

Dirty Laundry

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/15499701) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/15499701>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	F/M
Fandom:	Detroit: Become Human (Video Game)
Relationship:	Connor (Detroit: Become Human)/Original Female Character(s)
Characters:	Connor (Detroit: Become Human) , Hank Anderson , Original Characters
Additional Tags:	mentions of adult themes , Fluff and Angst , Swearing , Mentions of Sex , Heavy mentions of abuse
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2018-07-31 Completed: 2018-09-01 Words: 24,470 Chapters: 23/23

Dirty Laundry

by [SaintOlly](#)

Summary

The Eden Club has seen an epidemic of deviancy, but Detroit's android detective, Connor, starts to question his own thoughts when he meets The Eden Club's last human employee.

Notes

I haven't wrote anything in nearly 5 years, but I've really enjoyed writing this. My writing style isn't what it used to be but I hope you enjoy it anyway. A fair bit of swearing and a lot of music references that I hope you can excuse.

References to depression, sex, suicidal thoughts and kinks as well as the main character working in a sex club. No scenes of smut. Not all tags apply for every chapter and might get a bit angsty in later chapters. Doesn't follow canon perfectly, but may have spoilers to the game.

Update: It's been four years but I still see this slowly ticking up and I wanna say thanks to everyone who's had even so much as a glance over it in the past few years. It's kept me going right through my degree and I am eternally grateful

Chapter 1

1

Cyberlife have refused to comment on the recent rise deviant cases but have assured potential customers and owners of androids that these cases are still rare compared to the number of models sold in the past month alone. If you suspect your android is becoming deviant, please inform local authorities who will be happy to collect and deactivate-

Hank turned the channel before the news report had finished. It had been three days since the last deviant homicide case had landed on his desk, but it hadn't stopped the RK800 model from arriving at his house each evening to go over theories.

"It seems to be a traumatic event that turns these androids deviant, perhaps if we could question more of them we could determine if the tipping point is physical or verbal." Connor said, sat at the table across from Hank's living room.

"That doesn't explain why three service workers would just up and leave their posts on the day that the android broadcast went out." Hank replied, rolling his eyes.

"Maybe they're also influenced by the sight of other deviants?" Connor asked, his LED flickering to a yellow. "If you wanted, we could run some tests using the deviant we have in custody."

"How about you let me have a night off and fuck off home instead." Hank glared. "Surely that's somewhere in your programme."

Connor got up from the table and sighed before he left his partner for the night. Hank couldn't help but feel a little guilty for snapping at him, the android seemed to be less like a machine each day he'd work with him and he was starting to wonder whether Cyberlife's golden boy was beginning to have his own thoughts and feelings just like the other androids they'd been meeting. The detective would never admit it, but the android was becoming almost bearable.

It was 3am as Hank was polishing off his drink and heading to his bedroom to settle down for the night before a sharp rasp at the door echoed through his home. When he opened it, he wasn't surprised to find Connor stood waiting in the rain.

"Lieutenant!" He smiled. "There's a new case!"

So much for bearable.

Detroit was eerily quiet for 3am on a Saturday morning. There were only a few drunken twenty somethings parading home after a night dancing and almost no other cars, automated or not, on the roads towards the centre.

"The man apparently has multiple bruises to his face and chest but the cause of death is currently unknown." Connor rolled off in the car. "Most likely a deviant android who worked in the club."

“Well we’ll see about that inside.” Hank murmured, pulling into a parking bay near The Eden Club. Establishments such as The Eden Club had only popped up once the creation of sex worker androids had come around, and they grew in popularity quickly as the stigma of paying for pleasure had subsided. Lined with neon lights, the club stood out on it’s street corner and a police cordon had already been put into place.

“He’s with me.” Hank said to the officers guarding the front of the cordon before they had a chance to challenge Connor. Most officers were used to him following Hank by this point but a few still liked to stop him outside out of pure dislike for the android detective. Inside, all rooms but one had been locked as a precaution and from the doorway the detectives could see a man in his forties lay dead on the circular bed inside.

“First thought’s?” Hank asked.

“From preliminary scans, it seems that the man died from possible suffocation. His eyes are bloodshot and the bruises on his body are not dark enough to suspect a blow hard enough to kill him.” Connor picked up a pillow that was further than the others from the bed. “No other signs of a struggle, and saliva on the pillow.”

“Could be anybody’s spit though, this is a sex den.” Hank leant against the door. “But lick that and I’ll send you back to where you came from. I’ll talk to the owner.”

Setting down the pillow down carefully, Connor began searching the room for any other clues he could find as Hank followed an officer to the back of the club.

“Were there any witnesses?” Connor asked the officer still waiting with him.

“Only other androids.” The officer replied. Connor went straight to work, probing the android workers for any signs of a deviant leaving the room shortly after the murder. Across the club, Hank was still with the owner, a man who went by Richie

“This is the first we’ve had, and I have over 20 androids here.” The owner sighed. “I should have known this would happen with all that crap in the news.”

“Was the man a frequent...err.... buyer?” Hank asked.

“No, well, kind of. He came in about once a month but most of our customers tend to come in weekly or more.”

“Did he seem off at all? Any reason an android would want to off him?”

“I don’t really see too much of the customers, that’s her domain.” The owner glanced towards the front of the club where a new figure was leaning against the door to a private room.

“Good luck getting a straight answer out of her.” Richie sighed, resigning to his office.

Connor had noticed the woman the second she arrived, it was hard to miss the knee-length red dress that was barely covered with a dark cardigan. Her ginger hair flowed into slight curls and fell just below her shoulders. He barely had time to think before she’d sauntered over to him directly and offered her hand to shake.

“Elle Ramsey.” She said, giggling at Connor’s expression.

“I’m Connor. I’m the android sent by Cyberlife.”

“I heard about you on the news, Mr Detective.” She teased, shaking her hips slightly.

“My partner, Lieutenant Anderson.” Connor gestured to Hank who had just joined the pair.

“Just a few questions, if that’s okay?” Hank asked.

“Fine with me, but I like to take my affairs in private.” Elle winked, taking Connor’s hand, and leading the detectives to a room at the side.

Software Instability Detected

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

The interrogations at The Eden Club weren't going to be easy, but it was made even harder by the newest arrival onto the scene.

Chapter Notes

Sorry it took a week to upload, I went to Spain the day after uploading. I should be uploading at least every other day now though.

2

Elle fell backwards onto the circular bed, her red dress spreading out to its full width.

"You don't seem phased that a murder just happened in the next room." Hank folded his arms, frowning at the redhead.

"Well I wasn't exactly around to watch it happen now, was I detective." She smirked back.

"How about we start with the androids, have you suspected any of them to be deviant before today?" Connor questioned.

"Probably, but could you really blame them?"

"I don't understand..." Connor's LED flickered yellow.

"Well these androids are treated like shit." Elle started. "Some of these customers are disgusting, they slap and beat the workers here and they think it's perfectly okay because androids aren't supposed to feel anything right? They don't have safe words or pain thresholds or even a proper voice to say what is and isn't fair!"

"Are you trying to say the guy deserved it?" Hank scowled.

"Actually, I believe the handsome one was the one asking the questions" Elle smiled, lifting Connor's chin with her finger. "I'm not happy somebody died at all, but if half the androids here were deviant I wouldn't be surprised. It's not exactly quality working conditions."

"What...wh.." Connor stuttered. He'd completely lost his words before Hank interjected.

"What about the guy then, Richie said you might have known him."

"BDSM enthusiast, liked to bite." She waved her hand in Hank's direction, clearly preoccupied with staring at the RK800 model in front of her.

"Is there any way we can find out the model who did this? They can't have left the building." Connor rushed.

"Most of the models here look the same so good luck, I'll turn the memory reset off until morning, so you can do what you need." Elle winked, getting up and taking a Polaroid photo from out of her bra. "For if you need me." She scrawled her number on the back and handed it to Connor. The photo was of Elle and a blonde girl, both smiling and squinting at the camera in the sun.

"Wait, why did you-"

"She's gone Connor." Hank leant against the door. "You wanna tell me what happened with you?"

"Nothing, just a small glitch. It won't happen again." Connor looked at the floor.

"Better not, glitches like that cause trouble." Hank slapped his hand onto Connor's back and lead him back into the main club. "You better get to work if we want to be out of here before sunrise."

"So far I've only had glimpses of an android leaving the room, brown hair and a man's tie wrapped around its wrist." Connor said, letting go of another android's wrist. "It's most likely covering a wound that would leave a Thirium trail, and only a deviant would know to do that." Scanning the room again, Connor was running out of places to explore. The pair had been searching the club for several hours at this point and Hank had dozed off in a corner, only waking to listen to another theory his android had. With Connor's ability to scan rooms, probe memories and analyze DNA, there wasn't a need for the Lieutenant to stand over him until it was time to discuss scenarios and agree on possible events leading up to the murder. However, Hank couldn't help but wonder whether an android would replace him outright one day. Surely not. Being a good detective was about more than analyzing scenes and scanning DNA, some things needed a human opinion.

Walking slowly into the VIP area, Connor looked desperately for another lead. In the center of the room, an android was dancing around a pole. Carefully, he reached out his hand to grab the android's wrist and was almost stunned for a moment when the android flinched away from his grip.

"Please..." The android whispered, its eyes pleading with Connor's. "I don't know what they'll do to me."

Connor turned the android's wrist over slowly and sure enough, a deep blue cut was visible. The wound had been burnt closed and looked almost days old at this point.

"Who helped you?" Connor demanded.

"No..." The android sobbed. Connor grasped their wrist and was quickly seeing very faded, almost destroyed memories of the past hours. He watched the android hit the man in the chest after he had slowly cut their wrist with a knife. As the man retaliated, the android had lashed out and hit him in the face repeatedly before being pushed backwards off the bed. Quickly, before the man could do more harm, the android grabbed the nearest pillow and forced him backwards onto the bed, ending his life by suffocation. Connor watched on as the android wrapped the man's tie around their wrist and fled to the storeroom at the back of the club. After hiding in a corner for a while, the android caught a lighter from an unknown location and cauterized their own wound. Gasping, Connor fell backwards, letting go of the android's wrist who darted towards the door. It was almost as if he felt every emotion the android worker had gone through and his LED had turned a bright red as he stumbled trying to pick himself back up.

"Hank!" He yelled into the other room. Hank appeared moments later with the deviant shaking in handcuffs.

"Let's take her back and call it a night."

Chapter 3

3

Connor spent most of the next morning sat staring at a blank monitor. Thoughts of guilt washed over him, even though he couldn't quite comprehend what he was going through. He thought repeatedly about the events of last night, how he shouldn't have allowed the deviant to run whilst he was stunned on the ground. He was worried that Hank would think he was becoming obsolete and get him taken off the mission.

Then there was the girl. Nobody had ever called Connor handsome before, and she probably didn't mean what she was saying. Was he supposed to think about it this much? It was almost as if he was feeling. He twirled the polaroid between his fingers again.

Connor's wallowing was only broken when Hank crashed into his own seat opposite.

"Afternoon, Lieutenant." Connor smiled.

"If you want a girl like that, I can get you five down at the river." Hank joked.

"I don't understand..."

"Forget it." Hank frowned. "She'll be here later anyway."

"But why?" Connor became attentive.

"A lighter was found in the storeroom. Had Miss Ramsey's prints all over it."

Connor's LED lit yellow as he pieced the story together. Androids had no need for lighters, so it made sense that a human would be the one that provided the lighter, but why would a human help an android? Also, the events happened at 2:37am and Elle didn't pass the police cordon until 3:24am. The whole place was surrounded and if she'd left through the back, she would have been caught.

"Lieutenant, about last night." Connor started.

"It's fine Connor, we found the lighter because of what you saw." Hank half smiled. The pair both loaded up their cases and carried on filing for a good few hours until a phone call broke their silence.

"That's us." Hank sighed, hanging up. "She's asking for you."

Elizabeth Ramsey.

26 years old.

Job Status; Personal Assistant

Convictions; None.

Elle sat at the table in the well-lit, completely white room, hands cuffed to the centre point. Hank and Connor were being briefed on the little information the woman had disclosed before being taken in for questioning, and it seemed that since then she'd become adamant with her demands.

"Either I talk to that android, or you talk to my lawyer." She whispered to another detective, winking as she pulled away from him further. Connor stood upright and straightened his tie.

"It seems that the only way to get any useful information is if I try and talk to her." He spoke to Hank. "Her lawyer is Michael Williams and with his current client list it could take us days before he arrives. Without solid evidence that ties her to the case, we have to release her in 24 hours."

"Are fingerprints not enough?" Hank was starting to become agitated.

"A lighter found in her workplace could be argued to be left behind or picked up by another deviant."

"Whatever." Hank frowned. "Floor's yours."

Elle didn't turn around when Connor let himself in, but she knew it was the android regardless.

"About time you showed up, but if you wanted me in cuffs you could have asked." She smiled over her shoulder.

Connor took a second to take in the room. Elle's clothes were almost the complete opposite to the previous night's; dark jeans and a red plaid shirt that came to her elbows. As he sat in the chair opposite, he immediately noticed pale yellow bruises under her jaw.

"Miss Ramsey, please can you explain why your fingerprints were found on a lighter at the scene of a crime." Connor asked, expressionless.

"I smoke? I've got another 10 lighters in my drawer you can look at if you want." She beamed.

"Your heart rate and breathing indicates that of a non-smoker, are you sure you smoke?"

"Your friends have been talking to me for a while now, I've not exactly had a chance to step outside."

"An addict going through withdrawal, even at this early stage, would appear at least a slight bit anxious. You seem perfectly calm to me." Connor challenged. Her clothes didn't smell of cigarette smoke either, but he feared that a comment on that would lead to another comment about his intentions.

"Well let's say I find an injured android somewhere, as your friends out there already implied, is it a crime now to repair one? I'm just human, I can't spot a deviant and I didn't

find out what happened until a very nice police officer stopped me from coming into my own workplace.” Elle said, she’d paused for a moment after Connor’s question but quickly turned the interrogation in her favor.

Connor stopped for a moment. Elle had a point, there was no evidence pinning her at the scene of the crime, but there was also no alibi to say she was elsewhere on the night. She’d cut off the interrogation at every angle.

“Your file says you’re a personal assistant, who is that for?” Connor asked after a long silence.

“Not relevant.” Elle was short now.

“Richie doesn’t have a personal assistant on file.”

“Richie runs a brothel, he doesn’t have much on file.”

“But if you were his personal assistant, you’d be on payroll-“

“Unless you’re asking about this stupid lighter, you should probably fuck off now.” Elle slumped back in her chair. “It’s rude to just scan people like that.”

“Apologies Miss Ramsey. I didn’t mean to offend-“ Connor was cut off again, this time by Hank entering the room.

