



Collar of Robots

and buy it. By the time, Jessica finished her shopping for the day it was beginning to get dark so Jessica hurried on her walk back home.

Jessica had her own personal robot assistant or MaidBot, which was their more correct name. She also had a home control computer, which performed tasks such as electronically paying bills, ordering whatever supplies and food were needed to be delivered to the house, scheduling and organizing the MaidBot's duties, and sending any needed control commands out to the MaidBot.

MaidBots were essentially robots; the company that built the MaidBots, designed them to do all the cleaning and household chores for their owners. The company had also designed them with various female appearances, to make them seem more lifelike, and their work was very convincing. However, all MaidBots shared one thing in common which helped their human masters recognize their status as mechanical servants not people.

All MaidBots are required to wear a standard MaidBot uniform, a French chambermaid style uniform that was nothing special, pretty much, what you have probably seen in sexy videos. Black high-heeled shoes, black latex stockings held up with a garter belt, the typical short black latex dress with poufy "sleeves" at the shoulders, latex full length gloves, a frilly underskirt to make the skirt pouf out, cute little apron, and finally a hair clip/headpiece to keep the maid's hair out of her face.

Last and, most importantly, was the standard maid's control collar that all MaidBots were required to have, Jessica thought it might be a law or something. "Yeah," Jessica thought, "Most likely the people who invented MaidBots were almost certainly male nerds, who had never been with a real woman in their lives."

Jessica personally liked the idea of the MaidBot uniforms being required as she felt that they helped humans understand that these were just mechanisms designed to be servants, and not real people. Jessica also felt that the uniforms made the MaidBots easier to identify because, in her opinion, no self respecting human woman would ever wear such an outfit by their own choice. Jessica was not only spoiled but also a bit opinionated.

When Jessica arrived at her home, she was hungry and thirsty. As Jessica walked up to her front door, the door camera, which was monitored by the control computer, allowed it to identify Jessica as its mistress, it then sent the MaidBot to open the door for her.

The MaidBot greeted Jessica saying, "Welcome home mistress, did you have a nice day?" Jessica didn't even bother to take the time to answer the MaidBot but just continued walking into the house.

Jessica had some mail waiting for her on the table inside the door, which she picked up, put in the bag with her collar, and took with her. Jessica's MaidBot had been sent out to retrieve her mail earlier that day so its mistress would not have to bother to do so herself.

In addition, the MaidBot had already prepared a plate of snacks and a cup of wine for Jessica and informed her that the food was waiting for Jessica in the living room.

Jessica went to her living room carrying the bag and her mail, followed by her MaidBot who then stood by waiting at attention, while Jessica proceeded to open and read her mail and eat and drink her fill. After Jessica was finished, she decided she wanted to try on her new collar. Jessica then retired to her bedroom, carrying the bag containing her new collar, leaving the MaidBot to clean up after her.

When Jessica got to her room she changed out into her nightgown then put on the collar, she felt the cold metal on her neck, and though it was cold and heavy, it felt very nice. Jessica didn't feel any different aside from having a rather cold, heavy weight on her neck; but otherwise, the collar was comfortable she thought, "Well I guess a real MaidBot would not have any sense of self-awareness to pay attention to the weight."

Jessica walked around in her study for a little while to get used to walking with the new weight on her neck. Once she felt she was very comfortable about walking around with it on, Jessica walked to her study. Then Jessica sat down, and did some paperwork she had brought home from work. When she was done with her, "Homework" Jessica headed back to her bedroom then off to bed while still wearing her pretty, new, collar.

Once her mistress headed off to bed, Jessica's MaidBot went about cleaning up the house as usual. While the MaidBot was performing its assigned tasks, the house control computer sent out a new command to the MaidBot instructing it to stop cleaning and proceed to the maid storage room for maintenance and to be re-charged.

While the MaidBot was returning to its charging base, the house control computer sent news to the MaidBot that it was to be serviced tomorrow and would need to have its collar rebooted. Rebooting the collar would allow any old data stored in the collar to be removed in preparation for uploading new data and programming. Once the MaidBot entered its charging station the collar turned off and all needed temporary data within was transferred to a temporary folder in the MaidBot's internal memory.

