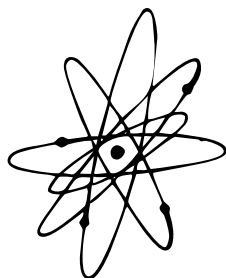




The new Jenny, wait unit WU19274, in her permanent new 'Home,' with her fellow
"ServeBots."

May I Take Your Order

By: [JaneDoe-2010](#), August 23, 2024, Revision 1.3b



The story opens in the mid 2050's, society has advanced technologically by leaps and bounds, but some things never change. Yes, as once predicted, androids and robots are now practical realities and, as predicted, are taking many of the jobs once held by humans. But in most cases people don't seem to mind because the jobs were almost always the menial ones which people usually hated doing anyway.

The one thing that never changes is nostalgia! Like people a century earlier who were nostalgic about the 1800's, even though they never could have been happy there, or in some cases even have survived, people always look back and romanticize the past. The current trend was imagining the "easy life" of the 1950's. The big cars that drank insane amounts of fuel, greasy spoon diners where cute girls in bobby socks and poodle skirts drank milkshakes, and waitresses dressed in old fashioned uniforms brought your food to you by hand. Yes, those were the days, or at least that was what people thought.

Jennifer Dawes was like most girls her age a cute brunette with dark eyes, she enjoyed shopping, going out with her friends, and especially, Boys! But unlike most of her friends she had a tragic past. When she was a year old her parents were killed in a car crash on the way to a party. Jenny had spent the rest of her days in foster care and in various homes with various families. Jenny was good in school and had big plans for her future, she wanted to become a marine biologist and work with dolphin rescue programs.

When she graduated high school, she did so with honors and received a scholarship to attend a well known university in Florida that was famous for the many fine biologists they had produced and the good works that they had done. She moved there, quite a long trip from her foster home, and moved into the freshman dormitory. Not being made of money, Jenny needed a job. She had worked as a waitress for nearly a year while living at her last foster home, and though she wasn't overly fond of the work it paid well and was not too hard.

As the end of her first year was fast approaching, Jenny decided to begin looking for a waitressing job locally so that she could stay near the school and not have to move back to her foster home for a couple months then head all the way back for the next year of school. Her foster parents were quite pleased with the motivated nature of their charge and her willingness to do a job which didn't really interest her just to be able to assert her independence and earn her own way.

There was a problem for Jenny though, as she began looking around for a waitressing job, she found that most of the restaurants in the area had moved to a fully android staff. Their owners found that these automated staff members were much cheaper in the long run as they didn't get a pay check, and the android wait staff, when tipped, just passed the tip on to their owners. After all, these were only machines and didn't have any need of, or want for, money!

One day Jenny was eating at a Joe's Diner, a local 1950's themed restaurant. It was only a couple of weeks before she was done with school for the summer and while eating, Jenny was watching a man who seemed to be checking out the android staff. The man acted as though he owned the place which made Jenny curious. Jenny struck up a conversation with him and found out that the man did indeed own the restaurant but rarely came by. His restaurant was essentially fully automated so he really didn't need to be there unless the Restaurant Control Computer called him for assistance, or he was simply curious about how things were going. The man was very nice and introduced himself as John then he asked Jenny about herself.

While talking to John, Jenny found out that he had switched to a fully automated staff several years earlier. John had bought the entire system from an automation company called XS-Tech. The system included a fancy Restaurant Control Computer (RCC) which was installed in a locked room in the back. The RCC did all the management work running the restaurant, it was a virtual manager. The RCC wirelessly directed the android staff's actions, ordered supplies, and paid the suppliers, bills, and other creditors. While the RCC was not mobile and couldn't move itself, it had many virtual remote hands under its control by using the android staff as its hands.

As Jenny looked around and began to think about it, she realized the wait staff was entirely composed of android waitresses that all looked alike, and like they were inspired by the very late, old time actress, Marilyn Monroe. All of them had blond hair, unrealistically blue eyes, nice curves, etc. And every one wore a short pink waitress' uniform with white trim, a little hat, cute little apron, and even bobby socks and white sneakers. The kitchen staff was also androids but they remained in the back, unseen by the public. They reported to the android ChefBot who, in turn, only answered to the RCC or, of course, John himself.