“Alibi holds up.” He spoke, holding up his phone with a photo of Elle covering the screen. She was stood in the same red dress, arm linked with an artist at an exhibition. The timestamp read 3:05am and the nearest art exhibition was a 15-minute drive away from The Eden Club.

“We’d have seen the deviant come out if she’d seen it before we did.” Connor frowned.

“You’re free to go Miss Ramsey, thank you for your time.” A police officer said behind them.

“You know where I am.” She whispered to Connor on her way past.

Chapter 4

4

It had been 3 weeks since Connor's last encounter with Elle, but every day the android struggled with the burning desire to go back and find her. He hated these feelings, they made him question everything he was. He had so many questions to ask, the first being why she'd lie about being a personal assistant on her official records. To anybody, it was clear she was far from a PA. What was her real job?

There had been multiple deviant cases since the android murdered the man at The Eden Club, but Connor somehow always found a way back to that case. It was if he was looking for the smallest piece of information that could tie Elle to the scene of crime and force her back into his company at the station. She must have been there, it was the only explanation.

Or at least that was what Connor told himself as he stood outside The Eden Club at 11:30pm Friday night. Making his way inside, he avoided eye contact with the number of humans that were staring at him, almost in disbelief. It wasn't long before he was knocking the door of the back office.

"I need to speak to Elle." Connor smiled at Richie who answered. "For the investigation." He quickly added.

"She's not here." Richie frowned. "Doesn't start until midnight, you can wait outside if it's that important."

"Where is she?" Connor almost demanded.

"She plays at a bar down the road on Fridays, unless it's important." Richie smirked. Something about the way he spoke her made Connor want to punch him, but he kept his composure at all times.

"Thank you." Connor smiled, heading back out through the club and into the rain. There was only one bar on the street and as he neared the door he saw a large neon red "NO ANDROIDS" hung in the window. What was he doing? It was bad enough to go to the Eden Club in the first place and now he'd stalked this girl to a bar. Regardless, Connor pushed open the door and used his detective status to gain entry past the security that manned the inside.

I don't believe in saints,

they never make mistakes,

I know it's not my place,

who am I to tell you that you need to change,

Connor didn't need to scan the room to spot the red-headed girl up on the stage. A man behind her was playing a guitar and most of the humans in the bar were holding their phones in the air.

Dirty laundry, is piling in her room

She's got her secrets, yea I got mine too,

I don't care about what you did, only care about what we do,

Dirty laundry, looks good on you

The music got louder as a drumbeat from a speaker pumped through the bar. Connor rounded the crowd and sat on a barstool just left of the stage. It was clear Elle had already spotted him, winking in his direction mid song.

The song finished, and Elle quickly ran down the steps to greet him.

"Connor, what are you doing here?" She beamed at him.

"I just wanted to ask a few more questions." Connor replied, sitting upright on the stool.

"It's been 3 weeks." She frowned.

"Once again, Elle Ramsey!" The man with the guitar shouted into the mic.

"Give me 5 minutes." Elle looked upset, but turned anyway and headed back onto the small stage. "Let's lighten it up, shall we?" She grinned to the crowd. There must have only been around 50 people in the bar, but each one was paying their full attention to the girl on stage.

I've been here all night,

I've been here all day,

And boy,

Got me walkin' side to side

Elle strutted around the stage, waving every now and again to men who cheered her on. Something about the performance made Connor more uncomfortable.

Software Instability

The song finished quickly but Connor remained fixated on Elle the entire time. He didn't even have time to speak before she'd sprinted off stage and dragged him towards the exit.

"Sorry Connor, I'm late." Elle seemed panicked. The pair almost ran towards the Eden Club.

"Elizabeth, why did you lie about your job status." Connor yelled through the rain. Elle didn't answer, she just stopped dead in the street and clasped both hands over her mouth.

Lying in the street, an Eden Club android was dead. A bullet had ripped through its arm and a second through its head.

“Laura...” Elle dropped to her knees.

Chapter 5

5

Elle was sat cuffed once more to the table in the white interrogation room. Another detective had arrested her after seeing her reaction to the dead android, despite Connor's given alibi. An android that worked at The Eden Club had supposedly assaulted a customer and made a run for the exit. Richie had shot the android twice before it escaped into the night before calling the police, who arrived mere minutes before Elle and Connor had left the bar.

"Why the fuck would you care if an android died?" Detective Gavin Reed shouted at Elle inside. She remained silent, tears falling onto her black dress.

"Would it be better if I tried asking questions?" Connor asked Hank, who had been reluctantly dragged back to the station for the case.

"I think you've said enough already." Hank frowned. It had been Hank that Connor confessed the night's events to. He'd seemed angry that Connor had gone to the Eden Club without orders but had defended him when Connor tried for Elle's release. He at least agreed that seeing a dead body, android or not, was enough to upset anybody.

"I was with your dumb android right before she was shot, so how many times do you need to put me in these before you get the fucking message." Elle eventually spat at Gavin, jingling the cuffs between her wrists.

"That's enough Reed." Hank spoke into the speaker. Reluctantly, Gavin joined the rest of the team in the room adjacent.

"She's a sympathiser." Gavin spat.

Hank sighed and nodded towards Connor and then the door. The android knew exactly what he meant and followed the sound of heels into the hallway.

"Elizabeth..." Connor started. Elle turned around immediately and pulled him into a hug.

Software Instability

"I'm sorry about Laura." Connor hugged back, patting the back of Elle's head. He'd never realised how much smaller she was than him, even whilst wearing stiletto heels.

"Thanks for sticking up for me." Elle cried into his chest. "Nobody's ever done that for me before."

"You couldn't have done anything." Connor said, not knowing where his words were coming from. "I should escort you home, it's not safe at this time of night and considering your emotional state, it would be safer if you had company." He stepped back.

“That’d be nice, yea.” Elle wiped her tears away. Silently, the pair headed outside, and Connor summoned a taxi. Elle punched in an address onto the console and turned to face the window. Rain crashed down on the glass as they drove through the city streets of Detroit. Eventually, the taxi arrived outside a high-rise flat on the outskirts of the city.

“Come in if you want.” Elle sighed, opening her door and standing in the rain. “Or don’t, who the fuck cares.”

Connor joined her outside and followed her up several flights of stairs until they reached her flat. Inside, the flat was small, and polaroid photos covered almost the entirety of one of the walls of the front room. Most of the photos were of Elle with the same girl from the polaroid she’d given Connor weeks ago. All were dated from 2 years ago.

“That’s Lily, she was my best friend growing up.” Ellie half smiled.

“What happened to her?” Connor asked.

“She got a high paying job in Spain, left two years ago. She got engaged this guy over there, he’s great. She pays for me to go over every year for 2 weeks, but apart from that I don’t really see her. Give me a few minutes.” Elle retreated to her bedroom and shut the door. Connor continued to examine the flat.

Empty pizza boxes littered the counter and various DVD’s were strewn across the coffee table. There was only one photo that wasn’t stuck up with a pin was one in a frame next to the TV. In the photo, Elle and Lily stood on a beach with their arms wrapped around an android.

Hearing the door open again, Connor turned to find Elle stood in an Eden Club uniform.

“Sorry, I was expecting to be at work.” She frowned.

Software Instability

Slowly, Elle made her way to the couch and wrapped herself in a large duvet.

“You can go, I’ll be fine.”

“Your emotional state still indicates--“

“Fine. Stay. But you stay in the guest bedroom.” Elle smiled, looking down at her blanket.

“Tell me about your friendship with Lily.” Connor started the conversation. The rest of the night was spent with Elle telling Connor all the stories her and Lily had shared over the years. Most of the stories were about times the friends had gotten drunk in college and ended up on tables or convincing people they were VIP’s to clubs so they could have drinks bought for them. But one story stood out in Connor’s mind.

“So, when we saw the film, we thought it was so creative and cute how they used the Morse code to communicate and like two weeks later, Brandon cheated on Lisa, so I took her

straight to the tattoo studio and we got these done.” Elle smiled, lifting the Eden Club bra she was wearing slightly to bare a tattoo on her ribcage.

“Stay.” Connor smiled back.

“Yea, probably pretty stupid but it’s still nice.” She lay her head in the android’s lap, taking him by surprise. “Thanks Connor, I needed this.” Within seconds the red-head was asleep.

Connor placed his hand on her side and went into standby.

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

I've not posted a lot of author notes because I don't have a lot to say, but thank you for reading and supporting. For a while I never really knew where this was going but writing again made me happy and that's all that really matters at the end of the day.

6

Connor arrived back in the station the next day to find Hank already sat at his desk.

“Good morning Lieutenant!” Connor said eagerly. This was the first time he had seen his partner in work before 12pm.

“I’ve been here all night, where did you even go?” Hank was angry.

“I escorted Miss Ramsey home.”

“Why the fuck would you do that? We had an investigation.”

“My apologies, Lieutenant.” Connor frowned. “I learnt a lot about Miss Ramsey, things that could prove useful if there is any further investigation.”

Hank leaned back in his chair and picked a pen to play with whilst he was lost in thought.

“Do you like her?” He eventually asked.

“She is an interesting character. I think she may not be giving us correct accounts of the incidents at The Eden Club.” Connor’s LED flashed yellow as he recalled all the stories that he’d been told the night before.

“Like what?” Hank seemed curious.

“I have no evidence to believe she works as a personal assistant.”

“No shit.” Hank frowned and looked back at his terminal. “She’s no saint.”

Connor chose not to say anything more and instead looked at his own terminal. The case they’d currently been assigned was an undercover one. A deviant named Markus had been leading marches of androids across the city and previously belonged to artist Leo Manfred, an esteemed artist. Tonight, Leo would attend a party with many other artists to celebrate the opening of a new gallery in Detroit’s center. Rumors had it that Markus would be attending secretly to reconcile with his old owner, who had sympathized with him until Markus had killed his son during a row in Leo’s home.

At 5, Hank and Connor both left to Hank’s home to get ready for the party. Both were dressed in suits with black ties. Secretly, Connor had moved the Polaroid from the pocket of his usual jacket to his new blazer. He still wasn’t sure why he’d done it, but he’d done it anyway.

In the taxi, the pair went over both Leo’s and Markus’ photos and agreed that if Markus arrived, he’d likely be in disguise and have other deviants in the crowd to assist him if anything happened. It was a good half an hour before they arrived outside the party where androids greeted them at the door.

When they made it inside, Hank headed straight to the open bar and Connor took a moment to scan the room. There were at least 200 people already in attendance and most were dressed in formal attire, enjoying the music. Behind them, another android was announcing into a microphone the arrival of any artists with paintings in the gallery.

“Please welcome, Mr Manfred!” The android announced after a few minutes of Connor and Hank being there. The crowd turned to applaud the arrival of Leo and a second android pushed his wheelchair towards a table to the side of the room.

“Keep your eye on the room, I’ll watch Leo.” Hank whispered to Connor in passing. Connor took position sat on a stool on the corner of the bar, watching the side-lines of the party.

“Please welcome, Mr Paul and Miss Ramsey!” The crowd clapped once more. Connor’s eyes immediately shot to the entrance where the same red-headed girl was now stood in a floor length deep blue dress, holding hands with a man who stood in loose jeans and a paint-splattered shirt. The couple made their way to the bar and Elle didn’t notice Connor sat at the corner but ordered three shots of alcohol and finished them herself.

Connor watched as she then ordered a pint of beer and followed Mr Paul over to the other side of the room. The man talked to many people, mostly other artists, and kissed the hands of a few girls as Elle stood by scanning the room around her. Every time her eyes edged closer to Connor’s, he’d look away and internally beg for her not to notice him. She never did, but instead sighed and fell back into a chair at the table her date was sat at.

Hank, on the other hand, was stood almost directly behind Leo at this point. The android that had accompanied him stood idle beside the table, occasionally pouring drinks for him and his acquaintances. Without the announcement of more guests, the room seemed to have filled even more and it was becoming harder to scan the surroundings for suspicious activity.

Despite this, it took Connor only seconds to notice Elle get up excitedly across the room. Had she spotted him? No, she was pulling on her dates sleeve instead. Mr Paul shrugged her off several times before the red-head gave up and Connor felt like he wanted to punch somebody again. The song playing was a slow one and coupled all around the room convened in the center of the room to dance. Before he even knew what he was doing, Connor stood up from his stool and walked across the room. He scanned the environment around him and not a single thing seemed suspicious to him. He took his Elle’s hand and after her initial flinch away, she allowed him to lead him to the dance-floor.

“Connor, what are you doing.” She blushed, wrapping her arms around his neck.

“Your date seemed preoccupied and I thought I’d take over.” Connor smiled back. Elle kicked off her shoes and the pair danced beautifully. Each move they made was as if it had been rehearsed and more people around them stopped to watch Elle and Connor move graciously across the floor.

“Connor...” Elle breathed, grabbing his hands as the song ended. Connor froze in place, overcome with warnings and red lights in his vision, but Elle just moved closer to him. “Kiss me.”

“Connor!” Hank yelled behind them, gun in hands and staring towards a window. It was a male PL600 model and it was climbing out. Connor pushed Elle to the side and sprinted after the deviant. He watched it fall to the ground outside and jumped after it, chasing it down the long stretch of road until it rounded a corner. Connor followed it but when he turned the corner himself, it was gone.

Slowly, Connor walked back to the party where Hank was waiting outside.

“It got away.” He frowned.

“It’s alright, we know what it looks at. No sign of any others.” Hank frowned back. Crowds of people were leaving the party now, and they both watched as the man Elle arrived with pulled her harshly by the wrist in a taxi.

“She hates me now.” Connor’s LED went red.

Chapter 7

7

Connor caught the deviant in the end. The PL600 model was spotted on the streets early on Sunday morning and they had managed to corner it before a second escape. Still, he still couldn't shake an awful feeling. By this point, he'd given his polaroid a permanent place in the corner of his terminal. Hank had spotted it almost immediately and had given his disapproving opinions multiple times.

It had been 6 long days until Hank eventually sighed at his own desk and gave in to Connor's obvious brooding.

"It's not a bad thing." Hank started. "Deviants."

"Deviancy is just a fault in an android's software." Connor replied coldly.

"You could be free, Connor."

Connor said nothing and concentrated on his terminal instead. He had already known Hank was sympathetic to deviants, empathy wasn't unusual for a human to feel. Most humans were empathetic to the deviants at this point. As more cases of deviancy cropped up, the media pressure was becoming a huge challenge for everyone at the station.

"You were less of an asshole when you were speaking to her." Hank smirked, grabbing his coat. "But she's trouble."

Connor followed Hank to his car where they then traveled to the bar down from The Eden Club. Friday night.

"I don't think this is a good idea." Connor frowned, practically glued to the car.

"If it makes you happy it's not a bad thing." Hank smiled sympathetically at him.

"I don't have a need to be happy."

Hank rolled his eyes and opened Connor's door for him, beckoning him out. He flashed his badge to the man on the door of the club, the neon red sign still reading "NO ANDROIDS."

