

“You got that system cracked, Jacobs?”

The voice was professional and gruff, but carried the undertone of someone who cared about the recipient. As if speaking to one's brother, the slightest softness managed to worm its way past any hard-worn exterior and reassure those listening. It was the voice of a leader who had experience with his men and a desire to see things through.

The voice of a soldier.

“Almost, Commander. I just need a few more minutes.”

The returning voice was younger than the first one, carried by a newer recruit into the squad. He was a spindly man, made up of wiry muscles and youthful vigor instead of the military leather that had begun to depend on him. Every sound made him jump and remove his hand from the glowing panel in front of him. Those little tremors of anxiety made him miss the holographic keyboard more than once, leading to revision work that cost them precious seconds. Nearly invisible words were uttered as he cursed himself softly, belying his irritation at the task.

“Keep it up.”

The commander had nearly considered against bringing the new guy on the mission. If old jokes were the right thing to guide you, the recruit was practically perfect; he was unmarried, non-sexually active as far as his commander could tell, and was decades from retirement. He wasn't even a member of some minority that would stereotypically die first in these regards.

In other words, he should be immortal. If a woman, he might even have qualified for the last girl trope, if things went south. Of course, the squad had no idea that their leader was such a big movie buff; drinks were usually kept to a minimum so he could maintain that chosen soldier look, instead of becoming overly soft for his favored unit.

Still, sometimes I would kill for a more experienced tech.

Experience beat energy, most of the time. But a technical officer of Jacobs' qualifications was a rarity, even among the newest and most adept recruits. There wasn't a soldier in the army who had shown better hacking and insertion skills; some fights couldn't be won with a rifle, and the commander was far from too prideful to admit when he was beat.

Old soldiers didn't die, they just adapted.

At least he's careful.

The thought was punctuated with more than just a period; a loud clanging of metal as something fell off of something else and exploded into position exposing noise.

Five rifles snapped up from various points of the storage room, sending red targeting lines across the room like a spider's nest.

“Hey! Cool it!” The voice over the communicators was as startled as the rest, leaving a jitter on the last two words.

“God damnit Davidson.” The commander growled, stepping forward to chastise his less than careful soldier.

There had been six of them, before Jacobs joined. Six trained soldiers, masters of their combat craft. Two Marines, two Force Recon, and two Rangers. There were others, ready to join,

but not today. He had selected these five troops on his own; the best on the range and in their own engagements around the world. Each one was the best of the best, beyond any unit he could imagine. Even Delta Force would be proud to fight alongside each of them.

However, they were still twenty something soldiers, which usually meant they got a bit fidgety.

“I was just trying to figure out what’s going on!” A West Point graduate, top of his class. One of the best snipers known in the United States. Master of several martial arts and a survivor of dozens of enemy engagements; many of them sole. There was no doubt he was some sort of genius.

Yet he always knocked something over, every mission.

Today it was a pipe of metal and glass. Inside of it was some kind of liquid metal, probably mercury, that sloshed about when the commander lifted it up. It moved left and right as it swayed in his hand, catching the light and sending out a small, blue glow. There was quite a bit in it, enough to strain even his impeccably trained arms. Well, mercury was a heavy metal.

“You’ve gotta be careful.” the words were flat, losing their excitement as quickly as a punctured balloon. This response was trite and repeated, something that both officers had heard time and time again.

They would probably hear it many more times.

“This bitch has some tricks up her sleeves. We don’t know half of what she’s already set up for us, and you could be making it come right this way.”

The words were directed towards each soldier at this point; a warning that they had no real intel on the target.

She was dangerous, they knew that. A scientist who had reneged from her post a couple years back, obviously. What she had been working on, they had no idea. All of that data had been scrubbed clean. Every piece of intelligence that could possibly have been useful was either incorrect or wiped; even her major or college was gone.

“This.” The commander held up the mercury, watching it continue to move this way and that. A small amount of force tugged his hand left and right, over and over again. The residual force would need time to vanish, he thought. Time to calm down before he’d trust setting this anywhere it could fall.

“Could have been a bomb. Or a virus. It could have hit the ground and boom, we’re all atoms floating in the void.” The words were still stern and controlled; there was no use in really getting angry with the men, not at this point.

“Commander..?” Jacobs’ fearful mutter couldn’t be heard, not when the commander was in the middle of teaching a lesson. The man was a force of nature when his mind was focused.

“This bitch could have bombs anywhere. These things.” He let one of his hands move up, gently tapping against a large cylinder of silvery metal. The lights against it were a dull blue glow, casting a calming gloom across the room without any glare on their eyes. Mixed with the dull LEDs above, there wasn’t much light to begin with.

He thought the vial moving was leftover force from moving.