Then new programming and data was uploaded into the MaidBot's collar, old temporary data such as previous orders and task assignments were copied back to the collar from the unit's internal memory, and when this was finished, the MaidBot's collar was rebooted. When the control computer restarted the collar on Jessica's MaidBot, it detected a new, and unknown, collar in the house as well. After the upload was finished, the computer activated both the newly detected collar, and the original MaidBot's collar.

When Jessica's collar came on her eyes shot open and she jumped to her feet. Without thinking about it, or wanting to, Jessica then walked to the maid storage room where the control computer was installed. The control computer had a camera attached so that it could record everything that Jessica felt she might need if someone tried to hack into her system. That way she'd, at least, know about it and have a record of the event. The

computer scanned Jessica using the camera, trying to identify the strange new unit, and where it came from.

The control computer scanned Jessica but it couldn't find any record of her within the system. The computer tried comparing Jessica's scan with the MaidBot's scan, but the two didn't match up at all. Finally, the computer compared the scan with that of its owner and even though there were some matches, there weren't enough for the computer to recognize Jessica as its owner, besides this unit was wearing a MaidBot control collar so, obviously, it must be a new MaidBot.

Since the control computer could not identify this new unit as an existing part of the house system, the software concluded that this was a new addition to the household. The control computer retrieved what information it could from the new detected MaidBot's collar, recovering the unit's previous human friendly name, "HaileyBot," and its unit ID number. Then it added Jessica into the system as a new MaidBot and registered her with the company that serviced the house MaidBots. Finally, it added her to the list with the MaidBot it had already scheduled for service work, which was to be performed the following day.

The control computer added Jessica's designation "HaileyBot," and unit ID number 321-4254 to the house MaidBot inventory list, and then set her ownership data to reflect her new owner, Jessica. The new MaidBot was then uploaded with the control computer's cleaning and maintenance schedule. It was assigned a service position, and sent information regarding the household layout, and that needed to identify its owner.

Last, the computer ordered Jessica to standby for the night, as her collar did not indicate that she was in need of a charge. Jessica soon found herself forced into a deep, dreamless sleep. The other MaidBot was ordered to step into its charging pod and go into standby and charging mode. It, of course, complied.

The next day the van from the service company that repaired the MaidBots, and performed any needed maintenance or updates, drove into Jessica's driveway. Two technician bots exited and went to the front door. The house control computer then proceeded to open the door, and directed the TechBots into the maid storage and charging room where the two MaidBots were standing by. The control computer then allowed the TechBots to take the two "MaidBots" back with them for servicing and updates.

On the way to the factory Jessica's collar was re-activated. Immediately Jessica's eyes shot open but she found she couldn't talk, or move, at all. Jessica saw several MaidBots in boxes in front of her, and even though she couldn't look around or move, Jessica realized she was apparently also packaged in some sort of box. Jessica also realized, from what she could see from the corners of her vision, that she was traveling in a van full of MaidBots, and headed somewhere unknown to her.

Jessica's collar had a GPS, but she didn't know that at the time. Jessica had no way of knowing where she was or where she was going. Certainly, Jessica could never have

guessed at the time, that she was on her way to the MaidBot factory to be serviced and updated as just another MaidBot.

At first, Jessica was terrified, and then she thought to herself “Great! I at least I can still think. But I can’t move or talk to anyone so how will I ask for help?” Jessica could not help but think about the Barbie dolls she had when she was a kid, and the box they came in, she wondered whether she looked like a doll standing in her box.

While Jessica was trying to figure out what had happened to her, and having a mental conversation with herself, the TechBots began plugging into the MaidBots and compiling data on what needed to be updated and repaired. The service company found that by doing this the repair process was much quicker, and easier, for the factory.

Soon the TechBots had finished with all but two, Jessica and her personal MaidBot were last. The TechBots plugged into Jessica and her MaidBot’s collars, when the TechBot plugged into her collar, Jessica was scared. What would happen? She thought when it did this. However, Jessica was soon relived when it seemed that the connection to her collar didn’t do anything to her.

The TechBots finished quickly with Jessica’s personal MaidBot, but when they got to Jessica herself, they couldn’t connect to her internal memory systems. The TechBots noted connectivity issues, and data corruption, as some problems that warranted Jessica be more thoroughly checked out, and flagged Jessica as “defective,” needing additional diagnostic testing. Jessica was, of course, unaware of the results of the TechBots assessment, and just tried to ‘shrug off’ all of what was happening to her while she kept worrying about what would happen when they reached their destination and someone realized she was not a MaidBot.