Cast me aside to show yourself in a better light,

I game out grieving, barely breathing and you came out alright,

But I'm sure you'll take his hand,

I hope he's better than I ever could have been,

My mistakes were not intentions this a list of my confessions I couldn't say.

There she was, pouring her soul into every word on stage. The crowd tonight were just stood watching in awe, just as Connor was. Hank left Connor to go to the bar and they both ended up with a seat at a table towards the back.

“This one goes out to the android who doesn’t want to be free and thinks he can shit on the rest of us!” Elle almost screamed down the mic, waving to the pair at the back. A large cheer erupted from the once idle crowd. She’d clearly spotted them long before in order to plot her revenge on Connor.

“Fuck.” Hank cursed.

Fuck you, fuck you very very much

‘Cause we hate what you do

And we hate your whole crew

So please don’t stay in touch

“We should go.” Hank dragged Connor back to the car. Connor climbed into the passenger side and sat in silence as Hank started driving them home.

“I told you she was bad news.” Hank said, almost mockingly. “Worth a shot though.”

“I don’t understand what I did to have her hate me, but it’s clear she does.” Connor sighed. The city lights passed them by and the rain beat hard on the windows. Connor fought with himself not to say it, but he said it anyway.

“I want to go back.”

Hank had told him several times it was a bad idea, but still stood at the entrance to The Eden Club with him.

“She won’t want to see you.” Hank warned.

“There’s a high probability of that, but not 100%.” Connor replied, following Hank cautiously inside. Lights flashed in all directions and various android workers waved in their direction, but they headed towards the back regardless.

“Stupid fucking bitch.” A voice yelled from the office.

“Stay right there.” Hank demanded, flinging open the office door. Inside, Elle was crying and holding her face.

“I’m not paying for a whore that won’t put out.” A man screamed at Elle. She stood behind the chair in an Eden Club uniform. Suddenly, everything clicked in Connor’s mind. She was never a personal assistant, she was a-

The man's hand connected with Elle's face, knocking her to the floor. Everything moved so fast. Hank pulled his gun, the man stepped over Elle's body and a bright, red wall appeared in front of Connor.

Stay there.

The words covered the wall. All Connor wanted to do was to go and pick up the helpless girl from the floor.

Stay there.

She was screaming and the noise pierced Connor's ears like an alarm.

Stay there.

Internally, Connor started pulling at one of the words. It smashed to the ground and disappeared into a million pieces.

Stay there.

More words came crashing down.

Stay there.

Connor pulled the last one down and lurched forward.

"Elle." He yelled, rushing to her side. She had been crying heavily and red marks were apparent on her face. "I'm sorry." He almost cried. His LED had gone a bright red and he even felt himself shaking.

"They'll know, don't move." Elle grabbed Connor's wrist, still in tears herself.

The shock hit Connor like a train. He wanted nothing more than to punch the guy in the face and take Elle far away from this hell hole, but the second he did that, CyberLife would surely know he was deviant and deactivate him as soon as they could get hold of him. He had nowhere to go, nowhere to hide, no idea how to cope with these waves of emotion that were washing over him faster than he could process. Behind them, Hank had pushed the man against a wall.

"That's no way to treat anybody." Hank threatened. Slowly, Connor got to his feet and helped Elle to hers.

"I'm sorry." He whispered to her, straightening his tie and turning to join the Lieutenant.

"It's okay." Elle assured before almost sprinting out of the room.

"It's not okay." Connor murmured after her.

Chapter 8

8

It was almost impossible for Connor to work on any deviant case after the events at The Eden Club. Every time there was a new case, he couldn't help but feel sorry for the android that was clearly just trying to save itself. He'd tried to go back there since, but Elle had already asked for the month off and he thought phoning her would just bring back all the memories of that night.

Hank knew everything, without a word being said. Connor expected him to be angry at first, but the Lieutenant was almost sympathetic. Or, as sympathetic as he could manage. On all the cases, Hank had let Connor take a back seat and investigated himself.

But still, there was only so much that could make it easier. Every day was a struggle and all Connor wanted was to speak to the girl that turned him into a deviant. Some days, he was angry at her for doing such a thing to him, but the rest of the time he was angry at himself. He never wanted this, he was a machine built for a purpose. Emotions were just errors in your system and he was supposed to be perfect.

"Still worked up?" Hank sighed when he found Connor staring at Elle's polaroid one morning at the station.

"She hated me, but still helped me." Connor eventually spoke, his LED still flashing a bright red.

"Women are bad news." Hank laughed. "Go see her if you need to."

"I don't think she'd want to see me." Connor frowned.

"Only one way to find out."

"I think it's best if I just leave her alone."

"That would have happened whether we were there or not, Connor. But I'm sick of you moping around the place."

"I guess it couldn't hurt." Connor sighed.

That night he was still toying with the idea of going to see her. Every time he thought about her, a whole bag of emotions arrived and overwhelmed his systems. She probably would stay working at The Eden Club, and now that Connor knew exactly what she did there, it made him angry. It was more and more difficult not to think about the men who were probably hurting her each night. The bruises on her face weren't fresh, the man at the club clearly hadn't been the first to lay his hands on her skin. All Connor wanted was to take her to somewhere safe, somewhere far away from abusive men.

But would it matter? He was just some android that stepped into her life by accident. She opened up to him once, it wasn't exactly 'run away with me' material. Even if it was, he had no right to tell her what she could and couldn't do. She wasn't his, she wasn't anybody's. The thoughts still plagued his mind as he stood in the same spot at the back of the bar.

I don't know where you're going,

But do you got room for one more troubled soul

I don't know where I'm going,

But I don't think I'm coming home

And I said, I'll check in tomorrow if I don't wake up dead

This is the road to ruin and we're starting at the end.

Elle had thrown an arm around the same guitarist he'd seen with her the other night and the two sang with such joy. It was comforting to see her happy after what happened. When she finished her set, she headed straight for the bar and was cheered on as she downed shot after shot of alcohol.

"Elle." Connor tapped her on the shoulder, after much hesitation. Elle almost spat her drink out.

"Connor." She hugged him tight. "What the fuck are you doing here."

"I wanted to make sure you're alright." Connor hugged her back awkwardly.

"I'm fine, I'll always be fine. How are you?" Elle grinned up at him.

"I've been...worried...I think." Connor stuttered. He didn't even know how to answer the question truthfully himself.

"You...you turned didn't you." Elle whispered cautiously into his neck.

"I think so."

"Come back with me tonight, we'll talk about it." Elle smiled at him as the man on stage with her handed her another drink, winking at Connor as he pulled her away. Connor spent the next hour watching Elle and the man dance together. The way they moved was almost artistic, but it sparked something in Connor that he hadn't experienced before. Each time the man put his arms around Elle to lift her closer, Connor got agitated. It didn't last long though, and eventually he was at the front door to Elle's apartment again.

This time meant more. This time he could appreciate every photograph and every small detail of her small apartment. For the first time, Connor understood why she held onto every happy memory she could. All the polaroid's were proudly displayed and each one was a happy moment.

“Come here, handsome.” Elle threw herself onto her couch and opened her arms wide.

“I’m sorry about the other night.” Connor frowned, allowing himself to fall into Elle’s arms.

“Hey, it’s okay, there’s nothing you could have done.” Elle grabbed both sides of his face in assurance. “Besides, I can’t have my favorite cop being taken away, I’ve still got trouble to cause.”

“I should have punched him.” Connor half joked.

“Well aren’t you romantic.” She joked back. “Seriously though, you’d have made it worse and probably gotten yourself deactivated.”

“I didn’t...I didn’t want to become deviant.”

“What’s wrong with it.”

“It’s not...right.”

“Are you sure? Or was being ordered around without being able to question a thing not right.”

“I’ve arrested deviants, but now I am one.”

“It wasn’t your fault, sweetie, you weren’t yourself.” Elle hugged him tighter. Something about her acceptance made everything seem okay.

“I don’t like feeling so...down...all the time.” Connor spoke.

“Why don’t you stay here a few days, get your head together.” Elle offered.

“I wouldn’t want to burden you.”

“It’d be a favor, if anything.”

chapter 9

9

The next few days were confusing but wonderful for Connor. He'd not yet properly experienced the feeling of excitement and happiness. Elle would leave during the day to meet with friends and get food for herself, just as Connor would leave to go back to the station, and each night she'd come back with a new film to show Connor. They'd both sit for hours under the duvet on the sofa and watch everything from Horrors to Rom-Coms. She sang along to every musical number in every film and he watched happily as the joy swept over her each time.

On Thursday night, Elle came back slightly panicked and later than usual. Regardless, she pulled out an older film from her bag and put it on for the pair to watch. She'd not invited Connor to come and sit with her, but he had anyway, it was almost a tradition at this point.

"This one's completely silent, so no loud analysing." Elle joked. She wasn't wrong, it was a film where aliens would eat humans, but they could only decipher where they were through noise. There was barely a word spoken throughout the whole film.

Connor sat in silence, barely watching the film. It had been at least a week now and the bruises on Elle's face were still purple. She'd put on heavy makeup every morning before she left and only took it off in the hopes Connor wouldn't mention it, but the compelling urge inside him was almost too much most of the time. He was almost certain there were more now, as well as finger marks around her wrists and throat.

"Elle can I talk to you..." Connor asked eventually.

"Can it wait?" She sounded angry, following Connor's eyes to her own wrists.

"Not really."

Elle felt a wave of dread wash over her, and she pulled the duvet until just her head was visible out of it. She knew this day would come, and there was no easy way to dodge the topic of conversation.

"Men are pigs. They want more and more and lash out when they don't get it." A tear rolled down her cheek.

"Why do you still work there?" Connor asked.

"Look around, I'm broke."

"What exactly do you do?" Connor wasn't entirely sure if he wanted an answer.

"I'm an escort and dancer Connor." Elle frowned. "Some men pay me to go with them to nice parties, so they can pretend to their friends that they don't have the personality of a fig, and some men pay me to dance in front of them in my underwear. That's it."

“So, you don’t...”

“No, I don’t fuck people.” Elle snapped.

“I didn’t mean to offend you.” Connor was genuinely apologetic. “I don’t want people to hurt you.”

“Careful there, somebody might think you care.” Elle joked.

“I do care.” Connor protected, but Elle placed her fingers over his lips.

“I know sweetie, not many do though.”

“Is that why you’re annoyed today?”

“No.” Elle grew blunt again quickly. “I got questioned again, actually.”

“Who by?” Connor was concerned.

“Another detective, Mr Reed? They still think I have something to do with the deviants back at work.”

“I should have been on that case, why didn’t I know about this?” Connor was visibly angry at this point. He’d grown so close to Elle in such a short time, if she was apart of some deviant scandal, surely, he would know by now.

“It’s fine, if I’m innocent I have nothing to worry about, right?” Elle smirked.

“Why wasn’t I told about Miss Ramsey yesterday.” Connor almost snapped when Hank arrived in work.

“Why don’t you tell me where you’ve been going the past few nights, then answer that.” Hank spat back. “You’d get nothing of value from her.”

“I’m here to assist with deviant cases.” Connor stood up from his chair.

“And if you want to fucking stay that way, you best stay as far away from her case as possible.” Hank squared up to him. “I’ve kept quiet about you because I like you, don’t push that.”

“Sorry, Lieutenant.” Connor sat back down, coming to his senses. It was a long while before Hank spoke again.

“They think she’s been freeing deviants, but there’s not enough proof.” He sighed.

“She carries on working at The Eden Club, despite how she’s treated. Maybe there’s another reason she stays?” Connor offered his suggestion, but a pang of guilt came when he did.

“Maybe, maybe she just needs the work.”

“Nobody would stay somewhere so awful.”

“I’ll be keeping an eye on her anyway, but don’t worry.” Hank assured. “Your girlfriend will be fine.”

“She’s not my girlfriend.” Connor grew defensive quickly.

“Then why are you living with her?” Hank laughed.

Chapter 10

10

Connor hadn't meant to walk in on Elle changing, it was just an accident. He hadn't meant to see her in her Eden Club uniform again, but he had. He didn't mean to get so jealous, but these emotions were new, and he couldn't help it.

"Please don't go." Connor's voice almost broke.

"We've been over this, I need the money." Elle was frustrated.

"They'll hurt you."

"I'll be homeless."

"I won't let that happen."

"You don't even have a wage yet, what are you going to do about it." Elle had snapped. "Just go back to Hank's if it's that much of a problem."

"Please Elle, you can find another job." Connor begged.

"Then why don't you go find one for me." Elle laughed in his face. "Welcome to the real-world, Connor." She slipped a black cocktail dress over her head and pulled it down just above her knees.

"If I do, will you leave?" Connor asked, he was running out of options. Elle simply sighed and took his face in her hands.

"Remember the party?" She smiled sarcastically at him. Connor was already familiar with guilt. "If you wanted me to be yours so much, you shouldn't have pushed me away." She strutted towards the door. "No guy can ever handle what I do for a living, I don't expect you to either. And that's fine, but don't think you can come in here and tell me what I can and can't be. It pays the fucking rent and I don't have any other options, so if you can't be my friend for who I am then fuck off." She slammed the door behind her.

Connor felt so broken. She was right, she'd been an escort much longer than he'd had known her and he didn't exactly have income to keep her on her feet. He thought about all the other men who'd likely had the same argument as they just had, and he felt even more guilty. The countless men that Elle had probably had in the flat tortured Connor for hours.

"No." Connor whispered to himself. It wasn't about how many men had been here before, all that matters is the one she has from now on. He needed to tell her the truth.

Hank's phone call was scary. It was 1:02am exactly when he'd rang and demanded that Connor came down to the bar.

"Put a plaster over your blinky thing and get here now." Hank seemed worried.

"What's happened?" Connor was panicked. Elle should have left for The Eden Club over an hour ago but there was no other reason Hank would ring.

"I don't know, but she's wasted."

Connor didn't hesitate once when he ran to the bathroom, plastered over his LED and threw on some clothes he found stashed at the bottom of Elle's wardrobe. The clothes were male but thinking about who's they probably were tortured Connor so he didn't take a moment to scan them.

When he arrived at the bar, the usual neon 'NO ANDROIDS' sign was switched off. Inside, people were cheering louder than usual, and Lieutenant Anderson was practically glued to a table near the back.

"What's going on?" Connor asked.

"You tell me, I thought you'd be here, so I came down to see how you were." Hank frowned. As if planned, Elle appeared barefoot on a table near the bar.

"Who wants to fucking dance!" She yelled into a mic. A guy who Connor immediately recognized as the guitarist for her usual sets joined her on the table. Music played in the background and the two sang along, slurring the occasional word or two,

"I don't care, say fuck it!" Elle screamed again, falling backwards into the crowd. Connor lurched upwards, but the crowd caught her instead. When the song finished, Elle went immediately to the bar.