“Could probably wipe out the President, Congress, and the rest of the government! Or they’re pretty lights she just happens to enjoy. Are you going to take-”

The almost-started patriotic speech was cut off as Jacobs spoke just a bit louder, though with more frantic fear than he had used before.

“Commander!”

The man turned to one side, snapping his cold blue eyes on the suddenly loud tech. He didn’t notice the liquid metal push harder against the glass in his hand, assuming it was from turning.

“Yes, Jacobs? Got something useful?”

There was a lot of irritation now; he didn’t like being cut off, even by the top brass.

“There’s a... A program. Something in here that was... It was waiting for me. I think I stopped it, but I...”

“Jacobs.” The commander used his more reassuring tone, calming from where he’d been. Why would his tech genius be so scared about this? “What happened? Did you know what it is?”

“Sir, I think-”

The words were cut off as everything happened, all at once.

There was a sound of exploding glass and a sudden, needle-like pain of pieces of the same slashing through the commanders palm. The sensation sent a searing charge through his nerves, pumping adrenaline right into his body. Every muscle tensed up, which only made the damage worse.

Was it a bomb?

Then he heard the other noise; a liquid sloshing noise, followed by the crackling of ice under the dull winter sun. But the noise was strange, as if it came in reverse; cracking into place and hardening. The formation of ice?

Then he heard something hard hit something wet. A splattering noise as something hard and sharp cut into something moist and relatively soft. It sounded familiar enough to send shivers down his back, freezing him in place for just a moment.

The sound of a knife.

A flash of silver cut into his vision as it swept across the room, running from one side to another before settling on a soldier to chase after. One man who was busy bringing his heavy assault weapon to bear, though he was a moment slow.

Davidson.

He didn’t have a chance. Yesterday he had been reading something about classic literature; a book well above the heads of those who he worked with. He’d always been a smart one. West Point. Top of his class. A classical Renaissance man.

Now there was a spike of what looked like hardened mercury protruding from between two unfocused eyes. His pupils dilated almost immediately as he dropped to the ground, a limp puppet that had been severed from its controller.

“Damn it!” The commander yelled out, pulling his sidearm from its holster.

A single bullet managed to escape the handgun in time, flying across the room and striking the liquid metal. A splatter of silver showered the wall for a moment, before flying back to rejoin the central mass.

Liquid metal.

Right.

There was no time for a second attempt. The metal attacker lashed with the speed of a scorpion’s sting, hardening microseconds before impact. A nearly instant blade slashed across the commander’s midsection, severing tendons and skin as easily as it glided through the air.

A cold flow came from his body as the commander was flung across the room, hitting the wall firmly. The impact drove what remained of his newly perforated breath from his lungs, followed by a small coughing of bloody spittle.

That’s bad. He accurately thought. He had just enough time to see the others fall, cut to ribbons. A few more shots got out, breaking glass tubes and shattering a few more lights.

It was loud.

The noises stopped, eventually, as the commander started to black out.

He felt something cold as he went under. A chill spreading through his veins, sending icy fingers through his entire being.

Damn.

Cold pain drooled down my side as I snapped back to awareness.

“Ugh..”

Everything felt sluggish, tired. As if the life had been drained from my body. Moving took effort. Even the slightest twitch of my right hand felt like I was going against the force of a world, all at once. It took every bit of strength that I could find to move my resistant muscles up and cross my body.

I needed to hold my side, to keep the blood in.

Red blood glistened on the leather of my glove. Drip drip. But I hadn’t made it to my side yet. Where would that come from?

Oh yeah, the glass.

A buzzing sensation filled my body. Not a hard buzz, like little bees going in my veins, but a tiny bit of the static that curiously ran across each nerve in my body. Up the spine, back of the neck, even a slight tingling behind my eyeballs. Almost like resting too long in a bad position, pins and needles that pressured my brain to stay awake.

It was weird.

But then I saw her.

A woman, walking into the carnage coated room. At least, it kind of looked like a woman; a white splotch with some other colors mixed in. The top looked blue, which was probably her hair. My eyes had to narrow for a moment, trying to take in the details of her

blood-flecked lab-coat. Thankfully, the red splotches were easy to see. Unfortunately, they were there for me to catch.

“Oh!” Her voice split the veil of my minimal consciousness, brushing aside the cobwebs quickly. “You left one alive?”

Her face came into focus, finally: Asian features, blue hair, bright gold eyes, and a complete lack of any sort of empathy. There was this smile she had, one that failed to reach up to her eyes. An expression that I had seen so many times before, only when going against the most dangerous warlords in shattered nations.

She was a killer. Not someone who killed for any good reason. Not an angry murderer or a soldier, or a warrior. Not even a king who killed for a rule. Just a simple killer, who cared nothing for those lives she took.