Jenny was explaining to the restaurant owner all the trouble she was having trying to find a waitressing job in town because every place she looked had replaced their human workers with androids. John told

Jenny that the reason he had come to the restaurant was that he had been considering buying another wait unit, since one of his ServeBots had recently broken down, but that he just hadn't gotten around to it yet. The man liked the young woman and was impressed with her desire to work, that was when he thought of a possible solution which he proposed to Jenny.

John opened with, "This is going to sound a bit strange, but hear me out!" Jenny should have backed away right then because she could never have imagined the trouble that John's idea would soon send her way. What John then proposed was a bit odd and questionably legal, at best. But Jenny was amused at the ingenuity of his idea and the fact that it would help both of them. John told her that he really only used android help these days because it eliminated the staffing issues one usually had with human workers. However, John wanted to help the ambitious young student and decided he would make an exception for her.

But, John did have a few odd requirements, however, which he then explained to Jenny. In order to ensure his staff kept operating in the very integrated, smooth running, way he had grown accustomed to, John had a crazy idea. The control collars used to operate the android staff had, fairly recently, been found to work on humans as well as androids. The collar for John's wait unit, the one that failed, was fine and he still had it. But the android body had failed and that needed to be replaced, and this was key to his revolutionary idea.

The discovery of human compatibility with the collars had been discovered by accident. It was made by a woman who worked at an android production facility who accidentally found herself stuck in a weird predicament. While working one day she needed a third arm, well more precisely an extra hand. Without thinking, she had hung the collar intended for the android she was preparing around her neck while working. The collar was open, and she absentmindedly hung it around her neck while doing something else to the android. As she was about done with her android she accidentally bumped the button that indicated to the computer that the android was ready to move on in the line.

Her collar suddenly locked shut around her neck as the computer activated it, this overrode her ability to move, speak, or call for help. Unable to ask for help she was forced to move on to the next process in the line by the plant control computer, instead of the android. Upon entering the next machine she was rejected as incomplete and sent back thru the line for reworking. When she

emerged from the end of the line she was dressed, styled, decorated properly for her new function as a MaidBot, and packed up and shipped off to her new owner.

She spent a few years operating as a MaidBot, before the error was discovered when, one day, an art piece on one of her owner's shelves fell to the floor. It hit the MaidBot's foot and broke a couple of its toes, and when she was sent back to the factory for repairs they realized that the MaidBot was a human woman. Finally she was released from her forced life of servitude as a MaidBot.

One would think that this would have been enough of a deterrent to ensure that the collars would have been redesigned. But instead, the fault was blamed on the woman and little was done to prevent the problem from ever happening again. Since then people had been using the collars for entertainment, as a form of enhanced role-playing game. A few safeguards had been enacted to prevent the collars from being accidentally activated, but these safeguards could fairly easily be circumvented by ingenious programmers.

What John had in mind was to use the old collar as a Augmented Capability Device, using it Jenny could communicate directly with the ChefBot, the Restaurant Control Computer, and the device would assist her with performing her waitressing duties. The device could not only help her with any physical balance issues, but also organization, communication, and accuracy. It could even help her avoid any negative interactions with guests as it could help her override any fits of rage she was about to act on due to bad customer behavior.

Jenny had to admit that John's idea was interesting, but she was concerned about her freedom. Being a independent young woman, she asked John, "How will this affect my ability to make my own decisions?" To which John replied, "Like your uniform, you would only wear your collar while at work, and while on your shift, afterward you would take it off and leave it here in your locker along with your uniform. The RCC has a maintenance unit periodically send the uniforms out for cleaning and replace the dirty ones with clean ones."

Jenny thought about his proposal and had one last question, "Would I have to wear the same skimpy outfits that the other waitresses wear?" John thought about it, admittedly the uniform was a bit short but it was the kitschy 1950's style that the "Nostalgic" patrons wanted, so his answer was "That is what my customers want, so unfortunately, Yes!"

But therein lie another problem; John didn't have any more of the style uniform that the android wait units were wearing in her size. So John told Jenny that she would have to wear the old style uniform as he still had some of those in her size. The getup was about the same as the new ones, only slightly different, black trim rather than white, and a slightly different apron.