When the van pulled into the fully automated factory, the TechBots unloaded their boxed cargo and placed it into a receiving area. Once the boxes were unloaded, the TechBots unpacked the MaidBots, and Jessica, from their shipping containers. Then the TechBots left the MaidBots and Jessica, standing there waiting for further instructions. Finally, the TechBots returned to their van and left to go collect more robots that were defective or in need of maintenance.

Once the TechBots left, Jessica just stood there with the MaidBots, alone, in the receiving area for nearly an hour. The maintenance computer automatically read all incoming unit IDs from the collars. Then the computer commanded all of them to move into another area of the factory, and now Jessica was forced to line up with the other MaidBots as though she were one of them.

The MaidBots were then divided into groups by the maintenance computer. There were those units that only needed quick updates; however, there were some units that needed more wide-ranging work, for example, physical repairs. In addition, these other units might need a completely new set of programming and data installed into their systems, Jessica was the only member of the second group.

All the real MaidBots were quickly updated and then sent to be cleaned, and repackaged. After the MaidBots were repackaged, they would be ready to be returned to their assigned "Home Bases." Jessica, on the other hand, was just beginning to experience the joys of the update process.

First, Jessica was ordered by the maintenance computer to walk up to a large, boxy, machine and enter it. Jessica hated confined spaces and so she was understandably not too happy about having to do this. Nevertheless, since Jessica's collar was in control, she had no other option but to comply.

Once inside she was commanded to stand on a turntable like device with her legs slightly spread and her arms at her side. The machine then scanned Jessica with some kind of laser-like light while it slowly rotated her 360° Scanning every inch of Jessica from every possible angle.

The maintenance computer checked the unit ID within Jessica's collar and it was valid. Her unit ID number was 321-4254 and her human friendly designation had been set as, "HaileyBot," but when the scan was complete and the maintenance computer analyzed the scan data, it determined there were multiple anomalies found.

Jessica was not wearing a standard MaidBot uniform. Her hair was not in the standard hairstyle for a MaidBot. Jessica's makeup was not even close to meeting the MaidBot standards set by the company. And there was an extremely odd problem with this new unit; it seemed to be constructed from an entirely SynthFlesh frame, which was missing its printed unit ID number bar-code. Moreover, the unit's programming data was either corrupt, or unreadable, and needed reloading.

The maintenance computer proceeded to make several adjustments to the maintenance software and protocols for the unit, then recorded some new directives to be placed into the unit's collar that would update the unit's control computer with new instructions when it was returned to its assigned home base.

Robotic arms removed Jessica's clothing. Although she was very afraid, and quite embarrassed even though there was no one around to see it, she had no choice but to stand there and let it happen. Before long, she was standing there naked for all the world to see. Then the maintenance computer checked Jessica's collar notes, and found an entry from the TechBots indicating that this unit was experiencing connection problems and needed further diagnostics and testing.

The maintenance computer directed a robotic arm to plug into Jessica's collar. Control commands could be sent wirelessly to the collars but any major software changes or commands had to be sent via a physical connection, this helped prevent unauthorized changes to a MaidBot's programming. Once the connection had been made and Jessica's collar was linked into the system, the computer sent some executive commands to

Jessica's collar, along with new updated configuration data for the machines that Jessica would encounter next.

The collar kept Jessica immobile, and forced her to stand there while all these things were happening to her. Even though she wanted to scream for help, and run, Jessica stood firm. In preparation for the next step, the computer lowered an arm that ended with a "C" shaped clamp which locked around Jessica's mid-section which would support her like a child's doll when it was on display. Then Jessica was forced into standby mode.

The computer cleared out the contents of Jessica's collar and reloaded it with a new, fresh copy of the MaidBot control software. The machine then scanned her internal memory and found lots of old, unnecessary data, but it could not find any base programming or the data that was needed for normal MaidBot operation. When it didn't find the programming and data needed, the maintenance computer dumped Jessica's personality and memories into a database linked to her MaidBot ID.