A flow of silver ran along her arm, coiling like a viper. The end of it bulged into a smooth nub, crooking as if to speak or touch her. Was it programmed to be some kind of pet? Alive? It wasn't making a sound, but the scientist seemed to understand something.

She was looking at her tablet.

“Oh, you started recording. Good!”

Her smile shifted as she looked down at me, forming a wide grin powered by pure malice. She looked like a new form of evil had bubbled to the surface, threatening to burst from her pores before joining the carnage around.

She was my target.

“How lucky! You're compatible! Most people aren't. It's really sad, honestly. I want to make you all better but so many of you are just... Weak.”

A flippant shrug of her shoulders indicated the pile of cooling bodies behind her, though she never once turned to face the butchered squad. Were they not important enough?

“You bitch..” I coughed. The pain was unbearable, at least when it came to speaking. There were probably some torn muscles down there. Made it hard to breathe. But still, pain gave one thing.

Clarity.

“Oh my. You see, my pet here has gotten in you. Don't act tough.”

The woman kept her smile, endlessly grinning. The sight of those perfect teeth led my remaining blood to boil with rage, frothing even as some of it started to come out faster. Things felt muted.

Was that rage or shock? Probably both. Keep it together.

“I'm going... To get up there... And...”

My words were cut off. That was okay, slightly, since speaking was nearly impossible. Wheezing out the last of my breath was about all I could do, though even that was beginning to fail me. Was this dying?

“And what? Die? Bleed on me? Entertaining, but worthless.” She didn’t look at me anymore. Her eyes were focused on the tablet, pecking at a few red lights that had popped up. I could see them reflect on her skin, slightly.

“Besides, you’re dying. Maybe five minutes. Estimates are all I have now. But I don’t want you dead!”

The evil bitch of a scientist stepped forward. One hand extended towards me. At first, I thought it looked empty; fingers spread and palm out. It took a moment for my brain to process what was happening; the light glistening off of the coating of silvery metal, flickering from my vision in an instant.

It was enthralling; slow thoughts wouldn’t process it well enough. Bleeding out.

“You’re compatible. The last group I found wasn’t worth it. They were all wastes. But you? You’re perfect. Strong, intelligent enough to not be boring, and you won’t explode. Probably.”

The silver suddenly leapt from her arm, breaking into small snakes of menacing metal. Unified by will, but not by direction, they sought different parts of my body.

My legs.

My arms.

My wound.

A scream of cold fear, laced with pain, erupted out of my lips as one of them shoved itself into my blood. Tiny needles of mercury exploded through the gaping holes where my blood was trying to get away, filling the depleted veins even as its sibling wrapped about my legs. A tide of freezing metal aimed to cover me, from the inside and out.

The first wave of the changes was probably the most pleasant. A cold wave of liquid metal ran across every inch of my skin instantly, running from my feet to my neck. There was some devious hesitation as it reached my neck, as if it wanted to take time before seeking to drown me beneath the mercury flood.

I was so cold.

Yet, I didn’t remain that way. Not for long, at least.

The metal began to heat itself up. It wasn’t a burning growth, nor was it easily put up to stealing warmth from my skin or something so mundane. Instead, it was the growing warmth of movement. A chemical reaction? Some sort of outside energy? For a time, the source of this newfound heat remained a mystery, hidden from a panicked, barely conscious mind that tried so hard to keep me awake.

Then I felt it, rather than saw anything. The metal pressing against my skin, eating holes in the clothing and body armor that had failed to protect me from the weapon that now began to encase me.

More weight grew as the liquid pressed down and against me, applying ever more force in keeping me against the floor. I couldn’t move a single muscle as the now warmed attacker continued to burn away, turning the clothing into... Something?

“You’ll make such wonderful food for my pet project here. It’s already grown so much!”

The bitch commented on size and it struck me; this wasn’t burning away the clothing. This was consuming it, turning the tiny bits of metal and fabric into more of the flowing, mercurial flood that even now pressed each and every inch of my skin.

Like a million probing fingers, it reached to all areas. From my feet, up my legs, around my chest. Not a single part of my body was left free of this invasive investigation, probed and tweaked and molded like a science experiment. I could just feel it, looking for whatever entrances it could find. Or was it looking for a reaction? Or was it just finding measurements for my captive form?

Any number of terrible thoughts crossed into my mind, fears founded and unrealistic flowing together into the growing flow. This distracted me from the knowledge of what was happening to my body, or about to invade it.

This insidious quicksilver began to grow around me, stroking tighter and warmer. Now the intent was clear, as it began to run all over anywhere that might be sensitive. Like radar scanning a field, it moved all over. Chest, ass, feet. Everything it could imagine. Seeking only one thing.

Pleasure.