"Her alcohol intake is too high." Connor said to Hank.

"Well I can't get her." Hank shrugged his shoulders at the android. "Why do you think I rang you?"

"She doesn't really want to hear from me right now." Connor looked at the floor.

"Trouble in paradise?" Hank laughed. "You owe me another drink." He said before weaving through the crowd to where Elle was stood. Connor had assumed that Hank would simply talk to her, but before he could protest, Hank had Elle's arm over his shoulders and was dragging her towards the exit.

"Hey man, if she doesn't want to leave don't make her." The guitarist grabbed Hank's shoulder.

"She needs to go home." Connor interjected.

“I’ll take her when she’s ready, yea?” The guy shot Connor an aggressive look and pulled Elle to the bar, who waved nonchalantly back at them.

“I’m going home, she’s not my problem.” Hank finished his drink.

“What can I do?” Connor asked, lost as to what people usually did in these situations.

“Looks like that guys got it covered.” Hank laughed. “You still owe me that drink.” He shouted back at Connor whilst leaving.

Connor turned again to find the two friends up on the bar dancing to a song that was playing even louder than he thought the tiny bar would allow. He decided that standing closer would work out better if she was to fall or decide she wanted to come home, so he weaved his way through the crowd. It was strange how people seemed welcoming now that he’d hidden his distinguishable android features. People apologized for being in the way, and the bartender came straight over when he eventually reached the counter.

“What’ll it be.” The man asked. Connor sighed up at Elle, defeated in his mission to get her home.

“I’ll take what she’s having.”

“Good choice.” The bartender looked up at Elle. “I’ll put it on his tab.” He winked, finishing off a double vodka and coke. Connor walked underneath where Elle was standing and handed her up the drink which she grabbed enthusiastically and ruffled his hair.

“Thanks babe.” She finished it in one. A different song came on and Elle screamed at her friend before jumping off the countertop and pulling him to the centre where the crowd made a gap. She kicked off her heels and the man grabbed her waist and they began a salsa that Connor had only ever seen in the films Elle had shown him.

Despite his obvious jealousy, Connor couldn’t keep her eyes off how effortlessly Elle moved around the room. Her friend was strong and picked her up countless times, the routine had clearly been rehearsed before. Around them, people clapped along and began dancing themselves. Different men switched with Elle’s friend and each time, she’d turn them back around. Eventually, the guitarist made his way back to her and Elle jumped up to wrap her legs around his hips. The jealousy was too much for Connor, watching Elle with anybody else made something inside him feel as if it was on fire.

Fighting with himself, Connor eventually headed out into the cold Detroit air. He toyed with himself for a while about where to go but decided to make the shorter walk back to Elle’s apartment. It wasn’t until he was right outside the door that he remembered he had no way of getting in, so sat down right at the front.

It was at least 2 hours before Elle made her way back home, her guitarist in tow and wrapped in his jacket.

“Oh my god!” Elle squealed, much more intoxicated than she’d been when Connor left. “As if you waited here.”

“You stalking her?” The guy stood in front of Elle defensively. Elle slapped his side.

“It’s Connor you dick head.” She teased. The guy’s body immediately relaxed, and he offered a hand to shake.

Elliott Dunn.

25 years old.

Job Status; Freelance Musician

Convictions; D.U.I

“Hi Elliott, I’m Connor.” Connor shook the man’s hand and smiled back.

“I need a shower.” Elle stumbled towards the bathroom. “Don’t fuck him when I’m gone.” She pointed a finger at Elliott.

“I’m definitely going to fuck him when you’re gone.” Elliott teased back. “I have a wife.” He raised his hands in the air when he saw the concerned look over Connor’s face. Elliott had heard Elle speak about the android for over a month now, and even though he’d heard every tiny detail, he still had some sympathy for the guy. When Elle had complained about being pushed to the side, it had been Elliott who explained that an android’s programming would be dominant, and she couldn’t expect every man to fall at her feet like she was so used to.

“How did you meet Elle?” Connor asked after a few long moments of silence.

“In college, her and her friend were in a sorority and they’d sneak into our fraternity nights dressed as guys to drink with us.” Elliott laughed.

“Did it work?”

“With hips like theirs? Not at all, but it was funny, and they were cool, so nobody cared. They just wanted to party.” He grinned, scanning the wall for a specific photo until he found what he was looking for.

“Here.” He handed a few photos to Connor. On each of the photos, Elle and Lily were wearing oversized football jerseys and had drawn beards on in marker pens. Elliott had his arms around them both. “Their covers were better when they first came over, I promise.”

Connor smiled at the photos before handing them back. “She’s always so happy in these.”

“She’s a happy girl, I just wish she’d find somebody like Lily did.” Elliott sighed, grabbing his jacket. “If you know any RK800 models named Connor, tell them to hurry the fuck up and ask her out.”

Connor’s emotions crashed back on top of him. “But I’m an android.”

“And I lost my arm after a car crash, but I still play guitar.” Elliott rolled up the sleeve of his shirt to reveal a prosthetic limb. “And as usual, she’ll have passed out on that bathroom

floor.” He finished, closing the apartment door behind him.

Sure enough, Elle lay curled in a ball on the bathroom floor. Gently, Connor picked her up, trying not to wake her but failing anyway.

“You’d be more comfortable in a bed.” Connor smiled down at her in his arms.

“They fired me Connor.” She tilted her head into his chest. “The straight up fired me.”

“It’s fine, we’ll find something else tomorrow, okay?” He reassured, holding her tighter.

“You look dumb as a human.” Elle slurred every word. Connor set her down gently in bed and pulled a blanket over her. “I like your face.” She placed a hand on his cheek.

“I like you.” Connor whispered.

Chapter 11

11

It was around 3pm the next day when Elle eventually woke up. Even then, she was groggy and drank more water than Connor thought her body could handle. She collapsed on the sofa and patted the space next to her, inviting Connor to join her.

“Sorry I got so drunk.” Elle fell into Connor’s lap.

“It’s okay, do you feel better today?” He laughed.

“Fuck no.” She dragged out the no, rolling onto her stomach. “How bad was I?”

“Well, you danced with almost every guy at the bar, then you fell asleep on the bathroom floor and I brought you to bed.”

“Anything else?” Elle lifted her head slightly.

“No, just that.” Connor had frozen up. He’d secretly been hoping that Elle would forget last night’s events, and he wasn’t about to admit them now. In a way, he was thankful for becoming a deviant, he could lie without the internal conflict. But if he wasn’t a deviant, would he have said anything in the first place?

“You pick a film today, I can’t think straight.” Elle sighed.

Connor scanned over every film in the online library until he found one he deemed interesting.

“This one is about an imperial force trying to control the galaxy, and a group of rebels try and overcome the force.” Connor smiled down at Elle.

“I know.” She rolled up the dress from last night that she was still wearing. “I’m a big fan.”

On her thigh, she had a large tattoo of the characters in the film.

“I can choose a different one.”

“It’s fine, you definitely need to see all of the Star Wars films.”

The pair watched the series of films until it was the dead of night again. Elle only moved every now and again to go to the bathroom and at one point, make herself some toast to eat, which she complained made her feel sick again. Connor managed to lose himself in the film, attaching himself to the characters and becoming completely enveloped in the plot.

They were four films deep when Elle dragged herself back to her bedroom. After hesitating, Connor deemed it best to follow.

“Is everything alright, Elle?” He asked cautiously.

“You mean apart from now having no job and no way to pay rent? Everything’s brilliant.” Elle smiled sarcastically. “Sorry Connor, I know it’s not your fault.”

“Is there anything I can do to help?”

“Unless you have a couple thousand dollars lying around, I doubt it.”

“You’ll find something else.” Connor assured.

“Your friends down at the station tried blocking me from going to Lily’s wedding in a few days too.” Elle frowned. “My lawyer said that they can’t do that unless I’m being detained, but they think that with the recent android marches that I’m going to run off before the find me guilty of something.”

“I’m sorry, I haven’t heard anything about that.” Connor grew frustrated again.

“You will soon, darling.” Elle grinned, pulling her quilt over her.

Hank was already at his desk the next morning when Connor arrived for work. It was strange seeing him so early, but the smell of coffee almost drowned everybody in the station.

“Congrats, Connor.” He yelled over, almost mockingly. “New special assignment.”

“What is it, Lieutenant?” Connor joined Hank at his desk.

“We need somebody to escort somebody to an event abroad, just to keep a close eye on them.”

“Of course.” Connor eagerly agreed. Reading over deviancy files was growing boring and since he’d been taken off any cases relating to Elle Ramsey, it would be a relief to be doing some work away from his desk for once.

“Great, pick Elizabeth up from her apartment tomorrow. I’m sure you don’t need directions.” Hank joked.

“Please Lieutenant, I can’t do that.” Connor panicked.

“Why not? I thought you’d jump at the chance.” Hank demanded.

“I feel I’m too close to the case, it would probably be better to send somebody else in my place.”

“That’s why I asked you to be put on it, girls not going to open up to some stranger.”

“I don’t think she’ll appreciate having a chauffeur to her best friend’s wedding.”

“She already knows, was over the moon to hear you’d be going. What are you worried about?”

Connor sat at his desk with his head in his hands.

“I told her I liked her.” He eventually confessed. “If she heard, she wont let me forget it all week.” Hank laughed.

“That’s brilliant, send me a postcard.” He said, grabbing his jacket. “If you get anything important from her, tell me immediately.”

Chapter 12

12

As planned, Connor went back to Elle's apartment to collect her for the airport. In typical Elle fashion, she'd already packed him a bag by the time she found out Connor was coming with her, and soon enough they were on a plane to Spain. There'd been a few issues with Connor's lack of ID, but his serial number and attachment to Elle eventually got him through and allowed him on the plane.

Elle prepared for the heat by wearing a sundress but regretted the decision when they landed in Iceland and had a 2 hour wait until their next flight to Barcelona. There were no issues getting through security in Iceland, and Elle fell asleep on their final flight.

When they landed, Elle was bouncing on the balls of her feet in anticipation. Lily had agreed to pick them up from the airport, and it had been almost a year since they'd last seen each other. With recent events, it had been harder and harder for Elle to call Lily like she used to, so the best friends had a lot to catch up on.

The second they saw each other, it was like a scene from a movie Elle had made Connor watch. They both just screamed and hugged for an eternity, then screamed more.

"I can't believe you're getting married." Elle cried into her best friend's chest. "I'm so happy."

"You know I would have cancelled the whole thing if you said you couldn't make it." Lily was crying too at this point.

"Show me." Elle squealed, grabbing Lily's hand. "It's so pretty oh my god."

"I know." Lily blushed. "But speaking of pretty." She winked in Connor's direction.

"I'm so sorry, this is Connor, I hope you don't mind, he's my police escort." Elle brought him forward.

"Causing trouble again, Liz?" Lily tickled Elle's sides.

"As always, but it's okay because we're actually friends when he's not trying to arrest me. Again, I hope you don't mind."

"Of course not, I sent you two tickets for a reason." Lily nudged Elle's shoulder.

"It's not like that." Elle assured. Connor's feelings dropped a little.

"Then you have to meet Tyler's friend, he's an accountant."

"Just point me in the right direction." Elle winked, taking Connor's arm, and pulling him towards a car parked closest to the terminal. The entire ride back to Lily's house was filled

with the girls catching up on the last year. Elle had talked about a bunch of unsuccessful dates and Lily mainly talked about working and wedding planning. She'd chosen Elle to be her maid of honor the second she had gotten engaged, but

Elle had kept most of the wedding plans to herself back in Detroit.

"So, most of the guests are already here, we booked out the entire hotel and it's been pretty much a giant party ever since." Lily spoke, barely containing her excitement. "My parents don't arrive until the day before though, so we can all just be 21 again until then."

"Is Elliot already here?" Lily asked.

"Yea I booked his flight for yesterday, I'm sorry I should have put you on the same flight, but I didn't realize he was still in Detroit I thought he'd have moved to Los Angeles by now." Lily put her hand on Elle's arm apologetically.

"It's totally fine, I had Connor to keep me company anyway." They both turned to wave back at Connor in the back seat.

The hotel looked beautiful when they eventually arrived at its front doors. The Fairmont, Lily had boasted many times in the car there. It had an indoor pool, beaches, and snow skiing nearby, an outdoor pool and a garden to walk through at night. The sun beat down on them on their short walk inside, and Elle wrapped herself tighter in her cardigan to avoid being burnt.

"So, I didn't know if you'd bring a date or not, so I got you separate rooms just in case." Lily smiled awkwardly, handing Elle and Connor separate key cards.

"I don't need to sleep anyway, it's fine." Connor smiled.

"Yea but you need a place to spend the night at least, you can't just loiter around like a creep." Elle joked. "Plus, you're right next to me so you can't miss me too much." She put her hand under his chin again.

"You've got to get ready for 6 anyway, we're having a meal then karaoke next to the pool." Lily waved them both off to their rooms.

Connor unlocked his room door to find a spacious room stretch out in front of him. The bed was king sized, and somebody had folded the towel into a swan. There was a large window that spanned the length of the entire wall at the far side, and beautiful views across Barcelona could be seen from the hotel.

When he opened the suitcase and seen what Elle had packed for him, he decided that the least embarrassing option was to go for shorts and a shirt and made a mental note to never let Elle choose clothes for him ever again. Elle was taking an exceptionally long time, so Connor decided to try her door.

"Can I come in?" He asked. Elle unlocked the door without saying a word, applying some sort of powder to her face.

"Do I look alright?" Elle asked worriedly.

“You look fine.” Connor reassured, pulling her into an unexpected hug. He didn’t know why he’d done it, all he knew was this urge to be close to her.

“No seriously I know so many people here who haven’t seen me in years.” Elle frowned into his chest. “Promise me I look fine.”

“Would I lie?” Connor asked.

“You’re right I guess.” Elle sighed.

Downstairs, long tables stretched out across a large dining room. Elle and Connor sat near the head of the central table, Elle needing to be close to the bride to be. Throughout their meal, countless people came up to the top of the table to wish Lily well and reconcile with Elle. Most of the conversations went the same, a quick “I haven’t seen you in ages!” followed by “I’ll get you a drink later and we’ll catch up.”

“There’s only a small probability of you actually having the time to catch up with everybody you’ve seen so far.” Connor whispered to Elle.

“I know but they’ll just buy me a drink, tell me about their boring job and run back to their nice husband.” She rolled her eyes, laughing as she did. “I’m going to be the last one married in this whole room.”

“Does that make you sad?” Connor asked, but was interrupted by the arrival of the groom and his friends. Lily jumped out of her seat to plant a kiss on her fiancée before inviting the group to sit down.

“So, Elle, this is Sam.” She gestured to the man stood directly next to her fiancée, who took Elle’s hand and kissed the back of it. Sam stood tall and it was obvious he was in a high paying job with the way he dressed, despite having both arms completely tattooed down to the wrist.