The computer then cleared the old data from her mind, and began to upload the new, current, MaidBot programming, and data, into Jessica's mind. When it had finished the upload, the service computer deleted any old memories of the MaidBot's previous assignments, and cleared out her command buffer. Now Jessica would have no choice but to accept any new commands from her owner or the home control computer, from that point on.

Finally, Jessica's personality was reloaded into her mind and the MaidBot was brought back on-line. Jessica was suddenly conscious again. Unfortunately, and unknown at the moment to Jessica, the ability to make decisions and do whatever she wanted, was no longer hers. Jessica's ability to make decisions was now completely based on her primary MaidBot programming and all decisions would be made by the AI running in her collar.

Even though she really didn't want the knowledge or ask for it, after the update and once she regained consciousness, Jessica realized she now knew everything a MaidBot needed to know. Jessica was now fully programmed with all the information that any MaidBot would possess, or could likely ever need. Jessica now knew more about cleaning and maintaining a household than she ever thought humanly possible, and that certainly was more than she ever wanted to know.

Jessica still had free will but was unable to use it. At this point, Jessica thought to herself "Once someone realizes who I am and turns off the collar. I will return to being the mistress of my own house and I'll have total control again, and the ability to think on my own." This might be true, but for that to happen first someone would have to turn off her collar. The maintenance computer then commanded Jessica to move off to the cleaning, costuming, and preparation area of the plant where she would be cleaned and prepared for return to her owner; of course, again she had no choice but to comply.

Jessica found being cleaned by machines was particularly disturbing and the drying machine, which dried her off with forced air until she was completely dry, presented some odd sensations also. The decoration phase was the most disturbing part of the process. First Jessica's body below her neck was sprayed with a liquid. This liquid removed all the hair so that now Jessica's body was completely smooth and Jessica resembled a window mannequin that had not yet been dressed. This was followed by another drying cycle.

Another machine dropped down and covered the upper part of her head, including her eyes. When it raised back up Jessica had a newly styled head of pink hair, even her eyebrows were now pink, matching her control collar. Her hair looked artificial, and soon the rest of her body would follow.

Once her hairdo was finished, a machine essentially spray-painted Jessica's body with some sort of permanent 1-step makeup. The makeup seemed, to Jessica, to be like some kind of paint. Warm red lights were shone on Jessica until her paint job was dried so that the next step could begin. A machine sprayed her with some kind of, for lack of a better term, sealant. Now Jessica looked just like any other MaidBot, her skin tone was completely even with no blemishes or marks. And her skin had a slightly satiny, shiny, look to it. If a person didn't know any better they would have thought Jessica had been built, not born.

A robotic arm moved out from the wall with a semi-circular device on the end. Jessica was very concerned when the device covered her face, especially her eyes. Then Jessica felt her face go numb and there were several bright flashes. Once the arm retracted, the feeling returned to Jessica's face and she found she could see again. What Jessica did not know was that the machine had changed her eye color to an almost artificial blue.

But, the worst part was yet to come for Jessica. A robotic arm descended with a boxy looking thing on the end, which it then placed against the back of Jessica's neck. Suddenly Jessica felt what she could only describe as a series of bee stings on her neck. In actuality, the machine was permanently imprinting a new bar-code on Jessica indicating her unit ID and her status as property.

Even though she loathed it, Jessica was dressed in a proper, standard, MaidBot's uniform. It was like those outfits which she had said no human woman would ever wear. Jessica could not help but feel humiliated at the thought of having to wear the thing, and possibly be seen in public wearing it. Finally, Jessica was commanded to proceed to the shipping department for repackaging and preparation for return to her home base. Although she hadn't yet realized it, her own home was now her "Home Base," and from now on, her ONLY workplace, where she would serve her Mistress without question.

-Taken from Jessica's perspective-

I was forced to move through the shipping department where I was boxed up. My personal MaidBot was there and had been boxed up, as well. At the time, I had yet to accept the fact that I was now its fellow MaidBot and a servant.

Before being packaged, we were switched into a “shipping” mode, wherein, all non-essential motor control is disabled until the unit is reactivated. I could still see, hear, and feel movement but could not move on my own. This procedure was designed by the company to protect the MaidBots, and delivery personnel, should interference occur during shipping causing a MaidBot to malfunction.