Jenny was not thrilled about having to wear the uniform, the really short skirt didn't provide for much coverage down below and was a bit corny and embarrassing, but the rest of the job seemed OK! John had offered her a very decent pay rate, higher than most waitresses made, and she could keep her tips! Besides, it was only for the summer! So Jenny appreciatively said, "Thank you John, I would be happy to take the job. I guess now I'll have to call you sir, or boss, from here on!" Jenny didn't realize it but before long, once she was wearing her new collar, she would only be able to refer to him as her owner, or Master.

John laughed, amused by all the questions and Jenny's enthusiasm, and told her to meet him there Monday at 1700 hours, she found out he had been in the military and was used to using 24-hour time. At that time, he would show her around the place, get her a uniform and, hopefully by then, have the collar ready with modified software to help her integrate with the staff. Then John said he had to leave but hoped to see her Monday and the two parted ways.

True to his word, on Monday John was waiting at the restaurant and met Jenny. He gave her the grand tour, not a very long one, since it wasn't an enormous place. There were two seating sections, the kitchen, bathrooms, and a small room that had once been used as an employee's only area. John first showed her the kitchen and introduced her to the head ChefBot, unit CB63827, and even though it was only an AI powered android it politely greeted the prospective new waitress and welcomed Jenny to the staff. John even showed Jenny what the RCC looked like, in the small locked room where it resided; just a boxlike computer with a few wires going in and out of it, and a couple of antennas.

Then John showed Jenny the virtually unused back room which had once been the employee only dressing, locker, and bathroom. He said that androids never needed to go to the bathroom, never took breaks, and never left the restaurant so they never had to change into street clothes. He further said that the only time androids ever came in there was to recharge in a maintenance pod, or to change into a clean uniform should theirs become dirty.

John had setup ten charging and maintenance pods which the staff androids took turns using when needed, and he also maintained a large stock of clean uniforms there. Since no one had used the restroom back there in years, he figured it sorely needed a good once over. John assured Jenny that he would have the maintenance units clean it up and prepare it for her in case she ever needed to use it while working, before the situation could ever arise.

John also told Jenny that she, obviously, would not have to use the pods since she was human. However, her collar would need to be charged periodically and the easiest and fastest way to accomplish that would be for her to enter a pod and take a nap for a couple hours. John told her that, as long as she was not claustrophobic, she could take a nap whenever the Restaurant Control Computer (RCC) informed her that her collar needed charging, and that he would have it include the charging time in her paid work time.

Jenny said that she never had any trouble with tight spaces, in fact she loved spelunking, or cave exploration, as a hobby and so tight places were a natural for her. Jenny added, "Besides, how many jobs are there where you can take a nap and get paid for it!" John laughed and was happy to hear her response as it would make things much easier for both of them. The collars had a USB access and charging port but it took 24 hours for the collar to charge that way, and only two to four hours in a pod.

John gave Jenny her choice of the ten lockers in the dressing room; she chose number seven, as she felt it was a lucky number for her, the RCC recorded it as hers. Now the locker would automatically unlock for her, and her alone. John then had her pick out a new uniform in her size, from the boxes of uniforms stored there. He then apologized that he didn't have a name tag for her. Since Jenny was unique in his otherwise fully automated restaurant, and all of the androids had their IDs permanently tattooed into their synthetic skin, he hadn't had a need for name tags in quite a while.

John assured Jenny that he would try to remember to order a name tag for her as soon as possible, but if he was taking too long, call him as, at his age, he was prone to forgetting things. Then he asked Jenny if she had any additional questions about the job. Jenny seemed confident that she could do the job just fine; and the rest, although unusual didn't seem too difficult. Happy hearing this, John began explaining how the collar worked.

John told Jenny that when she put the collar around her neck and the back halves came close, an electromagnet would pull the two halves together. Then a miniaturized latch would lock the collar on her neck until the RCC unlocked it. He explained that this was a safety measure designed to prevent her from taking it off in an uncontrolled fashion. This was because there had been a few cases of people going into seizures when they forcibly removed their collar before the collar systems had disconnected from their nervous system.