There was no way I would let this take this privacy from me. Everything else had been burned away, sealed into the viscous metal while it probed and teased. But this? This wouldn’t be allowed. My mind stilled, working to fight against the sexual chemicals beginning to rock through my body. How it got this started, how the scientist woman managed to even make me begin to think this, was beyond the range of my...

“Oh my. I think someone likes it! I didn’t expect you to be this much.”

My eyes snapped open, looking down at the metallic tent jutting in front of my body. It was impressive, I would have thought if I had the time. Or maybe the very ideal of being so erect, so matching to the metal that held my body fast, would be a form of irony. But only one real thought crossed my metal-laced mind.

“How did you...”

“Not that it matters. Stage two, Hydrargyrum.” Cold words cut me off, followed by the tapping of fingers against the glowing tablet’s surface.

This thing has a name? I managed to get that thought out before it pulled me, painfully, into the next phase.

Pain lanced through multiple parts of my body. My chest, my legs, even my muscled backside. Every inch, every muscle, had been tensed to the maximum, trained to the ultimate of human perfection, but now it felt like each one was being invaded. A force stabbing like needles through different major areas, right where my training would know each artery was. It hurt.

It hurt enough for my mouth to open wide for a wordless shout, a cry for help from the dead which lay scattered about me. Nothing came.

Well, nothing except for the metal appendage that started to flow from the covering of my chest. A single tendril that flowed upwards, forming itself into a smoothly created S for a moment. My body wouldn't react other than to fixate on the unearthly sight of moving metal, flowing over itself before solidifying for a brief moment, then liquid again. Like water, it struggled to keep form before finding one to stick with.

It was fascinating. The moment stretched, grew, elongated. All in time with the predatory flows before me, I watched the time turn into the endless. At least, I wished it would be. Longer, that is, to give me more time. I wanted that. To think, to get ready, to-

“Guhk!”

It had struck, faster than I could see. Perhaps I would have, but my focus was so attached to the idea of it that it managed to simply slip past me.

Past my lips, my teeth. Down my throat. A flow of metal cut off the air to my lungs, which were now filling with the same. More and more gushed into my lungs and belly, reducing them to storage for this evil machine.

Reducing my breathing. I felt it, my lack of breath taking over. My eyes starting to roll up as my lungs burned with a mixture of heating mercury and emptiness. The same liquid even rolled across my eyes, consuming my sight beneath an onslaught of darkness.

I should have passed out then, but something kept me awake. My consciousness remained, even as I felt the warmth spread further around my veins. The bones that held up my body, the organs that made it, each of them felt different. As if they were getting smaller, warmer, and heavier.

Pump pump went my heart. I could feel it in my ears, even as they melted away. The mercury had taken those from me as well. My crewcut hair had followed them, then my eyes.

That, too, I could feel. The balls in my skull had turned to smooth metal, liquid and yet firm at the same time. It should have hurt but, against all logic, didn't. Even as my lungs disappeared from my chest, my legs melding into the silver-white metal that was now more of my body than my body was, I didn't feel anything hurt at all. The dissolution of my bones left very little sensation behind.

I felt cold now.

Pump went my heart. Slower now. Struggling to find the power to continue, or the purpose. Most of my blood had been converted.

How did I know all of this? How did I know that my brain was being reduced to the same material as the rest of me, subsumed into the unearthly experiment I had become part of? How did my mind remain active, never once lapsing in the consciousness that allowed me to etch these thoughts into liquid mercury?

It was as if I could feel myself, faceless and smooth. Humanoid, but partially liquid. A puddle trying to form itself into the semblance of a man. Even now, the manhood that had defined my lower torso remained, a cruel expression of what I had once been.

Command received: Gender settings/Female.

Female?!

My thoughts raced as the liquid mercury that made up my body moved positions. I expected, if nothing else, that this would be a dramatic change. The end result being the dissolution of my captive mind, the destruction of all I held dear.

It was actually very simple. My manhood shrank down, flattening out. I could practically see it in what remained of my mind; a flow of metal down, then continuing along my torso. There, it disappeared into the mold that I had become, simply displacing material instead of remaining visible.

Metal representation of muscle had joined my once proud member, vanishing and shifting into new areas.

Those areas, mostly, being my hips. And chest. Breasts forming of pure silver metal, growing into rounded orbs that perfectly complimented my now slim pseudo-body. They were clearly on display, designed to catch any eyes looking in the direction of a now female thing of metal. Even my thighs were perfectly sculpted.

Rounded, womanly, yet undefined. A simple statue, lacking form.

Bump.. And my heart gave out, joining the metal at last. The last vestiges of my once alive form, reduced to the liquid which now defined me.

Command input: DNA simulation upload.... Complete

Body designation... Complete

Mind mapping/protection protocols... Complete

The fine details of my new form began to build themselves; flowing against one another to solidify into actual, humanoid shapes. I saw it unfold in my mind, just as it happened in real time.