I’m sure I must have looked like a life size Barbie doll once I was packaged into my box. Then we were loaded into the back of another van much like the one that brought us to the factory earlier. A few other boxes were also loaded in the van for deliveries and once everything had been loaded in, the van set out to deliver us to our assigned destinations. The van made several stops before delivering my MaidBot, something in another box, and me, to my house. At each stop, packages and, or, other MaidBots were delivered to their assigned destinations. My MaidBot and I were the final stop, or at least it was the last one I was aware of.

Once we arrived at my home we were picked up and carried into the house in our containers, along with the mystery box. The home control computer had realized that there were now two MaidBots assigned to the system and it would need another charging pod and had ordered one to be included when we were returned.

The TechBots left us for a while, and went off to set up and install the new charging pod before we were activated. Once our boxes were cut open, we were removed and placed into our charging pods, within the maid charging and storage room. My fellow MaidBot was immediately activated and soon after, I was as well. I had no idea at the time that even though I have a very large house, my new living quarters would now be a tiny pod in the basement of my house.

The house control computer connected wirelessly to both of us immediately. The first thing the mainframe did was download any new maintenance reports and configuration information from our collars. Since the service computer had determined that my frame was not mechanical, but biological, it had added new maintenance information for my house control computer to use. The information gained, included such data as proper fueling protocols for the new MaidBot, and how to deal with its spent fuel.

The control computer, based on these new maintenance requirements, would now add to the other things it automatically ordered for the house, supplies such as fuel for unit 321-4254 and all the items that were needed to maintain it properly. The computer also adjusted the operations schedule for the house to include times when it should order the new MaidBot to go to its pod and begin refueling, or to discharge stored spent fuel. My collar could also wirelessly send a request for emergency adjustments to the schedule, if my sensors detected that my storage systems were nearing capacity, or I was low on fuel.

Since we had been removed from the house earlier in the morning and, as such, were unable to perform the day's assigned tasks, the mainframe computer sent new and updated orders, to both my fellow MaidBot, and me. These orders commanded the other MaidBot to resume cleaning up the house as she was doing before she had been ordered to stop and return to her charging station. My fellow MaidBot was then sent off to clean the upstairs, which was what it had been doing the night before when it was interrupted and forced to begin its recharge cycle early.

However, since my command buffer had been erased at the factory by the maintenance computer I was sent new orders. As I said before, my collar has a built in GPS locating system so that a MaidBot could be sent on errands to anywhere in the world, although, in reality they would probably just be around town. Like many wealthy people, I did not like having my mail delivered to my home address, and so, I had a postal box at the local post office. It would have been nice to have had time to get used to being a MaidBot but that was not to be the case.

My first order was awful, I was commanded to walk to the post office, pick up the mail, then return to the house and place it on the table inside the front door for my owner. I was horrified at the thought of walking thru town dressed like a common MaidBot, but since I had no choice, I went for a walk. Along the way people glanced over at me but few really paid me much attention. As far as the townsfolk were concerned, I was just another mechanical servant doing its owner's bidding.

When I returned with the mail, I placed it onto the table inside the door as ordered. I was then given new orders to advance to the kitchen, clean it thoroughly, followed by the living room. Once I had completed my tasks, I was to signal the control computer for new orders, and then tend to them as directed. So, like it or not, that is what I did for the next 4.639 hours. My collar also contained an extremely accurate time clock, which only helped in making the time spent working seem to go by even more slowly.

Several weeks had passed, a Maidbot's life is horribly boring, the same routine each day, day after day. Then about a month after my transformation into a MaidBot, at 15:05.372, I was cleaning the living room, for what seemed like the thousandth time, when there was a knock at the front door and the control computer ordered me to proceed there, open it, and greet the visitor. When I opened the door, I got a terrific shock as I saw that it was my best friend Holly, who now lived out of town and had not visited me in several years.

In a slight bit of shock Holly took a step back, looked at me quizzically, and said, "Hello! ... Jessica? ... It's been a long time."

I replied, "This unit is sorry Ma'am, Jessica is the name of this unit's mistress, but this unit's mistress is not home at the moment, may this unit be of service? This unit's database recognizes you as Mistress Holly, a friend of this unit's Mistress."