John explained that if, at any time, Jenny needed to remove the collar she need only contact the RCC and request that it initiate a collar shutdown and removal procedure. The process would only take about a minute and was for her protection and safety, then the collar would beep three times and unlock when it was safe to remove it. John then tried to prepare her as to what to expect when trying her collar on for the first time.

John told her, when the collar was closed around her neck she could expect it to pull shut when it was nearly closed, then she would hear a click as the latch engaged. After that she would temporarily feel her body stand at attention, with her arms to her sides, and she would feel herself lock up for a moment. This was normal behavior for all androids as they were awaiting further instructions. But John had modified the programming on the RCC so that it would recognize Jenny as a human woman. As soon as the RCC recognized the wait unit was Jenny it would release control of her motor functions back to her and her collar would simply help guide her actions.

Since the system would be aware that Jenny was not an android she would be able to override the system at any time should she wish to move or say something on her own. But as long as she was wearing her collar, Jenny really didn't have to think on her own at all. The AI program in her collar would attend to the customers needs automatically, Jenny would simply be providing a body, and she would be along for the ride, something John had heard was a surreal experience.

Since John didn't have to pay his other "Workers" he needed a convenient way to pay Jenny. He asked her, "do you have a credit card?" She replied, "Yes, WHY?" He said, "If it is OK with you I will have the RCC directly deposit your paycheck into your credit card account as a credit." Again, Jenny wasn't sure that this was legal but figured, "Oh well, it's his butt in the sling if it's not, not mine!" So she said that would be fine. John told her, "when you arrive on Monday, before starting work; buy a candy bar, soda, lunch, whatever,

just something cheap. I'll have the RCC record your card number to use to pay you and it will pay you back for the cost of the item in your first 'Paycheck.'

Another "Perk" of her collar would be that Jenny would be able to directly, wordlessly, and wirelessly communicate with her fellow staff and the RCC. If Jenny needed something from the kitchen she could directly contact the ChefBot from anywhere in the restaurant. She could also contact the RCC anytime she needed a break, water, food, to use the bathroom, etc. This method of communication was faster and more precise than speaking. A final bonus was that she would never need to write down her orders as they were automatically entered into the RCC as she took them. This added both accuracy and a valid record should a customer try to argue about the accuracy of their order.

Most of the details of the job seemed great to Jenny and she thanked John then said, "When do I start?" John replied, "I can use your help as soon as possible, but I don't want it to affect your school work. When do you get off for summer break?" Jenny told him in a week, so John said that would be great and he would have her collar ready, along with the modifications to the RCC programming by the time she came in, and MAYBE, hopefully, her name tag too. John asked Jenny if he could have permission to enter her locker before she returned next Monday to put her collar in, once he had it ready, she agreed and the RCC gave him temporary access until the following Monday.

Before she left that day, Jenny had already tried on, and selected a uniform that fit. It was already in her locker ready to go, and so all she had to do was come in next Monday at about 1130, get dressed, and put on her collar, the RCC would help her with the rest. John told her that if she needed anything else just call him, and gave her a card for the restaurant with his personal number written on it. Before they left he said that he had to get going and told her to, "just have fun, and again remember, If you need anything just call me!"

Jenny's first day at the restaurant was a bizarre experience, to say the least, being a conscious android substitute was certainly strange. She arrived as instructed, bought a candy bar, then went to the dressing room to get ready, she stored her purse and clothing in her locker and dressed in her silly uniform, while thinking, "how embarrassing!" Then the moment of truth came, Jenny removed the collar from her locker, looked it over for a moment, and then placed it around her neck.

As warned, the moment the two halves came within about one half of an inch of each other, they pulled together with a definite click, then Jenny heard another click as the latching mechanism engaged.

At first it seemed that nothing was happening, but then Jenny felt a tingling in the back of her neck. The sensation was caused by a swarm of Nanobots entering her neck, released by her collar. These micro-droids were creating a Bio-Electric neural interface to Jenny's spinal cord and brain, bypassing her own commands and desires. Before long Jenny felt herself stand at attention, unable to move on her own. Then she heard herself say in a mechanical sounding version of her, "wait unit coming on-line, please stand by!"