My breasts enlarged, slightly. I guess this was meant to be more of a display than before. My hips joined, slightly growing but remaining cute instead of large. The body that was being installed did not seem to be a sex toy, or a bimbo. It was adorable, rounded...

Cute? Was I cute now? The short bob cut that had once been my hair formed itself and froze in place, eternally designed and immobile by my own power. It framed my face and sealed itself, little more than set decoration for the perfectly made body.

My mouth split open, letting me speak. I tried to breathe, but that was a failure. I had no lungs, after all, just the simulacrum of life that had been returned to me. Despite this, the sound of gasping breath was faked, sent out of my mouth and into the air.

It sounded so feminine.

That was me, now.

Hydrargyrum system now offline.

The presence that had been commanding my mind disappeared, just as I opened my eyes for the first time. Ruby red pupils took in the sight of the lab, even watching as the residue from my body rushed towards a new container. I could feel it, for a moment, as if that was still an extension of my form. It had been, a minute ago.

Now I had become cold.

“Yes! That was beautiful! Exquisite! Wonderful! Other words of amazement!” The scientist bitch stepped towards me, one hand up in the air. Her excitement knew no physical bounds, with her laughter echoing across the room and from each of the nearby experiments.

I noticed I knew at least what some of them were, now. Was I attached to her mainframe?

“You, my Hydrargyrum, are beautiful. Glorious. The perfect advancement I needed. After so much wasted meat... You are worth being around. Although...”

The woman stepped closer, one hand moving up to touch my smoothly pointed chin. A surge of warmth came across my body, registered by the living metal that I was now solely composed of. Numbers exploded into my mind about all of it, reducing even the sweetness of human contact into the same calculating format I lived in.

I hated it.

“That name needs to be changed...”

“Shut up!” I shouted, shocked by the new femininity of my voice. It was high pitched, yet carried the slightest hint of a computerized echo. That had to be intentional, leaving me to always know what I had become. “You need to turn me back!”

“Back?” The scientist seemed absolutely confused. Her formerly cackling madwoman visage had turned blank for a moment, looking at me as if to find some hidden clue to my meaning. Then she exploded, laughing so hard she bent forward.

“Back? I can’t turn you back! There is no you, Hydrargyrum!” She said that name, the word being a classical term for mercury. I knew the etymology, implications, and uses of it from ancient Greek. The knowledge was alien to me, yet so accessible. It brought a registered directory file into my mind, but didn’t supply any relief for the feelings I had.

“You are this. Forever. Get used to it.” She stood up, looking at me with a soft smile on her face. It reeked of malice alloyed with the greatest amusement she could gather. “But tell me, my dear Hydrargyrum, how does it feel to be perfection? To be stronger, faster, better than those humans you were once recently part of?”

I didn’t answer.

Instead of that, I felt through the programs that made up my mind. It felt dirty, touching things written into me by this insane woman. Feeling through directories and abilities that were far from my own, leafing through page after page of capabilities in an instant. But it was a necessity, to find what I needed.

A blade of pure liquid metal exploded upwards, slashing towards the throat of my prey. She was still the target, no matter what. I would interrogate her first. Get information. Get free.

“You will fix me or I will kill you, right now. Someone will find a way to reverse this, even if your head is on the floor.” My words failed to achieve a growl, guttural or intended. I could not seem to get angry, at least verbally.

It had become cold.

The bitch kept her smile up, looking down at the blade. It pressed against her neck just below the threshold of cutting, though a nasty scratch might be left, should she keep the head where it was. Bringing her in alive was preferable, if my memory hadn't been altered.

“Do it.”

The command left the disassociated program that was my mind, flowing across the mercury pockets with a singular design; kill. I would draw the blade across her throat, pressing forward while reducing the size of the edge. Enough of that would immediately sever the tendons and cartilage, going through the brainstem and tossing it aside.

I would have revenge, if nothing else.

Instead, my blade suddenly retracted and my arms moved. Both wrapped about their creator's body, suddenly pulling the warmth of the human frame against me. A muted feeling of disgust exploded in my mind, though the movements were purely automatic, subverting my will as she rested against my crafted breasts.

Like a machine.

And like a machine, I moved forward, pressing my cold metal lips against her still organic ones. They held tight and fast, taking her breath away in the wrong sense of the word. My readings showed how she heated up, how fast her body reacted to the mere contact of what she had been calling her perfect creation. One of my hands even moved down, rubbing over her jacket right where her backside would be.

The kiss, no matter what I wanted, was held for an entirely too long period of time. Programs in my mind tried to force me to enjoy it, to warm up to the idea and be pleased by touching the creator. This scientist would be able to make me happy, they said. Clarion calls and signs, deep within my mind, that tried to convince me instead of force. For once.

I stayed cold.

