie deftly took Tom in one hand, and then maneuvered on her wheel, moving herself the smallest possible distance backwards, and straight onto him. Tom audibly gasped at the sensation of entering the MaidBot; his hands remained at his sides as she accepted him into her body. There was nothing to impede his progress as she moved, a fraction of an inch at a time, backwards. Tom felt the familiar, and yet, new shape of her lips and the folds parted before him. Rosie needed no further foreplay, as her most intimate parts now obeyed her programming and allowed Tom to enter without protest or having to be persuaded, and yet her muscles still offered resistance that instead made the experience far more than merely pushing his way into an inert vessel.

Rosie was no inflatable woman, she was pliant to Tom, but also held him as skillfully and tightly as any fist might have, ensuring that he felt a renewed sense of excitement and pleasure now that they were united. Tom began to move inside her, while she made small movements of her own, maximizing the effect of both their positions and actions according to the data that now flooding into her dialogue box. Tom leaned forward and cupped her breasts in his hands, squeezing her already stiff nipples between his thumbs and index fingers. The appreciative sounds she made in response only served to intensify his efforts.

Tom could not have hoped to last long in this literal fulfillment of his fantasy, and he soon reached climax. Rosie allowed him to withdraw slowly, only turning to face him once she was sure that he had had time to gather himself a little and would be responsive to her words. She smiled sweetly, and pulled his jogging bottoms back up, neatly slipping his manhood inside so that it would not be trapped by the waistband as she did so and chuckled lightly as she said, "That was very nice indeed, but I think it is time for someone to clean themselves up, while I do the same around the house."

Rosie gave Tom a conspiratorial sideways glance as she placed herself back into her uniform and said, "Remember, if you're in need of some personal attention later on, just come and find me. I'm on duty around the clock, and your comfort is my pleasure!" With that, she turned and wheeled smoothly away heading down one of the downstairs corridors and blowing a kiss at him as she went.

Tom did not move for a long time, literally an hour, if he had bothered to check the clock on the wall. His thoughts were not confused, but more a quiet lack of clarity that felt a great deal like he was facing something that was either monumentally important or of no consequence at all. When he finally shook himself out of that state and began to walk towards the stairs to the bathroom for a shower, he was still not sure if he was either the victim of a terrible accident, or the luckiest man he had ever heard of.

The End?