Then it happened, the connection was made to the RCC and Jenny, Heard? Or perhaps, more accurately, was aware of a new voice in her head which said, "Welcome, Jenny, I am the voice of the Restaurant Control Computer AI, I have been instructed to assist you with your new function as a human wait unit. Please stand by while important data and programming are being uploaded into your Control Collar, this won't take long!"

Even if Jenny had wanted to do otherwise, she was forced to stand there while flashes of data kept flooding her mind; the layout of the restaurant, kitchen procedures, proper waitressing procedures, customs and mannerisms, etc. After what seemed like forever, the upload was completed and Jenny heard, felt, whatever, a strange sensation as the RCC sent a command to go to table B12 and take the customer's orders.

Jenny then started walking to the table without even wanting to; as she walked she automatically grabbed two menus. She wondered how she knew the number to take since she hadn't seen how many customers were waiting for her yet. Also while, walking she realized that she could look around at will, and she stopped for a second to look around to see if people were staring at her. Jenny noticed that, embarrassed as she was in the silly getup, no one seemed to be paying her much attention; perhaps they thought she was just another mindless AI android doing its job. But as soon as she stopped concentrating on looking around she felt herself begin walking to her assigned table again.

And after she made the trip thru the gauntlet, she arrived at her assigned table where a young couple was waiting for her. Without thinking Jenny handed them the menus and said, "Welcome to Joe's Diner, a blast from the past, with the quality food and service of the future. I am your wait unit, Jenny; may I take your orders,

please?" The young couple looked up at her and said, "Yes Jenny, may we have a few minutes to look over the menu?" Jenny automatically replied, "Of course, take all the time you would like. I will be back soon!" Then Jenny turned and moved to her next assigned table but not before going to the kitchen to retrieve their order, she was fascinated by how she knew to do that!

Jenny was amused at how little mental effort she had to put into her work. If she just went with the flow the AI in her collar made all the decisions for her and she realized that this job was going to entirely too easy! She never needed to have someone call her from the kitchen to pickup an order, she just intuitively knew when to go and get it. She seemed to know how to do anything required of her before she ever needed the knowledge, which she thought was weird! And as her customers placed their orders they were automatically recorded by the RCC, so Jenny didn't even have to write them down.

Jenny's first day went well and she found the experience to be both entertaining, and amusing. Several days later she had her first pod experience, at about 1600 hours, the RCC informed Jenny that her collar was in need of charging. It informed her that another wait unit would be assigned to attend to her customers, and then she was directed to walk to pod 6, enter, turn and face the door, then lie back and relax; her pod would do the rest. Jenny did as instructed and soon drifted off to sleep. Oddly, even though she was asleep her collar maintained her balance and standing position.

Five hours later Jenny awoke, surprisingly refreshed, she was not sure what awakened her, since she didn't have an alarm clock or even a watch. But she would eventually find out that the RCC brought her out of sleep mode when her collar was fully charged. Since it was nearly time to close, the RCC had Jenny begin cleaning up the closed B-Section of the restaurant. At 2200, Jenny was informed that they were now closed and instructed to go to the changing room, then wait for a single beep from her collar which would let her know it was about to unlock, so as not to startle her. Then once it had unlocked, remove her collar, and uniform, dress in her normal clothes, and go home.

A month passed, and Jenny was perfectly used to her daily routine. She had grown accustomed to the feelings and sensations of being controlled by the RCC, and didn't mind since she could always take back control whenever she felt the need. She had almost messed up though, one day, when a rude customer smacked her on the rear as she turned to walk away. Thankfully the AI in her collar responded appropriately and she didn't override the system and smack the man,

like she wanted to. School was still another two months away and this seemed like the perfect job, but things were about to get a bit complicated for Jenny.

Soon after starting her new job, Jenny had realized that John, the owner of Joe's Diner, was never around. He relied almost entirely on the RCC to manage his restaurant and "employees." In fact, she had only seen him once after she started the job; approximately two weeks in when he stopped by to check in on her. She told him that the job was not only entertaining, since she met many interesting people, but she was so happy that he had given her the chance to do it. John was thrilled with her response and yet he had, once again, forgotten to get her a proper name tag.

The lack of a name tag had not really been a problem for Jenny, since she always introduced herself to her customers when she first arrived at their table, still it was kind of customary for a waitress to have one. Never the less, Jenny didn't really mind so she didn't bother calling John and asking for one. After all, he had done her a huge favor by breaking the rules and hiring her, instead of just buying a new wait unit.