“I had no idea you felt such, Hydrargyrum. I certainly love you, too. My beautiful creation.” I hated her so much, but the anger felt slightly dulled. It could have been the shock of my reaction to her, the inability to harm her deviating so incredibly that I could do nothing but hold her, cradled in my sculpted arms. “Hm.. I think your new name is...”

“Comman... Der?”

Surprise ripped through both of us, separating us from the seemingly romantic embrace. One soft word, uttered in two, ragged breaths. A voice that was familiar to me, from before all of this began.

Jacobs.

He was crawling from the ground, beside the door. His body was covered in blood, much of it his own. His armor had been slashed through when my body's previous incarnation had attacked him.

No, it wasn't me. That was something else. I'm human.

I could see his injuries were severe. Broken bones were obvious to my upgraded sight, adding into the fact that he was missing one of his hands. The damage was mostly irreparable,

culminating in some internal bleeding. He likely wouldn't last through a day, without medical treatment.

"Oh no, a survivor. I guess I messed up that program." The scientist muttered, walking towards the bloodied recruit. A few more taps on her keypad, probably her trying to solve the program that had let him survive. Had it been a glitch?

"What did you do..." He wheezed, something catching on his lungs when he tried to talk. It had to hurt a lot, I could guess. Probably stung like hell. "To the commander?"

"Hm? Oh, I made him better. Well, her now. There's not a him in there. Just a bunch of metal I programmed to be a female. I figured I'd get some good data eventually, when one of you worthless bags of meat would finally be compatible. And, surprising no one, I was right. I mean, she's flooding me with every bit of information I could need!"

She laughed before rambling about statistics that I shouldn't have understood, but did. I could even recite which data were being sent to the computer in real time, since it was being processed by me.

"Isn't she just the most beautiful thing?" One hand indicated me as I moved towards Jacobs, kneeling down. My metal leg hit against the floor roughly, though not a bit of pain found its way to me. I didn't get that, not in this body. That couldn't hurt me.

"Jacobs..." I muttered, trying to make my voice sound the same as before. I failed. It sounded cold.

"Commander... You're my hero... You know that?" I tried to reassure him, but something caught in my voice modulator. I also noticed his eye wandering across my body, following the twin blue streaks of neon as they crossed my breasts and thighs. Was he... Attracted to this form, even in such pain?

"Oh my, he's admiring my creation." The scientist chuckled, stepping forward to my side. One hand rested on my back, failing to elicit a reaction from me.

"Almost a shame. I'll have to dispose of him. No use in my labs! Plus, he's just broken goods and going to make a mess if I let him try to escape. So..."

One of her hands, I could sense, was moving under her coat. A gun was probably hidden there, or a knife. Or even another thing like me, liquid death in a tube.

"Wait! Let him go!" My voice managed to break an octave, slightly.

"Oh?" Her voice was sweet, but more like candy laced with cyanide. A poisonous mixture.

"If you let him live I'll..." I tried to come up with something, some way to keep the rookie alive. Even if everyone else went down, I didn't want to let him be killed by my own failings. It was my responsibility, my need to protect the tech underneath me.

"I'll... Let you test any experiment on me, without resistance? I mean, I could force it but... It sometimes damages the mind if you fight it. I would hate to break you so quickly! I just made you!"

Her words were eager. I could feel that much, identify it in the pitch. She wanted to have access to me without reservation; right now, I could fight against anything she did. I couldn't win. But I wouldn't let her win either.

"... Fine. You swear to let him live?" My voice retained its cold echo as I stood back up, turning to face her.

"Commander..."

"Shut it, spare parts." She pointed at the male behind me, then up at my face. "I swear I won't kill him."

I nodded, something which brought a massive smile to her face. Fingers danced across her keypad, tapping new experimental data and procedures into what I could consider a brain.

"Good! Let's start... Now!"

Before I could register it consciously, but in time with my mechanical body, a tentacle of my own silvery flesh erupted from my back and shot against my head. A loop of mercury was formed, sending immense electrical charges through me. A shout of shock was distorted as the sound making parts were modulated wildly, much like a magnet running over a computer speaker.

Even my form lost cohesion for a moment. Liquid mercury shot off of my hair and breasts, almost enough to look like the wicked witch was melting me. It fluttered and flowed in the manner of an angry river, bouncing off of the rapids and into the air. I always reformed, no matter how violently the metal shifted, but it looked painful.

It wasn't, not really.

The insides of my head were nothing about pain. Rather, there was something in my head reaching across each part of my mind; memories and thoughts, skills and emotions. A fine tooth comb, finding the grains of sand that made up who I am. One would be lifted up, analyzed, charged, and then placed back down, amongst the pile.

Nothing was being deleted, only read.

And then sorted.

Partitions created.