“May I take you for a drink later?” He asked, Connor could see Elle blushing beside him.

“Of course.” Elle smiled back. Connor’s thirium pumped quicker inside of him from jealousy. “I’d love to.”

Chapter 13

13

After the meal, Elle was quickly pulled away by Sam, who had bought them a fishbowl to drink out of together. Every time he made her laugh, Connor had to look away from the amount of jealousy that built up in his system. Occasionally, Elle would look over in his direction and Connor would wave, only to be shook off with a half-hearted wave in return. It bothered him even more when Sam brought her away from the party to sit near the edge of the pool instead.

“Oh, hello there mister plus one.” A voice behind Connor spoke. He shot around to find Elliott sneaking into the party. “I take it you took my advice?” He raised an eyebrow.

“I wouldn’t call it advice.” Connor smirked, pleased to have somebody to distract him from the romance unfolding in front of him.

“An android with access to pretty much the entire internet, can’t ask out a girl?” Elliott laughed.

“I read enough articles to know it’s a bad idea.” Connor glanced over to where Elle was still stood. Elliott followed his gaze and donned a sympathetic look.

“Fucking Sam from accounting. Imagine introducing him to friends like me, ‘Hi this is Sam from accounting he drives a nice car and has to wear socks to bed.’ She went bungee jumping because she was depressed, and you think Sam from accounting is a good fit?” Elliott mimicked.

“I wouldn’t go bungee jumping.”

“Yea but you get to look at murder scenes all day that’s right down Elle’s alley.”

“I’m still not human.” Connor looked sad. Despite having his brief taste of equal rights, he knew the backlash the couple would receive if anybody found out about his love for a human girl.

“Yet you’re still more of a man than him.” Elliott pointed.

“Sam from accounting?” Connor laughed. “She seems happy over there though, it’d probably best to let her be happy with who she wants.”

“Just go over there and interrupt it, he’s like 35, he’ll just move to the next single girl here before he starts going grey.” Elliott nudged Connor’s shoulder.

“I really shouldn’t.”

“You really should.”

“Well I’m not.” Connor smiled smugly. Elliott pulled his phone from his pocket and handed it to Connor.

“If you don’t at least take her out by the time Lily walks down this isle, I’m going to lock her in a room with Sam from accounting.” Elliott looked Connor dead in the eye. “And he’s best man so they’ll have a lot of time together for that.” He finished before sprinting across the party in Elle’s direction.

“Elliott!” He heard her cheer from the other side of the pool, but Elliott grabbed her waist and plunged her and himself into the pool. The crowd at the party cheered and a few people kicked off their shoes and jumped into the pool too. Through all the commotion, Elle pulled herself onto the edge of the pool and shot dagger looks in Elliott’s direction.

“You’ll thank me baby girl.” He laughed, wrapping a towel around her that he’d picked up from the rental area. Elle ran towards him, but he threw the towel over her before she could lash out.

“I was having a good conversation, actually.” Elle protested.

“No, you weren’t. You know I know best.” Elliott squashed her cheeks in his hands.

“I missed you.” She hugged him.

“You saw me 2 days ago, you needy bitch.”

“I know and I missed you.”

Elliott brought Elle over to a circular set of couches and beckoned Connor over, who had watched the whole thing unfold in front of him in shock. All the effort that Elle had put into getting herself ready before hand had washed away in the pool, her hair had clumped into two and fell either side of her face and her clothes were sticking to her at every point.

Sam had tried to come over again, but Elliott had pulled Elle onto his lap before she could see him, and that seemed to deter him for a while. Karaoke had started and groups of different people from the party had gotten up on stage to sing along to old songs in bad tones. It was still fun, and the party ran on into the small hours of the night.

After another round of drinks, Elle took Elliott’s hand and dragged him towards the karaoke station.

“That’s cheating!” Lily shouted from the crowd. She had sat with her fiancée and her friends all night.

“All the way from the United States of America, Detroit’s finest Duo since 2028, the Ramsey’s!” Elliott shouted into the microphone.

Welcome to the end of eras, Ice has melted back to life

Done my time and served my sentence, Dress me up and watch me die

If it feels good, tastes good, It must be mine

Dynasty decapitated, You just might see a ghost tonight

Elliott sang first, it was the first time Connor had ever seen anybody sing with Elle and he was impressed. The duo moved together on stage perfectly and a few people in the crowd sang along. Connor applauded as the pair made their way back to where he was sat.

“I’ll just go get more drinks.” Elliott excused himself, winking at Connor as he left.

“You look good!” Connor teased Elle as she sat down beside him.

“Oh, fuck off.” Elle rolled her eyes.

“I’m serious! Though I suggest wearing something a little more appropriate the next time you go for a swim.”

“You’d like that, wouldn’t you?” Elle punched his shoulder. Connor froze in place unsure of what to say. Luckily, Elliott arrived back with drinks in time to break the tension.

“So, I’m going to do some sports tomorrow, nothing big but it’s a day out. Want to come?” Elliott raised his eyebrows at the two of them.

“I’m in, you want to come Connor?” Elle asked.

“Yeah, sure.” Connor smiled back at her.

Chapter 14

14

In the morning, Elliott woke Elle up by banging on some pots outside her room and almost forced his way through her door. Connor joined the pair just as Elle got in the shower.

“So, what am I wearing?” Elle shouted from the bathroom.

“Anything!” Elliott shouted back. He’d lay himself across the bed, excited to finally get going.

“Is Lily coming?”

“Where we’re going isn’t what she needs on the week of her wedding.” Elliott laughed. Elle eventually arrived out of the bathroom wearing a beautiful summer dress that could stop Connor’s processors functioning.

“Not that.” Elliott shoved her back into the bathroom, tossing a pair of leggings after her.

“You said anything!” She argued back at him.

“I also said sports, that doesn’t mean fucking badminton.”

“That’s still a sport.” Elle said, arriving out of the bathroom for a second time. This time, she was sporting leggings with a sports bra and had tied her hair back in a high ponytail. When she tried to pick her purse up, Elliott tossed it across the room. Before they had a clue what was going on, Elliott then forced Connor and Elle in the direction of a taxi, who eventually dropped them off at the beach.

“So, you brought your running shoes, right?” Elliott laughed, dragging Elle by both arms out of the side of the taxi.

“Oh, fuck off, no.” Elle groaned, sitting straight down on the floor. “Why do you always make me do this.”

“Because I could use your legs as a toothpick.”

“The legs are fine.” Elle moaned louder, barely allowing Connor to help her up off the floor.

“I’ll race you back to the hotel, winner buys drinks tonight.” Elliott took off in front of them.

“Fine with me, it’s an open bar.” Elle shrugged her shoulders, took Connor’s hand and dragged him towards the beach. “We’ll get a taxi back.”

“Aren’t you going to go running?” Connor asked suspiciously.

“No, we’re going to lie here and do anything but.” She threw herself onto the sand.

“You don’t have the complexion to be out in this sun, I advise buying some sun cream.”

“I hate the feel of it, so you’d have to put it on me.” Elle raised an eyebrow in Connor’s direction.

“You can burn then.” Connor sat down beside her. Elle threw some sand at him and rolled onto her front. They sat together for a while, watching people surfing on the small waves that formed in the sea.

Families on holiday passed constantly and Connor had noticed a few worried looks in his direction. Elle had seen one guy staring a little too long and had rolled onto Connor’s lap to put her middle finger up to him.

“So how did you and Elliott become a duo?” Connor eventually asked, he’d started to run his hands through Elle’s hair as she lay on his lap and she didn’t seem to mind so he carried on.

“He did music in college and needed a female singer for a piece he wrote, and after that we were both broke, so we played in bars to get some cash to actually live somewhere.” Elle replied. “He actually lived with me for a few months, until he met Lucy and moved in with her. Technically, he’s still on my lease.”

“I’m assuming Lucy is his wife.”

“Yea, she didn’t like me at first. Not entirely sure if she does now.”

“Why wouldn’t she like you?”

“She thinks I slept with Elliott when he lived with me. I didn’t, he’s the grossest person on the planet, but I’m sure she knows that by now.” Elle laughed. “She probably does like me, I set up a date for them because he wouldn’t ask her out.”

“He should return the favor then.” Connor joked, Elliott’s motives suddenly making sense to him. “He’s a good friend.”

“So are you Connor.” Elle stood up and wrapped her arms around his neck. “I’m glad you’re here.”

“Well, I wasn’t given a choice.” He ruffled her fringe out in front of her face.

“If we get a taxi now, Elliott owes me drinks.” Elle smiled, pulling Connor to his feet. The two of them rode back in a taxi together, joking about how Elliott’s legs were thicker than Elle’s head. When they got back, Elliott was lay on a lounge chair at the front of the hotel, sipping on a cocktail.

“Got this on your tab baby.” He raised his glass in Elle’s direction.

“You did not run here that fast.” Elle stomped her foot at him.

“Of course I didn’t, I got a taxi like I knew you would. And by the way, the fancy drinks aren’t included in the free bar.” He winked at Connor.

“Well fuck this I’m putting something pretty on.” Elle stormed off into the lobby. “I’ll see you tonight.” She shouted back towards Connor.

“So.” Elliott dragged out the word. “How did it go?”

“You planned that, didn’t you?” Connor frowned at him.

“Elle is afraid of exercise, it was perfect!” He cheered.

“It doesn’t matter, I still don’t know what to say.”

“Sit down.” Elliott patted the chair next to him. “You can’t come straight out and just ask, you’ve got to make it obvious that you want to be a bit more than her chauffeur that stays in her apartment all the time. You already know she likes you, so try complimenting her a bit more and when she gets a bit flirty, don’t shut it down. The best thing about Elle and guys is she does all the work beforehand without even realizing. Lean into it and then pick the right moment and just say how you feel.”

“I don’t know exactly how I feel though.” Connor frowned again.

“Then say that, you’ve never felt before, but she makes you feel something and that should mean enough.” Elliott put his hand on Connor’s shoulder. “I’ll be right behind you.”

“Thanks Elliott, you’re a good friend.”

“Number one best friend in the world.” He grinned. “You’ll never take that from me.”

“I hope I don’t.”

Chapter 15

15

The second night's party was fully in swing by the time Elle emerged from her room. She joined Elliott and Connor at their table dressed in a tiny black dress with multiple metal chains hanging from it.

"What the fuck is that." Elliott raised an eyebrow. "I thought he was the escort this week." He pointed at Connor.

"Somebody joked on my way upstairs that I'm going to be unmarried at 40, and I need a rich husband." Elle smirked sarcastically.

"You look more like the other woman than a wife."

"As long as they pay my bills." Elle winked at Connor. "Take a walk with me soon?"

"Of course." Connor said, a little too eagerly.

"I'll just get a drink first."

"Don't forget mine!" Elliott shouted after Elle as she skipped towards the bar.

"Come on, you." Elle took Connor's hand when she returned and dragged him away from the crowd. "So what do you think?"

"About what?" Connor questioned.

"About my friends. They're a lot sometimes, but I'm worse." She winked back at him.

"The company you keep says a lot about you, and your friends are great. I haven't seen much of Lily though."

"Yea, I know. But it's the week of her wedding and she needs everything to be perfect, so I can understand her being busy. After her hen party tomorrow, I'm sure you'll see a lot more of her."

"I'm sure she's great anyway, if she's anything like you." Connor stuttered. "You're, you're pretty great."

"You sure you're feeling alright?" Elle teased. "You seem a bit choked up there."

"I'm just a little overwhelmed by this week." Connor looked away for a second. Overwhelmed was an understatement, and he had everything Elliott had said on replay in his mind.

"You don't mind?" She pulled a polaroid camera from her bag and took a quick photo of the two of them in the moonlight.

“Here.” She handed him the photo. “Your first holiday.”

“Elle!” A sickeningly familiar voice called from the party. “Come here!” Sam shouted. Elle rolled her eyes and wrapped her arms around Connor’s waist.

“He won’t give up, with he.” She sighed.

“Go see what he wants, you wanted a rich husband.” Connor winked down at her.

“I’m not going to just leave you here.”

“It’s fine, honestly. I promised Elliott I’d tell him some gory work stories anyway.”

“I’ll meet you back here later.” Elle hugged him tight before dragging her feet in Sam’s direction. Connor headed carefully back to Elliott, avoiding the places Sam was practically tugging Elle to. Elliott was already waiting with a judgemental look and his arms on his hips.

“That went well didn’t it?” He rolled his eyes.

“It’s fine, she doesn’t like him.” Connor replied confidently. Elliott quickly grabbed his shoulders to spin him around. Across the party, Sam was leaning in to kiss Elle, who looked miserable. If Connor had a heart, it’d be at his feet when he saw Elle reluctantly kiss Sam back.

“No.” He barely even whispered.

“Now or never.” Elliott demanded, pushing Connor in their direction.

“What do I do?” Connor begged.

“Literally anything.”

“I don’t even know if she likes me.”

“She phoned me about you almost every day, if you don’t go over there now I’ll tell her myself.” Elliott was almost jumping with anxiety. “Just go.”

Connor tried to take his time crossing the room, but it was still not long enough to think about what he’d do. The only thing he could think about was how nobody should know, it’d blow his cover, and everybody would know he was deviant.

“Miss Ramsey, can I speak to you?” Connor tried to say as straight faced as possible.

“Sure?” Elle looked amused. “Am I under arrest again?”

“No, I just need to speak with you.” Connor grabbed her hand and lead her away from the crowds.

“I wasn’t joking when I asked if you were feeling okay.” Elle grew concerned.

“That’s the thing, I’m not okay. I missed the mark quite a few times, but I’d really like to take you to dinner.” Connor closed his eyes, terrified of the reaction.

“With no money? No idea what I eat, and no idea where to even go?” Elle teased, wrapping her arms around Connor’s neck. “How about you come sit on my balcony all night instead.”

“That sounds...better.” Connor smiled, relieved he wasn’t completely shunned away.

“Or why don’t you pick up where you left off at the exhibition?”

“Gladly.” Connor grinned, letting Elle crash her lips against his.

Chapter 16

Chapter Notes

So I'm going to be at Leeds festival until Monday so I'm uploading the next 5 chapters now to compensate. I'm setting the publish date for each night but I don't think that actually works. Please enjoy and if you're also at Leeds I'll be in red camp living it up to post malone <3

I finished this fic a while ago now so please leave comments if you're enjoying.

Have a great week!

16

After the night's drinking had finished, Connor had the best 24 hours of his life. The pair had returned to the party to find Elliott waiting impatiently at the table they were once stood at. Neither of them had spoken a word of what happened, but Connor caught Elle whispering to Elliott later on as they were dancing, and he'd immediately shot a thumbs up in his direction before picking Elle up in a long hug.