Jessica said to me sarcastically, "What the hell do you have around your neck? And why are you wearing a maid's uniform?"

I answered, “This maid unit is wearing the standard control collar as required by law for all robotic assistants, and this is the required standard uniform for all MaidBots.”

Holly said, “Uh, what the hell are you talking about? So why are you wearing it? You’re not a robot. Did you hit your head or something, or is this just some kind of fun role-playing game?”

Even though I had not actually spoken since the nightmare began, it was only then that I realized I was no longer able to speak on my own as I replied, “Negative! This maid unit is functioning within normal parameters and is not programmed to play ‘Games.’”

Holly looked amused and said, “Umm... All right, then! If you are a MaidBot what is your name, or ID, or whatever?”

I was now really scared as I realized that I could no longer even say my own name as I replied, “this unit is a household MaidBot, unit ID 321-4254, its human friendly designation is HaileyBot, it is the property of Mistress Jessica.”

I realized that Holly thought I was just really into playing a game when she said somewhat skeptically, “OK... HaileyBot, at any rate ... I came by to see if your mistress wanted to hang out or go do something since we haven’t seen each other in so long. But it looks like she’s way off somewhere in a kind of odd mood today, so I think I probably should just be going.”

While I wanted to cry out for help I could only reply, “If that is your wish Madam then this unit bids you good day. This unit will inform its mistress that you came by to visit when she returns!”

Holly paused, turned, and said, “But before I leave, can I get a cup of tea please MaidBot?”

All I could say in response was, “Of course, Ma’am! This unit’s internal database recognizes, and indicates, that you are a friend of its mistress.” That was all I could say, not help I am not a robot or anything else. Then my programming forced me to continue, “Please enter the house and take a seat, this unit’s mistress is currently unavailable, but will likely return anytime. Do you have a specific request for your tea?” Holly told me how she preferred her tea and, after I curtsied to her, I automatically replied, “Please remain here Ma’am, this unit will bring your tea to you shortly.”

Even though inside my head I was thinking how much I really wanted Holly to turn off my collar, or do something to free me from this nightmare. I was unable to say, or do anything to make that desire understood. Without my wanting to, I then turned and walked off to the kitchen to get Holly her tea. I prepared the tea as per Holly’s request, and placed it on a serving tray, then brought it out to serve to my mistress’ guest.

Holly took her tea and said, “Thank you HaileyBot, Mmmm, just the way I like it. So when did you become a robot, I mean no offense I’m not judging you or anything, I’m just curious.”

I replied, “This unit was activated for the first time one month, 3 days, 17 hours, and 23.253 seconds ago Ma’am. Also this unit takes no offense and welcomes any questions you might have.” Then I thought, “why can’t this unit stop calling her Ma’am, and why can’t this unit refer to itself like a human would?” I had known Holly most of my life, although I suddenly realized that I really couldn’t remember much from before this meeting. Yet somehow, my AI programming knew her name was Holly. I realized that, unfortunately, unless someone rescued me, I would never be able to refer to her again as anything but Ma’am, Madam, or Mistress!

Holly replied, “Oh, I see! So you spent all that time as a robot, today as well?”

In an emotionless tone I replied, “That is affirmative, this unit is only programmed for a single function, it is a household MaidBot belonging to Mistress Jessica.”

Holly then said to me, “I was just wondering about one other thing? When you will stop being a robot?”

I replied, “This unit will be shutdown and cease to be a robot when the unit is no longer able to perform its duties or function properly, or its owner decides to discard it!”

Suddenly I realized how desperate my situation was. I was no longer able to do anything on my own without a command from the house control computer, my software, or my owner. What the control computer didn’t realize was that our owner would never return. As far as the control computer was concerned, its “Owner” had simply not yet returned home; and the computer would keep waiting for it’s owner indefinitely, or until the system failed.

I also realized that I could only answer direct questions from humans if my software, or the control computer, knew the answer. I could not initiate a conversation, unless commanded by my programming, or the control computer. As such, I could not tell anyone of my situation, unless I was directly asked about it, even then, I wasn’t sure how my program would respond. Therefore, unless someone realized I was not an actual MaidBot and turned off my collar, which seemed unlikely since I looked and sounded just like the genuine article; I was stuck here as my mistresses’ second MaidBot, assigned to my own house, unable to leave, and at my Mistress’s command, except she would never return.