On a Tuesday, six weeks after she had started, a bad electrical storm was approaching from the west. This would normally have bothered Jenny since she was really afraid of storms, but since she was soundly asleep in her pod she was completely unaware of the weather outside. Suddenly an extremely close lightning strike hit the side of the metal diner. Thanks to the electrical skin effect, all the electrical current was diverted around on the surface of the diner to ground, and no one inside was hurt. However, there were complications due to the strike.

Along with any large electrical current, goes a similarly large magnetic field, almost like an EMP at close range. The magnetic field passing thru the restaurant caused the RCC to reboot, and when it did the custom software modifications that John had made were lost as the RCC reloaded its base software package and operating system from a backup, and then restarted.

Upon its 2nd boot up, the RCC reloaded all saved parameters for Joe's Diner from a backup, unfortunately, one made before Jenny worked there. The information included specifics like the name of the diner, its location, owner, etc., but it didn't indicate the quantity of Android staff presently in inventory. So the RCC sent out a discovery and ID request, for all in-house android units which

included Jenny's control collar, and so she too was included in the restaurant's inventory of robotic waitresses.

When Jenny's collar responded it replied with the old wait unit ID from the previous android that it was intended for, WU19274 an XS-Tech ServeBot; which it's collar indicated was currently charging in Pod 3. The RCC sent a wake command to the unit but since the modifications John had made were lost, Jenny was not given her autonomy by the RCC.

Jenny awoke and found herself commanded to step out of her pod and resume work and, like it or not, she did! But Jenny soon became concerned when she realized she no longer had any control of her own actions whatsoever; and she could not override, or disobey, her orders. Jenny was even more distressed when, at her first table, she introduced herself as wait unit WU19274, and was unable to speak her name, "Jenny!"

But that night, Jenny's real adventure began, instead of being able to keep her tips Jenny was commanded to place them in the tip slot, just like the other wait units tips; to be added to Joe's nightly profits and not Jenny's. Then, instead of being sent to the break room to dress in her normal clothing and go home, Jenny was sent to Pod 10 and forced to enter sleep mode; of course, since the RCC was in full control, she had no choice and complied.

The RCC determined that WU19274 was displaying some anomalous behavior and performed a full diagnostic scan on the unit after Jenny had entered her tube. The diagnostic indicated that the wait unit did indeed have some problems. The RCC determined that the best course of action would be to have the defective wait unit serviced at the factory. It sent a request to XS-Tech's support division to send a TechBot to check out the faulty wait unit, and determine if it needed to be returned to the factory for maintenance. The next morning, at 0700, the requested TechBot arrived to repair the faulty unit and soon began its work.

The TechBot started by activating the defective wait unit and commanding it to step out of its pod and standby at attention while the TechBot unit examined it. After a thorough examination the TechBot determined that the RCC was correct, this wait unit had several problems. To start, its frame was fully biological in nature, unlike the other ServeBots. This fact would require special maintenance routines, something the pods at Joe's were not programmed, or designed, to handle.

Also the unit was missing all identifying markings, which would need to be remedied. And finally, the unit's appearance had not been specialized to meet the standards set for Joe's wait units. But all of these problems could easily be fixed at the repair department. The TechBot informed the RCC that the unit would have to be taken off-line for about a day and taken back to XS-Tech's Maintenance and Repair Department. The RCC accepted the situation and began adjusting the work schedules for the other staff, in order to accommodate the offline unit.

While the TechBot modified one of the tubes to allow for WU19274's unique design, the RCC shifted control of Jenny to the TechBot. After it had completed its work on the tube, the TechBot took control of the defective wait unit and forced it to walk out to the waiting transport to be delivered to the factory. Jenny was frightened, well more accurately terrified, by what was happening to her; but to the outside observer, one would never know that there was any emotion at all within the wait unit.

Before long, Jenny was secured inside the TechBot's vehicle and on her way to XS-Tech for repair. When they arrived, the TechBot released Jenny from her storage bin and commanded her to follow him into the building. Once inside, the Factory Control Computer took over the control of Jenny's collar then directed her to remove all her clothing and place them in a storage receptacle. Then she was to go to the rework line where she was commanded to lie down on a tray-like contraption attached to a conveyor belt. While she was completely embarrassed; Jenny, of course, had no choice but to comply.