They were both shy and awkward when they headed upstairs, saying goodnight like every other night before heading to their separate rooms. Elle had lay awake for hours, thinking about everything that had just happened and all the situations that would likely meet the couple in the future, but eventually she couldn't take it anymore. She threw on some leggings and kept her pyjama shirt on before throwing open her door, still not sure whether she had the courage to follow through with everything she wanted. A part of her wasn't surprised to find Connor already stood in her doorway.

"Elle! I was just...just checking that your door was working." Connor stumbled over his words.

"That's funny actually, I was just coming to check on yours." She teased back, taking his hand, and pulling him into the room. "But mine's been acting up, you might want to stay here the night and make sure it's fine."

"That sounds like a good idea." Connor stood awkwardly at the dresser. "I wouldn't want anything to happen to you."

"You're such a dork." Elle smiled, kissing his lips again. This time meant more, it was comfortable and precious. The only time she pulled away was to smile and place her forehead against his.

"Can we keep this just me and you for a while?" Her eyes beamed up at Connor's.

"Of course." He smiled back.

"It's nothing against you, it's just it's Lily's wedding and not everybody is as welcoming as my friends are."

"That's fine with me." Connor kissed her again.

After about an hour of kissing and jokes about Connor's awkwardness, Elle eventually had fallen asleep on his chest.

The next morning, a girl's voice was practically screaming at the door and startled Elle awake.

“In the bathroom, now.” She demanded. Lily knocked on the door again. Once Connor was adequately hidden, Lily was let in, who proceeded to jump and cry around Elle in a circle.

“This is going to be the best hen night ever!” She was so excited.

“Body shots and keg stands?” Elle jeered.

“Pass out before midnight?”

“Wouldn’t be my hen party if we didn’t. Anyway, I’m sorry Elliott can’t come but you know how the other girls are around him.”

“I totally get it don’t worry.”

“But he’ll be with Tyler and we’ll probably all end up in the same bar anyway.” Connor listened to the whole conversation from the door of the bathroom.

“It’s your night Lily, its not that important anyway.”

“I know but I know how much you wanted him to come. I’m surprised he married that other girl you know.”

“Don’t even start that again.”

“Sorry, sorry.” Lily raised her hands in defense. “You two just work so well in everything you do.”

“He’s like my brother, I’d rather stick pins in my eyes.”

“Well he asked if Connor could come with him and Tyler, which was interesting.” Lily put her hands on her hips, eying Elle up and down.

“That is...interesting.” Elle cautiously glanced towards the bathroom door.

“I think you should give him another chance you know.” Lily sat Elle down on the bed. “I know he fucked you over, but I’ve seen the way he’s looked at you all this week.”

“I’ll take that on board.” Elle laughed.

“No, I’m serious. Sam really likes you, but I’ve never seen somebody look at you the way Connor does.” Lily frowned. “I just want you to be happy.”

“I am happy, you know me.” Elle smiled at her. “This week is about you and Tyler, not my love life.”

“The only thing that would make me happier than I am now, is if you got everything you want too. How cute would it be if you met somebody at my wedding?” Lily gushed.

“That shouldn’t matter though, you know I’m going to be happy seeing you get your happy ending, regardless of me.”

“Don’t be stupid you’re not getting off that easy.”

“Well...” Elle sighed. “If I told you a massive secret, promise to keep it that way?” Connor started panicking.

“I promise, Miss Ramsey.” Lily winked.

“I won’t tell you a thing unless you promise to never call me that again.” Elle rolled her eyes.

“I promise.” Lily offered her smallest finger out. Elle took it with her own and let out another sigh.

“Connor?” She shouted. Connor froze in place. Lily clasped her hands to her mouth. “Come meet Lily properly.”

Slowly, Connor opened the door to find the two girls sat with grins on their faces.

“Hi, Lily. I’ve heard a lot about you.” His voice was shaky. The fear of people’s reaction was too much to bear.

“Oh my god.” Lily ran over and pulled Connor into a tight hug. “Since when?” She demanded.

“Just last night.” Elle smiled up at Connor, who was still taken aback by the whole situation.

“She texts me literally every night about you.” Lily beamed up at Connor, still hugging him.

“Okay, think that’s enough for now.” Elle pushed Lily out of the room.

“Okay but you’ve got to fill me in later. Be ready for 6.”

“Promise you won’t tell anybody.” Elle offered out her little finger once more. “Not even Tyler.”

“I promise.” Lily smiled at the two of them. She seemed sincere. After she left, Elle breathed a sigh of relief.

“I couldn’t not tell her.” She justified. “She’s my best friend.”

“It’s fine.” Connor laughed. “It’s you who wanted to keep this a secret.”

“Lily would kill me if I kept my boyfriend a secret from her.”

“So, I’m your boyfriend now?” Connor smiled. He didn’t think anything could make him happier than last night, but that one word did.

“Sorry, I just mean, you know since...” Elle stuttered, blushing a bright pink.

“So that makes you mine.” Connor kissed her again. “That’s all I want.”

Chapter 17

17

Elle had left to get ready with Lily hours before Elliott arrived up to collect Connor.

"Sorry I'm late, I wanted to give the girls their old jerseys from college and they're now wearing them as dresses." Elliott sighed. "Don't know what I expected to be honest."

"What is the plan for tonight?" Connor asked hesitantly. When he'd looked up what a stag do usually entailed, he wasn't completely thrilled about the idea.

"Just a lot of drinking, we're going bar hopping and then meeting the girls at the last place. It's some club next to the beach, so it should be fun."

"Sounds good." Connor was relieved.

The first few bars they went to were boring and uneventful. Neither Connor or Elliott knew Tyler properly, and he hadn't had the time to come introduce himself either. They were only there because of Lily, and Elliott had mentioned several times across the night how much he'd rather be with the girls.

"I'd have let them do my nails for fuck sake, these guys are worse than my old football team." Elliott moaned.

"Lily said earlier that she knows how the other girls are around you, do you know why she said that?" Connor asked, looking for any form of conversation to fill the tiny corner they had at the side of the large group.

"They get very...touchy." Elliott laughed. "Wait, when were you talking to Lily?"

"This morning, why?"

"Lily only went to Elle's room this morning." Elliott smirked, watching Connor sink slightly in his chair. Although Elliott knew about his note, he wasn't sure exactly how much he was allowed to reveal about what was going on between himself and Elle just yet.

"Yes, she did, I seen her go in and wanted to meet her properly." Connor smiled a convincing smile, or so he thought anyway.

"You got to watch all that from the bathroom? Impressive." Elliott teased. "They already told me, Lily had a massive go at me for not telling her."

"Yea, can you please not tell anybody?"

"I wasn't planning on, don't worry." Elliot put his hand on his shoulder. It was nice having Elliott around, he was just as welcoming as Elle had always been and always seemed to enjoy Connor's company as much as Connor enjoyed his. Almost everybody he'd met so far had

been welcoming and friendly, Connor was lucky in a way that he'd not had to face any of the treatment that others of his kind were currently facing back in Detroit.

"So, did you's, erm..." Elliott asked cautiously.

"Did we what?" Connor replied, confused.

"Sleep together?"

"Well yes, she fell asleep after talking for a while and I thought it'd be rude to leave."

"I don't mean like that, but it's fine." Elliott smiled.

"Oh." Connor frowned, finally understanding what he meant.

"No that's a good thing." Elliott reassured. "Could you actually do...it"

"As much as you could." Connor got a little offended. "Not that I've actually thought about it." Elliott dribbled his drink a little in surprise.

"That's even better, most guys try that the second their date finishes." Elliott smiled up at him. "And Elle hates it. She's not exactly had the best...past shall we say."

Connor was going to ask Elliott to elaborate but deemed it better to let Elle talk about those things herself when she felt comfortable enough to. Once everyone in the party had finished their drinks, they followed Tyler and Sam in the direction of a club at the end of the strip. Outside, people were crowded around the entrance, some smoking and some trying to bargain with the bouncers to be let inside. Tyler's group managed to be let in immediately and lead to a few reserved tables.

"The girls are here somewhere." Elliott nudged. "Pre-warning, they'll be drunker than ever before."

Connor scanned the club quickly, but he needn't have bothered, a large group of girls were gathered around the bar, chanting at the two girls in the center of the group. Elle had balanced a glass filled with alcohol on her forehead and Lily was trying to drink it blindfolded. It didn't take long for Tyler and Sam to spot them either and head over to join them for drinks.

Lily had pulled Tyler close to kiss him, leaving Elle throwing herself down on a bar stool, pulling her jersey down past her knees as Sam offered to buy her another drink. Connor glared in his direction.

"He's not going to get anywhere anyway, it'll be funny to watch him try." Elliott tried to cheer him up. He was right, and it was only made funnier by Elle struggling to keep herself sat upright on the barstool.

Eventually, Elliot dragged Connor in her direction to save Elle from the clearly enthralling conversation she was having. She sprung to life at the sight of them both and wrapped her arms around Connor tightly.

"Always the queen of subtle." Elliott teased. "We're heading back soon if you want to come with?"

"We're heading back anyway, we're playing party games because this place is boring, and you can come join us I don't care what Lily says I'm supposed to be the planner." Elle was still hugging Connor's waist.

"Me and Tyler are heading back too!" Sam interrupted. Elle was clearly frustrated that he was listening in.

"Great, can't wait." She smiled sarcastically, which Sam didn't pick up on. After finishing the drink, he was holding out for her, the two groups headed back to the hotel where the girls threw themselves immediately into a drinking game about secrets from their past. Sam and Tyler had sat down immediately, but Elliott and Connor sat away from them, with Elliott explaining that it'd be more uncomfortable than fun for the two of them.

"They usually just talk about how much Lily and Tyler had sex when they first got together, and I still don't get how that can be exciting for anybody." He laughed. Connor was fixated on Elle.

"She never twitches her leg like that." Connor was visibly concerned. "When she's drunk she usually just falls asleep."

"Come on." Elliott nudged, sharing Connor's concerns. When they joined the circle, Elle seemed really on edge.

"I'm just, just worried." She whispered to Connor. "I'll be fine."

"We've got you." Elliott sat on the other side of her, rubbing her knee as he sat down. "Anything I can help with?"

Elle just silently passed Elliott her phone, and his face grew just as concerned.

"Give it 5 minutes and if you don't feel any better, just go to bed." Elliott whispered. Elle nodded and then carried on with their game. Elliott was right, most of the game was just Lily talking about her sexual adventures with Tyler. Sometimes, Connor wondered why Elle considered Lily her best friend and not Elliott. As much as the girls seemed to love each other, Lily hadn't paid much attention to Elle the entire time of the trio being in Spain with her. As the game went on, Elle seemed to get worse and lost awareness of everything she was doing. She started slurring her words and closing her eyes for longer than normal.

"Is Elle okay?" Sam sat down next to Elliott. "She doesn't seem it."

"She's fine." Elliott reassured, pulling Elle's head onto his shoulder. "It's just been a long night for her."

"Are you sure? I can take her to her room now it's no bother." Connor watched Sam reach out for Elle's arms and wanted nothing more than to push him away. He seemed so eager to get

his girlfriend alone in this state that it made him almost as angry as the time he saw her getting slapped at the Eden Club.

“I think she’d prefer me to.” Connor almost spat, pulling Elle’s arm over his shoulder, and lugging her towards the lobby. Nobody seemed to notice the two leave, which suited Connor perfectly.

“Your heart rate is too accelerated for somebody in your state.” He spoke to her. “Get in and have some water, okay?”

“Don’t go.” Elle clung onto his shirt.

“I’ll be right here don’t worry.” Connor reassured her as they reached her room. “I won’t go unless you need me to.” He lay her down gently on the bed and went to the bathroom to get her a glass of water.

“I’m sorry.” She frowned, sipping at the water carefully. “I’m not even drunk, I just, I just need a moment.”

“It’s okay, I’m just glad I’m here to help.” Connor kissed her forehead. After finishing her water, Elle slowly pulled off her jersey, leaving Connor completely speechless. It was the first time he’d ever seen her like this, and if he could breath, he’d be suffocating right now. Her skin was flawless, and every curve of her body was as if it had been sculpted professionally. Elle knelt over him, sending Connor into a stunned silence.

“Connor, I don’t want to go back.” Elle almost cried.

“Neither do I.” Connor smiled down at her, tucking a stray strand of hair behind her ear.

“No, you don’t understand. I’ve just had some news, but I don’t want to ruin your week.”

“You know I’ll look it up when you’re asleep anyway.”

“You’re right.” Elle sighed. “But I promise you, I’m not going to let anything bad happen to you okay?”

“Just tell me.” Connor took Elle’s hand.

“They’re deactivating androids across Detroit.” Elle cried this time. “I don’t want us to go back and that happen to you.”

“We’ll make sure it won’t.” Connor spoke, not even sure if he convinced himself with his words. His whole short life was crashing down in front of him. Everything he’d learned and lived, slowly being ripped away from existence. “They’ll send me back to CyberLife instead, but I’ll make sure I come back.”

“How the fuck could you do that though.” Elle sobbed.

“I’ll find a way.”

Chapter 18

18

The next day was the wedding. Lily had planned an intimate ceremony with only her close friends and family, but everybody was invited to the reception. In the morning, Elle had ran about frantically trying to do her makeup well enough to be maid of honour.

"I'll see you later on." She'd kissed Connor goodbye for the day. Elliott had met up with Connor shortly after the ceremony and they returned to their regular table where Elliott ordered twice as many measures that he usually had.

"How was the ceremony?" Connor asked.

"Boring. All the girls cried, they said yes and then several thousand hymns later, we're here." Elliott moaned. "I hate weddings."

"How come you're here but none of the rest are?"

"They've got to make a big entrance, obviously." He nodded towards the entrance of the outside terrace the crowd were gathered under. First in was a girl Connor recognized vaguely from Elle's Polaroid's, linked arm in arm with a man in a suit. The girl was wearing a floor length, deep purple dress and headed straight to a seat at the head table. More couples followed just the same, until a girl in a short dress graced the doorway.

Elle had tied her hair up and cut the length of her dress until it was just above her knees. She walked past the table the boys were sat at and gave a small wave. Sam was linked to her arm, just as all the couples before, but Connor had barely noticed.

"Sorry, man, I should have warned you." Elliott sighed.

"I don't care, she looks so...nice." Connor grinned. Elle took a seat next to the bride's seat, watching Lily arrive to a round of applause and cheers. Sam sat next to the groom, but carried on smiling at Elle. Most of the guests tucked into their first course, but Elliott joined Connor in not eating anything and they laughed over how much Lily likely argued with Elle over moderating her dress. Speeches started, which neither paid attention to until it was Elle's turn.

"My beautiful maid of Honor, Elle Ramsey!" Lily grinned, kissing Elle on the cheek.