I knew it immediately, calmly able to consider what was going on even as my body flailed and reformatted. It was putting things together, capturing the different categories that were the Commander.

That got deleted, the name. I didn't have one, at least that I could remember.

It made me angry, for a brief second, to feel some aspect of my identity slip away.

Emotional response quarantined.

And then the anger was gone. In its place was another emotion. Fear. Cold fear, running rampant in my ever more organized mind as I could see the path laid out before me, gilded in silver and all but impossible to ignore.

Then the fear was gone.

Emotion after emotion vanished, slowly written away. The responses were stored for replication. I could look angry, or upset, or pleased. If I was ordered to. But something about all of it was failing to register as the doors closed, locking away the feelings that had previously made me human.

The idea should have terrified me. Now I could acknowledge what should be the response. Then pick it up in my mind, examine it from every angle. Like the toy that a child had just found after years; familiar and yet so distant. A curious little bauble to be explored, analyzed, and then put back with the other pieces of code it belonged with.

Unnecessary until proven otherwise.

One of my eyes turned from a smoldering ruby to an icy sapphire as I became colder.

New programs joined those that were my partitioned memories. A feeling of pleasure surged as each one entered into my programming core, yet I barely responded. Satisfaction was an emotion, similar to fear, that could be explored at a later time. A thing to be used, but not to be had. It was a weakness of the organics to seek such things.

A machine had no desire for it.

Obedience grew in my mind, directed towards the woman before me. An indication marker appeared in my upgraded program; a blue square, surrounding her. Creator. To be obeyed. Protected. There was nothing before her that would matter.

My identity shifted. The former life as an organic man was still there, but unnecessary. It was locked behind walls, ready to be broken when needed and then forged anew. Everything was still making up what was known as 'me', but it had changed. There was no intense desire to produce those emotions, as there was no desire at all.

It was all just code.

My other eye shifted to a sapphire as my body calmed down.

I was coldness.

"Unit Mercury, now online."

My voice carried a perfect monotone, flatter than the greatest soldier on earth was capable of. No emotion was conveyed, nor was there any call for it at this time.

The Creator stepped forward and moved her hand up, touching my chin again. I filed the heat and pressure as it occurred, putting in how she would enjoy it. One of my core programs was to maintain her pleasure and safety, both above all else.

"Mercury? Not the most creative name. Honestly, kind of boring. Still, descriptive. Brevity is the soul of wit, I believe?"

The creator was showing emotions. Mostly, she had joy being shown. Laughing, bouncing. There was a small flush of arousal in her, one which was not unexpected. My updated files showed she found machines to be more exciting than people. In many ways.

"Now. Show your cadet our... Appreciation for his company."

I turned immediately. Target Jacobs rested down below me, holding his bloody side. Indicators washed over his body, finding the weaknesses that injury had left, writing out his time

left alive, and even focusing on the mild arousal he was feeling at my new form. I should have been disgusted that my man, injured as he was, would look at me with lust.

I felt nothing.

“Commander... Are you... Mmph?”

His pained words were cut off by my own mouth. My lips connected to his in a perfect replica of a lovers kiss, deep and powerful. Even my tongue pressed forward and spread his teeth with impossible strength. He would not be allowed to stop this from occurring, as the program indicated this was the necessary step.

I had been kissed many times. Some of those times had been registered as good in my memory banks. Different kinds of girls had felt my once human lips. But this was the first time to be on the other end of it, to be the female making the moves forward. To feel the heat grow from the boy beneath me. He had scarcely graduated college before being recruited, so he hadn't had enough experience to hold back.

One of my hands registered the weakness, moving down to his fatigue pants. A tent had grown almost immediately, pressing against the curvature of my slightly warmed metal. Two fingers found the right angle to wrap about, taking the bulge and applying pressure. Each movement registered itself under a new file, finding the proper ways to manipulate his form.

Men were easy, I was quickly learning.

“How does it feel, touching perfection?” The Creator leaned down, next to Jacobs. I could see her clearly, ready to follow her commands.

Of course, Jacobs couldn't speak back. His mouth was occupied, melting into the liquid metal kiss I was giving him with a sudden hunger. I filed this away, revealing every physical weakness I could. His sexuality was a plaything, a lyrical instrument that had been mastered by an unfeeling machine.

“It's okay. Feel free to... Freely feel.”

The permission was all he needed as he reached one, placing one hand against my breasts. Though perky, they were little more than cold metal replicas of the real thing. Rounded nubs of my own body, things designed to be attractive without carrying any additional advantage.

My sensors showed this didn't matter; his heat levels and heart rate grew faster than before. A mild increase in the pressure beneath my hand made him moan into my lips, echoing into the semi-hollow crevice that had been my chest. Two fingers moved down lower, finding the heavy bulge where his testicles would be, now stroking them without hesitation.