My life would consist of merely cooking for my mistress when, or if, she returned, cleaning the house when commanded, or doing whatever else the control computer commanded. Refueling (eating) or removing spent fuel (you know) whenever the control computer commanded me was not something to which I was looking forward. Refueling was not an appetizing thought, as the MaidBots which had a SynthFlesh covering were

feed a product called NanoPaste. NanoPaste is a goop, which provides all the required energy and nutrients needed to maintain the Android's SynthFlesh but which, to humans, tastes horrible.

I could also look forward to standing by in my charging pod for hours, or days, waiting for new orders. Last, I could be forced into a standby state by the control computer whenever it deemed it necessary. My only company would be the control computer and my fellow MaidBot, and I doubted either of them would be good conversationalists. I would not be discussing the news, my favorite movies, boys, or anything else. I was stuck in a very quiet house for what was, quite likely going to be, a very long time.

Thanks to Internet shopping, and home delivery, no one would need to go beyond the front steps of the house to retrieve anything that the control computer purchased. Whatever purchases the control computer did make would be delivered to our front door. Since the control computer paid the bills automatically and I had enough in my bank account to cover a lifetime of bills I knew the control computer would just order anything required for maintaining the household and me, forever. Therefore, until our owner returned and instructed the control computer to do otherwise no one would be leaving the property unless instructed to do so by the control computer.

Once an order had been delivered to the house, my fellow MaidBot or I would be sent to bring the delivery into the house and put it away. Since I looked like a machine, and would still be under the control of the collar, I would not be able to ask anyone for help either. A visiting delivery person, or a neighbor, would simply think that I was a very realistic MaidBot and nothing more. That was not a pleasant thought, nevertheless, the real problem for me was that I could not just leave the house on my own, I had to be ordered to do so, and this meant I could not run away.

After Holly finished her tea, all the while thinking I was merely just some kind of nut who was role-playing some silly fantasy, all she was able to say in a kind of disappointed voice was, "Well, OK... then. I have to go home now, thank you for the tea HaileyBot, please ask your mistress to call me when she has the time and would like to go out and do something." Inside I wanted to cry, knowing that call would probably never happen.

Although I really didn't want Holly to leave, I could say nothing to stop her, rather my response was automatic. "This unit is pleased that you enjoyed your tea! Thank you for stopping by. I will inform my mistress of your request when she returns. Please, have a nice day."

Then Holly slowly turned and walked out the door. As I closed the door behind her, I realized that I was now alone in my own house. I was confined there by my programming, unable to ask anyone for help, or to even tell anyone who I was; other than maid unit 321-4254, my designation "HaileyBot." I was now trapped in a silly maid's uniform that I hated, was unable to leave my own house, and would be forever forced to clean the house, be told when I could refuel or dispose of any spent fuel, be forced to

clean the bathrooms, or do anything else the control computer commanded me to do. I was now a slave to my own house!

In addition, since I was somewhat of a loner and currently had no boyfriend, few friends, and no living family, there was a very high probability that no one would come looking for me for a very long time. My co-workers would simply think that I had quit without giving them any warning. They would likely be too annoyed to bother to check on me. I was in a bad place.

I thought to myself, "I never had to deal with cleaning, and such, when I was a girl. I hate cleaning and cooking, which is why I purchased a MaidBot in the first place. Now, I will have to do all of these things for, potentially, the rest of my life." I was mortified at the thought. However, none of that mattered anymore as the control computer realizing that the guest had left, ordered me to resume my assigned tasks. If I could have refused, I would have but instead I just turned around, walked back to the living room, and resumed my cleaning assignments.

I had no idea when, or if, anyone would ever come to release me. However, if one thing could be said of this that was somewhat ironic, it was that I might be spending the rest of my life, as my own MaidBot. Then, another, even more awful thought hit me; what if, there were some extended power failure? Would the power cells in my collar run down and shut me down along with the rest of the household? If that happened would my body die from starvation, dehydration, or some other issue? Suddenly I found myself wishing I had ordered a generator, or battery backup system, for the house.

Worst of all, I can never leave the house, or contact anyone, as long as my mistress is still "Missing" and not here to command me to do so.

The End?