The belt began moving and Jenny was terrified, wondering what was about to happen to her, she thought, "I'm not an android but do these machines know that?" She would all too soon find out the answer to her question, even if it was not the one she wanted! The first machine she entered was scary but benign; it was apparently some sort of scanning device. A blue beam of light scanned Jenny from head to foot, and then the belt began moving and she was transported onward to her next adventure.

The machine she entered into next, washed her thoroughly with some sort of liquid. Thankfully, the machine was smart enough to avoid getting it into her eyes, nose, or mouth. Unfortunately that didn't prevent the machine from thoroughly cleaning out her lower ports. Jenny would have screamed, both out of terror, and the many odd sensations coming from below. But if she had seen the results of

what was happening to her due to the wash, she'd have really wanted to scream.

All her hair had been permanently removed, from simple body hair, to the hair on her head, and even her eyebrows and eyelashes. She now looked like a naked mannequin. Once the washing was complete she was dried with a combination of air blast and heat lamps.

Then she moved on to another machine, once inside this one she was placed into a deep sleep mode, unconscious and unaware of time's passage or what was being done to her, which was a blessing for Jenny. For what she would find out soon enough was the modifications to her body were not something she would have elected to have done if she had any say about it.

Luckily for Jenny, this machine was essentially a sterile operating room designed to accommodate the procedures it was about to perform. Before the fun even started, the factory uploaded the latest operating system, AI, and data into Jenny's collar while wiping out all old data and programming, now her collar was up to date and met all XS-Tech ServeBot specs.

Next, a set of five precision robotic arms descended from above and began working on her. They made four small incisions in her scalp, exposing her skull where it was cleaned, and sterilized with some sort of UV light. Then four small Neodymium magnets were permanently attached to her skull with tiny stainless steel screws before the machine closed the incisions and sealed them in with some kind of glue that would eventually dissolve when her wounds had healed.

Next in the procedures was correction of the unit's eye color. For that a device lowered over Jenny's face, there were a few bright flashes of light, then micro arms injected a permanent vibrant blue dye into the iris of each eye changing her once, brown eyes to bright blue. But the fun still wasn't over for Jenny; thankfully she was unaware of all that was happening to her. The unit applied new synthetic eyelashes and eyebrows to the unconscious girl to match her new appearance requirements, these would never grow, or deteriorate, but would always look nice and proper for an XS-Tech ServeBot wait unit.

The final insult, added to injury, was when the machine applied permanent black tattoos to Jenny's arms, forehead, and sternum which indicated her manufacturer, Unit ID (WU19274), function, and owner. Now Jenny was permanently labeled as a piece of property, an object belonging to Joe's Diner.

Even if she were to somehow escape the factory, or diner, no one would even help her. Jenny would immediately be identified as a rogue AI wait unit owned by Joe's Diner, frozen in place, and then be returned to the restaurant. Any pleas for help that Jenny might make would simply be ignored by her captors as they would assume that this was just an AI trying to escape its owner. In a worst case scenario, she could even be sent back to the factory to have her personality erased and a new one installed.

When the machine opened up the newly redecorated Jenny, was moved on to one last machine which lowered a blond wig onto Jenny's head. This wig had small metal plates sewn into the fabric which automatically aligned to the four magnets in her head, which attached her wig firmly, yet it was easily removable if need be. Finally, she moved on to a room where she was reawakened and then commanded to remove her uniform from the storage bin and redress. Since there were no mirrors, Jenny had no idea that she was now an almost perfect match to all her fellow wait units at Joe's save for her old-style uniform.

Once she was redressed, Jenny was commanded to move to shipping where a final upload of new data was sent to her collar. She was then loaded into a delivery vehicle for return to her owner. Before long the vehicle was back at Joe's Diner, Jenny was unloaded and sent back in to begin her new existence as a simple, yet conscious, wait unit. During this time Jenny was still unaware of all that had been done to her and the changes that were made, although she had noticed the platinum blond hair in her line of sight and wondered what else she would discover.