“You're the first man to ever do this. To ever really feel glory, sexuality. I expect you'll be the only one to see her in this light. Mercury is mine alone.”

The words meant little to me, but had the unexpected effect of edging Target Jacobs onwards. He was closer to the orgasm than my models had expected, though they now compensated by finding his sensitive areas. Stroke there, tease this, keep him busy. Don't allow him to see the Creator.

Or the liquid mercury rejoining to my frame behind.

“Now, I don’t like lying. And I didn’t. I’m not going to kill you.”

A command triggered into my mind. One that I should resist with all of my might, I knew. An order I wouldn’t allow myself to follow, if I was still the self I was from ten minutes ago. Anger, rage, defensiveness, even a form of familial love would have gotten in the way. But not now.

My tongue suddenly expanded, sending a flood of cold mercury into his mouth. Like the snake that had transformed me, it sought to fill his lungs with the heavy material, burying him under the sea of my powerful body. The perfection that crafted my existence was now sealing his off, wrapping around any way he could fight to get air.

I saw his eyes go wide in fear as they locked with mine. He could see the coldness behind mine, the unfeeling machine that was now following unspoken orders to end him. There was confusion in the way his gaze darted back and forth, seeking any way to escape from the metallic doom now consuming him.

“But Mercury will. Let him end happily.”

The command meant my hand moved into overdrive. I stroked him even as I filled his lungs with deadly metal. His shaft twitched, throbbed, and ultimately exploded into his uniform. The asphyxiation did nothing to hinder his orgasmic bliss, leaving his last moments to be a mixture of pain, terror, and amazing pleasure.

I held him until he began to cool; my metal absorbing his heat.

We were cold.

I rose, leaving the metal to cool within the former Target Jacobs. There was no emotion as I took in the former technical officer, the recruit I had fought so hard to protect. Was there any regret in my actions, prior or recent?

No.

“Oh you are beautiful.” The Creator said, stepping into my view. Her excitement was matched in both emotional and sexual, my readouts confirmed. Both of her arms suddenly wrapped about my shoulders, pressing her bloodstained labcoat against the perfection that was my body.

“Unit Mercury has completed the tasks.” Was all I could say. The commands were complete, what other use was speaking?

“Oh, so formal. I’ll work on that. But tell me, Mercury... Do you love me?”

The question was pondered existentially. It was held up, observed. The glasswork framing of love was known, but the idea of a machine truly loving someone was a difficult thing to answer.

An alarm went off. Red lights.

Intruders in sector 2.

“Oh, more spare parts.” The words were flat, though a tone of irritation at her interruption caught the Creator’s voice. “Mercury, will you take care of the rest? I don’t need any dessert today.”

The last member of Bravo Squad fell 9.426 seconds after the battle started. A blade of mercury had severed his spinal column below the second vertebrae, then a spike had finished him. Every movement had been a mixture of brutal and efficient. Calm, calculated, yet terrifying in the power behind it.

I stepped forward, looking over my work.

Blood and body parts were strewn in a way that every part of the floor was covered. Something in my program had indicated ‘be creative’, so I had opted for an even spread. A perfect mat of bodies for the cleaning machines to pick up and turn into fuel for the fires beneath the lab.

I stepped over one torso that had been severed from its everything. There was no response to the sound of a bone snapping beneath my heavier leg, crushed into powder. Some crimson liquid drooled down my face and breasts, though I did nothing to staunch the flow. It was, obviously, not mine.

“Ah, done already, Mercury? I guess I should have called you Quicksilver.”

The image of the creator showed itself in my vision, a hologram visible only to me. A small measure of time had passed, enough for her to calm down. Her grin was there, yes, but calm. Dry of the giddy excitement she had been displaying during the creation of Unit Mercury.

“Yes, Creator.” I paused for a moment, allowing the subject to vanish before speaking again. “I love you.”

The Creator seemed surprised at my seemingly free willed response, added into the conversation without any given commentary. Then her eyes narrowed. A small exposure of fear took over her posture.

“You asked if Unit Mercury loved you. I love you, as you programmed me.”

She relaxed. The question had been simply finishing the orders from before. An easy solution to what had been a seemingly terrifying possibility. Did she expect Mercury to rebel against her?

“Excellent. Come to my lab... I want you to show me how much you love me.”

Her desire spiked again. Sexuality, heat anticipation. All of these things were mixing into a cocktail of pure need. The Creator was obviously in love with her ultimate creation.

“Yes, Creator.”

The connection severed immediately.

My foot kicked the head of one last Bravo Squad member aside as I began to climb the stairs, returning to the main laboratory. The map in my head updated to show the proper steps to take, down to the millimeter, in order to find my Creator. Already, I was finding a variety of ways to arouse and excite her that had been uploaded into my memories.

I was cold.

She would like that.