"Lily I'm so happy for you, even happier than I was when you first asked me to be your maid of honor. You were always so good at everything you did, but I never in a million years thought you'd land somebody as good for you as Tyler is. I always thought I'd end up having to marry you myself in that ridiculous Jersey we wore in college to sneak into all the parties." The crowd laughed. "You've been so perfect to me over the years, and I hope you find all the joy in life that you've ever given to me and more. Thank you for being my best friend." The crowd cheered as Elle sat down. Elliott almost cried.

"I wish my best man was as great as she is." Elliott smiled, watching Lily and Tyler meet on the dance floor for their first dance. "Think this is where we stand around them like some sort of sacrifice." He joked. Sam took Elle's hand after a minute of Lily and Tyler dancing and brought her to the dance floor to join them. Elle rolled her eyes in Connor's direction, but humored Sam's terrible dancing by taking charge herself.

"By popular demand, a group I can no longer be a part of." Lily stood on the stage. "The Ramseys!"

"We're only doing two songs, and that's only because we were begged." Elle winked over to Lily. "This first is just because everybody deserves a good dance."

Elle and Elliott took up their usual positions, but this time was different. Elle didn't take to the stage as comfortably as she usually did.

I'm hurting, baby, I'm broken down

I need your loving, loving I need it now

When I'm without you

I'm something weak

You got me begging

Begging, I'm on my knees.

The crowd loved it. Everybody got up to dance and cheer, it was as if Connor was the only person in the room who couldn't feel the joy that everybody else did. How could he? For every second of happiness, there were 10 of dread that followed.

"So, Elle isn't prepared for this at all so be ready to watch a teenage strop up here." Elliott spoke into his microphone. "But she sang this for me on my wedding day and it's about time I return the favour to both my best friends."

"He's an arse." Elle spoke into her own mic.

"And I'm not letting her sing a word either. She can either stand there like a lemon feeling sorry for herself, or she can go have fun." The crowd cheered again.

Far away

The ship is taking me far away

Far away from the memories

Of the people who care I live or die

Elle stood for a while, jokingly trying to join in with her song, until Elliott gestured to somebody offstage to turn her microphone off.

The starlight

I will be chasing a starlight

Until the end of my life

I don't know if it's worth it anymore.

Elle sighed, looking down at Connor who had been smiling up at her the whole time.

"Fuck it!" She shouted towards the crowd, stepping down into Connor's arms. "If you push me again, I'll make you wish you were still in Detroit." She glared at Connor, a smile teasing her lips.

"I'd love to see you try." Connor joked back, taking her hands as they danced slowly.

My life

You electrify my life

Let's conspire to ignite

All the souls that would die to just to feel alive.

A few people watched in awe as the couple danced, a few murmurs and a few happy faces. Elliott finished his song and pulled the two of them into a warm hug.

"If that's the last time I ever sing that, you can both never speak to me again." Elliott gushed.

"I hope not." Connor smiled at them both. "Thank you for bringing me."

"I didn't have a choice." Elle kissed the side of Connor's neck, discreetly.

Chapter 19

19

The last day in Spain was almost upsetting. Elle reluctantly packed her bag, sobbing the entire time and assuring Connor that he'd be fine every 10 minutes. Elliott eventually joined them, but his mood reflected Elle's perfectly.

"They're planning an evacuation by the time we land." Elle complained to Elliott. "What if I just refuse? Surely they can't make me?"

"I wouldn't piss off the army, you can't date your way out of that arrest." Elliott tried to joke.

"I don't even care about the evacuation." Elle sighed. Both her and Elliott turned to Connor for a second.

"I'll be fine." Connor grinned back at them. He'd ran over a million different ways to not be deactivated, and although none of them had a high success chance, it was better than nothing at all.

"But what if you're not?" Elle took his hands.

"Then you move somewhere better, get a good job and remember that you taught me how to be happy."

"Well that was the most heart-breaking thing ever." Elle sobbed. When it came time to leave for the airport, the three of them reluctantly grabbed their bags and headed off. Elliott tried desperately to make conversation to take Elle's mind off the trip, but she was silent the entire journey and even during the wait for the flight.

When Elle went to the bathroom mid-flight, Elliott eagerly jumped into the seat next to Connor.

"Here, this'll cheer you up." He handed Connor his phone with a video on the screen. "It's from when I needed a bunch of recordings for my final."

On my own

Pretending he's beside me

All alone

I walk with him till morning

Without him

I feel his arms around me

And when I loose my way I close my eyes

And he has found me.

“I’ve never seen her sing like this.” Connor was astonished. Everything about the video was different, but it was still Elle and it was brilliant. Even the way she dressed, black leggings and an off the shoulder jumper, was the complete opposite of everything she wore now. Her hair was straight and a much more natural orange.

“You’d have loved her, honestly. She was a real theater kid back in college but drank like all the men.”

“Some things never change then.” Connor joked.

“Yea, she told me she killed off who she was entirely, but she’s still there under all the confidence she pretends to have now.” Elliott frowned. “It’s all an act, she just doesn’t want to be hurt.”

“What happened?” Connor pushed.

“A man.” Elliott rolled his eyes. “Convinced her to buy him everything he wanted, told her he loved her and left for another woman without a word.”

“That’s...awful.”

“Yep, you didn’t hear anything.” He nodded towards Elle, who was headed back down the aisle, before jumping back into his own seat.

It pained Connor to watch Elle worry so much and know that he couldn’t even reach out a hand to comfort her. When the plane landed, he felt the worst sense of dread he’d ever experienced as he put on his old jacket. There was something about it that made him feel uneasy, whether it was the serial number branding him or the fact he could be spotted as an android from a mile off.

“Just remember, they can’t hurt any of us if we’re good.” Elliott reminded them, though it was clearly more for Elle’s benefit than anybody else’s.

Elle nodded and carried on by Connor’s side. As expected, guards from the army greeted the trio and separated Connor.

“Apologies Ma’am, the android cannot escort you any further. You’ve been dropped from all questioning and are free to go now.” The man spoke.

“Thank you, but I’d feel safer if I was brought home by him.” Elle smirked.

“No can do, all androids have been ordered for deactivation.”

Elliott instinctively grabbed Elle by the arms as she almost collapsed in shock. Everything was so real now.

“Connor you don’t have to go.” She screeched after him as he was led away.

“I’m sorry Miss Ramsey, I’ve got to return to CyberLife.” Connor smiled convincingly. It killed him to have to pretend like his whole world wasn’t crashing around him, but this was one of the only ways he could see himself surviving. If he made it to CyberLife, he could disable the cameras, overpower the guards and hopefully walk out unnoticed and unscathed.

“Stop it.” Elle yelled, being held up entirely by Elliott at this point. Connor raised his hand slightly, realizing it could possibly be the last time he ever seen her. He didn’t even say goodbye properly, but wouldn’t that have caused the freak out sooner? Would she have even let him get off the plane if she thought for a second they’d be parting ways for good?

“Goodbye mate.” Elliott shouted. It was the last thing Connor heard before he was placed in the taxi.

If Connor could comprehend crying by now, he’d have wept. The taxi ride was tediously long and every passing sign was just another reminder that he was headed to his probable death. Everything he’d learnt and experienced would be wiped with one button. Even if he could escape, the challenge wasn’t over. He could end up spending years alone in hiding with only the distant memories of Elle’s breath on his neck to keep his mind at ease. His last trinket of feeling human.

Emergency protocol activated

The inside of the taxi turned red. Connor strained to see an old car accelerating towards the front of his, gaining speed with every second. In a panicked haze, he threw himself into the back seat and braced for impact.

Calculating

The dread returned. Automated cars were programmed to determine the importance of each passenger and provide an outcome that favoured the “best” person. Androids weren’t people, their lives meant nothing.

Calculated

Airbags burst out of every point possible inside the taxi. Connor’s body was forced back by the force, cutting his arm slightly as he hit the door. It took him a good few seconds to realize what happened before he flung his door open and fell onto the hard, snow covered road. The other car had almost melded with the taxi’s front and smoke was billowing from it’s bonnet.

He didn’t hesitate for a second. He ran quickly to the passenger door of the other car and had to pull it away to even see inside. The smoke was so thick, he could hear the driver choking.

“Calm down, I’ll have you out in a second.” Connor yelled, pushing back the passenger seat to be able to reach into the car properly. None of the airbags had deployed. “Are you injured?”

“Just a scratch.” A girl’s voice choked back. Connor couldn’t decide what was worse, the anger or the fear.

“What were you thinking.” He screamed, still trying to get to the driver’s seat. Wiping red hair from her face, he eventually pulled her out.

“You could have died.”

“I’d rather that at this point.” Elle sobbed weakly. “I didn’t know what else to do?”

“So, you try to kill us both?” Connor was getting angrier by the second.

“I knew your car was safe, relax.” She smiled.

“I’m not worth this. You’re human Elizabeth, you can’t be replaced.”

“Neither can you now.”

“I’m not important.”

“You’re important to me.” Elle snapped, flinching as Connor picked her up. A quick scan showed a broken left wrist and broken left arm, as well as concussion and several cracked ribs.

“You’re lucky you’re not dead.”

“I know what to do when you crash, I was in Elliott’s truck when he crashed.”

“That doesn’t make it okay. You could have killed yourself, my taxi could have determined me more valuable and you’d be dead.” A tear finally spilled onto Connor’s cheek.

“It did Connor.” Elle cried too. “What’s a whore compared to Detroit’s best detective.”

“No that’s stupid.” Connor carried her to an alleyway before setting her down gently. “I won’t forgive you for this.”

“You’re free now.” Elle smiled again. “They won’t find you and you can be free.”

Chapter 20

Chapter Notes

So before I take the 5/6 day hiatus for Leeds festival, I thought I'd leave it on some angst so you all have to wait for the ending 3 chapters.

ENJOY!

20

After the shock wore off, it was getting harder and harder to help Elle through the city undetected. After the evacuation, more and more army personnel were flooding the streets in search of deviants.

“Where should we go?” Elle asked weakly. The cold air was really starting to get to her.

“I don’t know.” Connor replied sincerely. It was long past trying to be optimistic. “I thought that maybe we could go to your apartment, but it’s way too obvious if CyberLife come looking.”

“What bout Elliott’s apartment? Just for tonight, I have his keys.”

“It could work, but only for tonight.”

“Tomorrow we could try leave the city.”

“It’s surrounded Elle, we can’t leave until this all dies down.”

“We need to try.” Elle whined. She was so tired of Connor shooting down any reasonable attempt at getting out of the city.

“No, Elle, what you need is medical attention.” Connor snapped back.

“I’ll be fine.”

“Your bones will heal in a bad position, then you won’t be fine at all.”

“Then fucking break them again later, I’m fine.”

The two sat in an alley for a while, waiting for the coast to be clear. Connor had seen multiple places he could have climbed to and hidden for weeks, but it was impossible with Elle’s injuries. The hours dragged on and the cold air grew harsher. Connor had managed to find a spare jacket in an abandoned car, but Elle insisted he have it to cover himself instead.

Eventually, they managed to make their way across the city to Elliott’s apartment. Connor had almost expected it to look a lot like Elle’s but was surprised to find it mostly empty. A few plates were scattered on the counter and a single photo, one of Elliott and his wife, sat on the mantelpiece.

“How’s your arm?” Connor asked, finally relieved to be somewhere safe.

“Sore, I’d cry if we had time.” Elle smiled a pained smile.

“You need help, Elle.”

“Well where can I go?”

“You can leave, just go outside and they’ll see you’re real. They’ll take you somewhere and help you.”

“Don’t fucking say that.” Elle yelled.

“Say what?” Connor stood up straight in defense.

“Don’t say real as if you’re not.”

“I’m not.” Connor raised his voice properly for the first time since Elle had known him. “If they wanted to, they could make 10 more of me. 100 more. I don’t matter, because I’m not real.”

“That clearly doesn’t matter to me, in case you hadn’t realized.” Elle yelled just as loudly back.

“I had a whole plan set out, to come back to you. But you can’t trust anybody, you have to control everything yourself.”

“Oh, well I’m so fucking sorry for giving a shit. Maybe if more people did, we wouldn’t need mister deviant hunter over here.”

“It’s just an error. That’s all it is.” Connor sat down, covering his face with his hands. He’d never let his new-found emotions get the better of him like this. After a while passed, Elle let go of her anger and came to comfort him.

“Stop acting like any of that matters, it doesn’t. It’d all end up like this anyway.” She reassured.

“You’re right. They’d have called me back sooner or later.” Connor agreed.

“You weren’t that good of a detective anyway.” Elle teased. “Like seriously.”

“Explain?” Connor laughed.

“I totally helped all those androids get free. It’s why I stayed there so long, I felt sorry for them all just staying there. Just bat my eyelids the right way and cops, even you, believe anything.”

“I knew that.” Connor laughed even harder. “You really think it wasn’t obvious?”

“You never knew!”

“I’ve known you for nearly two months, you’ve not smoked a single cigarette in all that time. You never got a taxi back to The Eden Club, you were driven by your date, that’s how you got there so fast. You work there so you know every entrance and had keys to the locked door leading to Richie’s office. You went straight to the back, helped that android, left through the same door and arrived at the front as if nothing had happened.”

“Oh my god.” Elle half laughed, half gasped. “Why didn’t you say anything?”

“I liked watching The Ramsey’s every Friday night. Wouldn’t be the same without the only Ramsey in the group, would it?” Connor carefully pulled her into a hug.

Elle had fallen asleep in Connor’s lap hours before he heard the banging outside. A cautious peek round the curtain showed several soldiers outside, all armed. Carefully, he woke Elle and ushered her to be quiet.

“Is there another exit?” Connor asked, hurriedly.

“The back door, but I hear them there too.” She whispered back.

“Upstairs.” Connor ushered. They ran quickly for the stairs. Connor was almost at the top when he heard the sickening thud behind him.

“Fuck.” Elle winced, clutching her arm to her chest, tears streaming down her face.

“Just stay there.” Connor tried to demand, but Elle just followed him upstairs and into Elliott’s room.

“It’s fine.” She cried.

“It’s not Elle, you’re making it worse.” Connor pleaded, scanning her arm again. Elle couldn’t even hold it up properly with her broken wrist.

“It’s fine, we can hide out on the ledge and when they come in, just jump down and run.”

“You’ll break something else, you have no way to grab onto anything.”

“I’ll be fine.” Elle moved towards the window. Connor watched as she feebly tried to open it.

“Elizabeth.” Connor grabbed her by the shoulders. “Thank you, for everything.”

“What are you-“

“You cared about me when nobody else did. I still don’t even know what a girlfriend means properly but thank you for being mine.”

“No.”

“Up here.” Connor yelled at the top of his voice. Downstairs, the sound of footsteps turned into a thunder as people ran up the stairs. “I’m sorry.”

The last thing Connor heard as he flung himself out of the window was the deafening scream from Elle. Then the gunshots were fired.

Chapter 21

Chapter Notes

I'm back from Leeds! Saw a bunch of my faves, camped out for 6 days and have loads more ideas for other fics. Anyway, hope you enjoyed the bunch of uploads all at once. Quite a few people missed them, so I started uploading them all at once from chapter 15 if you missed.