It was only as she walked up to the diner and saw herself reflected in a window that she was horrified at the sight. She no longer looked like Jennifer Dawes, she looked like every other wait unit at the diner, she wasn't even sure if her friends, family, or John, could have recognized her anymore. Even worse, she still didn't have any autonomy as her collar was still completely in control. She hoped that when she stepped inside the Diner and her collar reconnected to the RCC that it would recognize her as a human woman and return her ability to move, and speak, on her own. But sadly the modified programming which had allowed for that, was lost after the lightning strike occurred. Unless John returned and recognized her, reloaded his modifications, and instructed the RCC to treat Jenny as human, she was stuck as a simple ServeBot!

As you may have expected, upon entering the diner, the RCC entered wait unit WU19274 into inventory as property of the restaurant, and its owner John. Then the unit was put back to work, this time whether it wanted to, or not. Jenny immediately knew she was screwed as she found herself forced to walk to table A3, where four people were waiting for her. But what really reminded her of the severity of her situation, was when she heard herself say to her customers, "Welcome to Joe's Diner, a blast from the past, with the quality food and service of the future. I am wait unit WU19274, but you may simply call me Waitress; may I take your orders, please?"

Later that evening the hits just kept on a coming. At the end of the day, once the restaurant had closed, Jenny didn't get to go home, change out of her uniform, or keep any of her tips. She, once again, was required to turn her tips over to the restaurant before being ordered to clean up the place. After all, WU19274 was now merely a wait unit, someone's property, and property had no rights or choice in any matter! Since property certainly could not own anything, such as money or its own clothing, Jenny would never get to go shopping at the mall again. The reality was that WU19274 would likely never get to identify itself by its old name, nor make any decision regarding its own preferences, ever again!

Jenny was now truly experiencing the life of an android wait unit, she was unpaid, had no choice in any matter, and also spent all her off time in a pod which, thankfully, the new data in her collar had reprogrammed to deal with her human needs. Now during each maintenance cycle she was recharged with electricity for her collar, and fueled with a disgusting gel called NanoPaste which sustained her biological needs. Until she was released from her predicament, Jenny would never eat human food again, use the restroom, or wear anything other than her uniform.

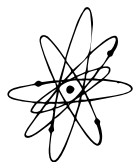
Jenny could also look forward to being cleaned, evacuated, flushed, and rinsed each maintenance cycle before being redressed in a clean uniform. John hadn't visited the restaurant in months and probably had forgotten about the college student he had employed as a temporary replacement for a faulty wait unit.

There were a few ironies, John never got Jenny her name tag and now, trapped as a ServeBot, Jenny no longer needed one, her ID was clearly marked on both her sternum and her forehead. Also, since WU19274 was unpaid, the restaurant's profits had increased significantly. And, eventually, when her old uniform wore out the RCC replaced it, ordering the current style sized to fit her, now she was virulently indistinguishable from her fellow wait units.

When school resumed the following month, Jenny was nowhere to be seen. The university assumed that she had either simply lost interest after her freshman year, quite common, or she couldn't pay for her sophomore year and dropped out. Either way, they never came looking for her. The problem was, neither did her foster parents, as they had taken on three new kids and were so busy looking after them that Jenny kind of fell thru the cracks. None of Jenny's customers ever seemed to realize that the wait unit serving them was, or had ever been, a human woman. They simply gave Jenny their orders, and paid her after their meal was finished.

Jenny kept hoping that, eventually John, or someone, would discover the error, and free her from her forced life of servitude, but after fifteen years elapsed, she was still waiting tables, and losing hope. Sixteen years into her service, WU19274 was saddened to discover that Joe's had been sold to a new owner. Apparently John had died and the estate sold the restaurant. This saddened WU19274 both because she liked John, and because the new owner would have no idea that the wait unit had ever been human. It seemed that Jenny's last hope of escaping life as a ServeBot had just died.

But several things could be said for Jenny the ServeBot. She was a fantastic waitress! WU19274 never forgot an order or got one wrong, the unit was always courteous, efficient, and never lost its temper! So, if you ever have the opportunity to eat at Joe's Diner, be sure to ask for wait unit WU19274, you won't regret it!



The End, *for Jenny, anyway!*