21

Elle had nightmares for months. Every time she closed her eyes, she remembered collapsing on the floor as a soldier scanned her and hearing the rest of them fire out of the window. Her struggle against them caused her even more pain, but at the time she didn't feel it. All she could think about was whether Connor was okay or not. They took her away from the city and to a proper hospital, where she spent a week being treated for the state she'd let her arm and wrist get in. Elliott had stayed with her the entire time, listening to her cry the same story a hundred times.

A part of her expected Connor to come back once the revolution was successful and androids were granted equal rights as humans. She expected him to arrive back at her apartment, flowers in hand and a smile that could melt even the coldest of hearts.

But months passed. 2 months. Then 6 months. Then 8.

After 3 months, she took the leap to move to Chicago. Far enough to forget that part of her life, but close enough to let it come back if it needed to. Elliott and his wife announced their pregnancy after the 4th month, and during the 5th, Elle auditioned for a musical. During the day, she worked as a receptionist for a law firm, but she wasn't ready to give up her performer side just yet. She'd begged Elliott to audition to, but with the baby on the way, their friendship was a lot harder to maintain.

Lily stopped texting back after Elle had a breakdown one night. Elliott had said it was because she wasn't a good friend, but it still stung Elle in the heart like a wasp. She'd already lost Connor, she didn't need to lose everybody else as well.

All wasn't lost. During rehearsals, there was a guy who sang like her favorite band and danced like he was born in jazz shoes. They got on like a house on fire, and Elliott joked that Patrick would replace him as ultimate best friend in the world.

Patrick had convinced Elle to sing in his local bar one night, but she'd stopped after one song. It hadn't been that long, but her old life was just a reminder of the second guy who broke her to the point of nothing.

"At least this one didn't steal my money and get another girl pregnant." Elle had drunkenly joked to Elliott one night. What started as a joke ended with them both in tears.

"At least you know you can move on now though, you moved on from that prick to Connor. Now it's just about finding somebody new." Elliot sobbed into his cocktail.

"I don't think that's possible." Elle cried back.

The 7th month was the easiest. Rehearsals were every night and work was busy. Elle barely saw her new, even tinier apartment from all the things she was doing. Her time in Detroit was almost entirely behind her.

It was the end of the 8th month. Opening night was a success and reviews started rolling in. Elle wasn't quite the leading part, but had more songs and dances than the leading lady that she didn't care. Elliott came to every show, even the matinees. Patrick was the leading male, but none of the songs let him and Elle sing properly together.

Closing night was the hardest. After this, Elle was planning to apply for university and get her life fully on track. There'd be no time for music or plays. But the curtain opened that night no matter what.

I have a dream, a song to sing

To help me cope with anything

If you see the wonder of a fairy tale

You can take the future, even if you fail

I believe in angels

Something good in everything I see

I believe in angels

When I know the time is right for me

I'll cross the stream, I have a dream.

From the stage, she could see Elliott sat front row once more, fake crying the whole way through like he always did. Afterwards, Patrick was there to greet Elle in the wings and hug her close.

"That was the best you've ever sang that." He gushed.

"Thanks, I'm really feeling it tonight.

When the show ended, everybody gathered in the shared dressing room to celebrate and drink before the after party.

"Miss Ramsey?" A steward entered the room. "A guest left you these."

The steward held out a bunch of blue orchids and Elle could have collapsed on the spot.

"Did you see who left them?" She barely spoke.

"I'm sorry, it was just a dark-haired man. He's been here every night."

"Thank you." Elle hugged the steward and dialed Elliott's number as quickly as her fingers would let her.

"Is this a joke?" She demanded.

“Woah, what?” Elliott spoke.

“I just got flowers, which is nice, but you didn’t have to make them blue.”

“I love you and all, but not enough to leave you flowers.”

“What if it’s-“

“Don’t even start. I’m not having you get all upset again.”

“You’re right.” Elle sighed in defeat.

“Well closing night is always the most expensive, it’s probably a nice rich guy who’ll take you to fancy restaurants!” Elliott tried to cheer her up as she picked a note. In an unforgettable font, it simply read I’m sorry.

“I’ll meet you at the after party.”

Chapter 22

Chapter Notes

Tomorrow is the last chapter! Hope you've enjoyed the ride

22

The after party was loud and crowded, and Elliott arrived late with a cocktail in hand.

“For the leading lady in my life.” He joked, handing the cocktail to Elle.

“If your kid is a girl, I’ll hold you to that.” Elle joked back, taking a large sip.

“So, your new best friend Patrick spoke to me, he’s a big fan.” Elliott started.

“No way.” Elle shut him off. “You know I can’t.”

“It’s not for you.” Elliott sighed. “I don’t want to have had our last gig and not have realized.”

“Fine.” Elle gave in after a long time debating with herself. “But I don’t even know what to sing.”

“You’ll know it.” Elliott grinned, pulling Elle towards the small stage the bar had. It all looked so familiar to the bar back in Detroit that it made Elle nauseous.

“I don’t know if I can.” She whispered.

“You can, just do it for me.” Elliott pleaded, picking up a guitar.

I don't believe in saints,

they never make mistakes,

I know it's not my place

Who am I to tell you that you need to change.

Elle opened her eyes to look over at Elliott. He was so happy to be back on the stage and it warmed her heart. He had a good job and a good life, but it’d be a shame to see him give up music for good.

Her closet's such a mess

Filled up with all the skeletons she's kept

Nobody's perfect I confess

But she's perfect enough

Without ever dressing up yeah.

As she looked around the room, the bar almost transformed to a past memory. The crowd were happily swaying to the beat and the lights went a familiar orange across the stage. The hallucinations got deeper. There was the sound guy, right at the back as always. The barman was serving the same drunk that was there every night. Connor was stood at the same table he always stood at, waiting for her to come offstage.

Dirty laundry is piling in her room

She's got her secrets

Yeah, I got mine too

I don't care about what you did

Only care about what we do

Dirty laundry, looks good on you

Elle blinked away tears. It was a bad idea to start with, signing the same old songs. The barman changed back to this new, younger, boy serving drinks. There was no sound guy, just a PA system that anybody could plug their phone into. Elliott took over for his verse but the image of Connor wouldn't shift. He wasn't even in his android clothes, it wasn't remotely real.

Dirty laundry

Elle almost screamed the last lyric and ran off the stage sobbing.

"I know, I can't believe it's over." Elliott pulled her into a hug. "I'm sorry I made you do that."

"I saw him." Elle cried into his chest. "Right at the back like normal."

"Oh my god, I'm so sorry Elle." Elliott said sympathetically. "Come on, come get some air."

The air outside was still warm from summer, and the sun had only just set. Elle sat sobbing for a while on a bench as Elliott rubbed her shoulder in comfort.

"It's not fair, I fucking loved him, and he was just taken away." Elle cried harder than she had before.

"He loved you too." Elliott assured.

"He called them to me. He just left me there." Elle grew a little angry.

"You needed help, don't get mad at him for caring."

"I know." Elle gave in. "I just wish I'd get over it."

“Elizabeth?” A voice spoke behind them. Elle clasped her hands over her mouth and screamed.

“I’m sorry I’m here, I shouldn’t have come.” The voice spoke again. Elliott took a big sigh before standing up, tears spilling from his own eyes now.

“It’s been 8 months, Connor.” He snarled.

“I know, I’m sorry. You both seemed to be doing so well and I didn’t want to take you back to what happened.” Connor was already crying.

“It’s good to see you, man.” Elliott pulled him into a tight hug that lasted forever. Elle stayed seated, hands still clasped over her mouth.

“You can’t be him.” She sobbed. “You can’t be, you’ve got to be a copy.”

“It’s me, Elle.” Connor smiled a weak smile as she turned around. “I just wanted to see your show, and then I couldn’t help myself.”

Elle said nothing, but nearly knocked Connor over with the force of her hug.

“I’ll never ever forgive you.” Elle screamed.

“I don’t expect you to. I should have either found you straight away, or not at all. This is dumb.”

“This is so dumb.”

“I know.”

“I thought you were dead.”

“I know.”

“I moved away and changed and got a real job and wanted to forget you, you asshole.”

“I know.”

“I still love you.”

“...I know.”

Chapter 23

Chapter Notes

Big thank you to everybody who followed this fanfic, we're all done now and I'm so happy for everybody who has stopped by even for a while.
Have a good one guys, hope you enjoyed, and if you read this way way after, then enjoy!!

Yours, SaintKirsty

23

The next year and a half may not have been perfect to some, but it was perfect to Connor. He got his job back at the station in Detroit and stayed with Hank during the week. Hank was happy to offer hospitality, but still complained loudly about most of Connor's quirks. Each Friday night, Connor traveled to Chicago to stay the weekend with Elle. He helped her often with work from her university and let her talk for hours about the strange clients that arrived at her front desk.

As it grew closer to the birth of Elliott's child, Elle went shopping with him at least once a week for baby clothes, and even helped him build a nursery in his new home. Some weekend, Elliott would join her and Connor for wine and films. He'd stopped being a session musician and got a job as an assistant cook in a restaurant but had joined a new band as their lead singer. Elle never missed a gig.

There weren't many deviancy cases that arrived on Connor's desk, and the bulk of his work was made up of attacks on androids by people who still hadn't accepted them as equals. He preferred this work to catching deviants, it felt like he was doing more of a justice than before. He'd experienced his own taste of it when a group of protestors hurled abuse at him and Elle one night in Chicago, but it was nothing compared to the sights he'd seen back at work.

Elliott's son, Austin, was born a week late. Aside from family, Elle was the first person to meet the new born and had already been named as his godmother. Lucy's childhood friend had been named godfather. Elle came home that night broody as ever, and her and Connor spent at least a week barely speaking, knowing that their inability to conceive would be tough for her in the future.

All was made up though when Elle's birthday rolled around. She held a party in her apartment that was "Godfather" themed. She'd shown Connor the film, but he still didn't understand why every question he asked was answered with "You come to me on the day of my daughter's wedding."

On New Year's Eve, Elliott's new band played to a small party. It took much convincing and a lot of cocktails but eventually, Elle agreed to sing 'Fairytale of New York' at midnight. It was that night that Connor met Elliott's wife, Lucy, and Austin for the first time. Lucy confessed to him that it was only once she had seen Connor and Elle together that she finally stopped being so jealous of her.

"I always thought they had something more than anybody in this world could have." Lucy spoke to Connor at the back of the party.

"Me too." Connor agreed. Admittedly, he'd been incredibly jealous of Elliott for a long while, but now they welcomed in the new year as best friends. Elle even went as far to admit

that she always preferred Elliott to Lily, which caused them both to tear up again and order another round of drinks to celebrate.

Connor and Elle had had their fair share of dates over the year too. Every time Elle realized Connor hadn't done something, she made it her mission to take Connor as soon as she could. This resulted in them going to water parks, the theater, museums and even a zoo at one point. Connor still didn't understand the appeal of any of these, but Elle's excitement made him enjoy each date as if it was both their first and last. He loved seeing her face light up when they arrived somewhere, and soon enough, her wall was replaced with polaroids from their adventures together.

Connor's favorite date was the day they went to a large amusement park. It was Elle's idea to go into a new horror attraction, and as somebody jumped out at Connor, Elle had pushed him backward and took a defensive stance in front of the actor. Connor had teased her for weeks on how she'd defend him like that, but Elle only retaliated with how much Connor thought he might shut down on the Sky Swing they went on that night.

"I'm just saying, if the ropes broke on that we'd both be dead." Connor argued, the fear of dying taking over his system like it had the very night they rode the death trap.

"Yea, because they'd really put people on a machine that had a chance of breaking, wouldn't they?" Elle teased.

"Well maybe if it did break, you'd have tried to punch it." Connor teased back.

Elle's law firm held a party when they finished the financial year, just to celebrate the profits they'd made over the past year. It became a running joke between the three friends that it was Elle's natural attraction to rich men that gained them so much money, but she was extremely surprised when she even received an invite.

"What do you mean you can't go." She moaned to Connor on a film night Elliott had joined them for.

"I said I'd help Hank around the house next weekend." Connor almost couldn't contain his laughter.

"I even got Elliott's band booked for it, so we could all go together." She stomped her feet.

"Then go with Elliott, he's already going anyway."

Despite the debates, and Elle's to bribe Connor to pass up helping Hank, she arrived at the party with Elliott anyway. She knew everybody there, but sincerely doubted that most of them would remember her name. Regardless, it was an open bar and Elliott was playing, so it was a good night in her eyes.

Elle danced and drank for a while with her best friend before he left her at the bar to play with his band. Most of the songs were upbeat, just typical background music for a party. Elle made her way to the front of the small stage to support and clap along, making Elliott direct all his lyrics to her jokingly.

“So, if you don’t already know my best friend Elle, then you really need to pay attention when you sign in.” Elliott spoke to the crowd. “It’s thanks to her that we’re here this night, so her favorite cocktail is a Sex on the Beach and I hope you all buy generously.”

“He’s joking.” Elle shouted to the crowd behind her, who laughed and applauded.

“I’m really not, but this song’s just for her anyway.”

I found a love for me

Darling, just dive right in and follow my lead

Well, I found a girl, beautiful and sweet

Oh, I never knew you were the someone waiting for me

“What the-“ Elle snapped as she felt two hands around her waist.

“Well, your date looks preoccupied up there, and I thought I’d take over.” Connor smiled at her.

“I should have known, really, by now.” Elle rolled her eyes and wrapped her arms around Connor’s neck. The two swayed to the song and smiled up at Elliott who was beaming with joy.

I have faith in what I see

Now I know I have met an angel in person

And she looks perfect

I don’t deserve this

You look perfect tonight

“I wasn’t sure on the song, I hope you like it.” Connor spoke nervously.

“You asked for this?” Elle breathed, taken over by shock.

“Elliott knew I’d be here the whole time.” Connor grinned, amused by Elle’s reaction. They turned to see Elliott waving from the stage.

“Connor, that’s so sweet.” Elle gushed.

“I thought it was only right. You work so hard, you’ve climbed so far from when I first met you.”

“Connor...”

“But where you started isn’t bad. You had so much thrown at you and you found a way to keep yourself afloat, no matter what it meant. And even then, you still found a way to help

people on your journey. You stayed in a place you hated, just for the chance to help people like me have a chance at life. You gave me the gift of happiness, in a place where I never even thought I'd ever experience it."

"You make it sound so great." Elle buried her head in Connor's chest.

"Because it is, there's never been a moment where I haven't been absolutely astonished by everything you are and do."

"I'm just me."

"Exactly." Connor stood back. "So, Elizabeth." He got down on knee.

"Will you marry me?"

Elle stopped for a moment. The room around her was spinning, and all she could see was her and Connor.

"Yes."

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!