

Look@What BOT In the DraggEd

by Kerensa



Story by Kerensa
Art by The Black Sluggard

"Shut up."

John glanced over at Dorian, surprised at the comment. The two men...well, one man and one android, (but who's counting) were driving down the highway. Kennex hadn't, in fact, been even talking.

"Uh..." he began, but was interrupted.

"Shut your mouth and close the door

I wanna watch you while you take it off

I'm gonna take a blindfold put it on

And then I drop the leather to the floor

I said shut up..."

The cop rolled his eyes and gave a heartfelt sigh; obviously Dorian was listening to music again.

'And singing,' he thought wryly. Not that the DRN didn't have a nice voice, it was just that he sang the most obscure songs. 'And wait a minute...what?!' John thought as he really listened to the lyrics his partner was singing.

“Turning the lights out
Burning the candles
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight
Turning the lights out
Tighten the handcuffs
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight...”

Dorian turned those bright blue eyes on Kennex and suddenly the police officer didn't care what he sang. With a smirk on his face—and a definite tightening of his pants—John returned the look.

“What song is that?” he asked.

“Mirrors by Natalia Kills,” Dorian informed him promptly.

“Really. I've never heard of her or it,” John admitted. He looked back at the road and shrugged one shoulder negligently. “I wouldn't mind hearing it, though,” he told his partner.

With a slight smile gracing his lips, Dorian touched a hand to his ear, the blue lights on the side of his face flared briefly and suddenly the car was filled with the sounds of a young woman singing. John listened a few seconds and, without looking over at the android, stated, “You can keep singing. If you want to,” he added nonchalantly.

Outside of the car traffic whizzes by at amazing speeds; if John hadn't been driving at a reckless speed himself, he would have been worried. As it was, he headed towards the police station; sure of his driving superiority and enjoying the melodic sounds of his DRN, his partner, his lover, his Dorian, singing a decidedly sexy song.

Life was good.

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Life sucked...and not in a good way.

It was Monday morning and his desktop was filled with files needing to be typed on and his partner had disappeared. Well, to be fair, he hadn't actually disappeared. No, Dorian had gone down to the Biotics Lab to talk to Rudy Lom, their resident expert on all things computer and robotic. Still, John was alone with the paperwork, which wasn't actually done on paper anymore, and that made his mood plummet from the high it had reached on the ride to the station.

John Kennex glared at the room in general when the paperwork didn't magically disappear. It didn't matter to him that most every other detective was also burdened with their own computer files. Detective Valerie Stahl was typing away at a good clip, Detective Paul's MX was typing at his computer and even the captain could be seen in her office, also working on the computer.

'Crap! I can't really complain when everybody else is so busy.' With an internal grumble, John realized he couldn't delay it any longer and began to type out his report on the how and why he and Dorian had caught John Jacobs, a thief...you know, stealing.

"John, there is a problem," Dorian informed him about half an hour later. He had walked up so quietly that the detective was startled and ended up typing, 'rmphypph', which didn't make any sense at all.

Kennex backspaced over the mistyped word before looking up. "What's wrong?" he asked. If the android thought there was a problem then there probably was.

"Rudy is not in his lab," Dorian informed him, a serious look on his mocha-colored face.

"So? Maybe he's somewhere else...uh, in the station." Obviously he was somewhere else if he wasn't in the lab.

"He has not signed in yet today."

John glanced at the clock feature on his computer. It read 10:45. "Maybe he's late," the detective offered.

"Doctor Lom is always in his lab by 7:30 in the morning, promptly every day."

Kennex opened his mouth to offer a suggestion and closed it, thinking. "Every day?" he asked.

"Yes, without fail," the android informed him.

"Lom's missing?" Paul asked from his desk.

"Yes, he is," Dorian told him.

There was a general stirring of the people in the room. Rudy was a little strange, most of them thought...okay, more than a little, but he was one of theirs. Besides, any excuse to delay paperwork, no matter what, was preferable.

"Has anyone tried his home?" Valerie offered. "He might be ill."

"Yes, I tried his residence as soon as I determined that he had not come in to work today," Dorian told them. "There was no answer."

Captain Maldonado's office door opened and the smaller woman looked out. "What's going on?" she asked in a soft, but authoritative voice. After she'd been brought up to speed on the situation with Rudy the captain gave a decent suggestion, "Bring up the video feed."

Before she had even finished her sentence, Paul's bot's fingers typed information into the computer, so fast that its fingers were a blur. Six different feeds immediately popped up on the computer screen. The Biotics Lab and the five different entrances to the station were featured.

"Let's see the feeds from when he left last night," Richard instructed his bot.

Immediately the MX found the lab feed from the night before. John leaned to one side so he could see the monitor better. Dorian typed a couple of keys and the pictures were now on Kennex's monitor, as well. The detective gave his partner a 'thank you' nod and settled back in his chair to watch.

They watched as Rudy powered down his computer, talking to himself the whole time, and left the room. He left, via Exit #3 by his vehicle about three minutes later. Nothing unusual.

Without being told to, Dorian fast forwarded the feed on all screens until Rudy reappeared this morning. The speed that the taped feed went at was so fast that it made John's head spin; only an android could look at it without becoming ill.

"Here he is," the DRN stated, sounding slightly relieved. Dr. Lom drove in through the #3 entrance at 7:25 this morning, according to the time stamp on the feed.

"He arrived on time," Kennex observed. "So where the hell is he?"

That question was answered a few moments later. As soon as Lom's red vehicle stopped, it was surrounded by several people. No, make that several androids. It was easy to tell from the stiff way they moved that they were something other than human, even though they weren't MXs or DRNs. The door to Rudy's car was wrenched open and one of the bots stuck its hand inside. In seconds the interior was filled with a mist. The doctor's unconscious form was pulled from the vehicle and placed in a waiting van. The whole incident had taken less than a minute.

"Damn," John summed up the situation succinctly.

"Check for the license plates," Maldonado ordered, snapping the deathly quiet room out of its stupor. "Run facial recognition on those men," she added.

"They're bots," Detective Paul stated.

"Yes, but they had to be made. There will be a record of them somewhere," she told him, not outwardly put out by his attitude.

"Yes, Captain," Richard nodded.

"We'll head to his home," Kennex informed his superior officer. "Maybe there's some clue there as to who would have kidnapped Rudy. Or why."

She nodded to his and Dorian's back; they were already heading out the door. "Michelson, Jeffries, go with them," the worried captain ordered another set of officers and their MXs.

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Rudy's apartment was not what John expected, not at all. In his mind, Kennex expected a small, cluttered apartment with half-completed projects over every flat surface. He couldn't have been more wrong.

Luckily, Dorian had known Rudy's address, because otherwise, John would have headed the wrong way out of the police station exit. Kennex would have turned right, towards the more

modest side of town where his own apartment was. However, he had to turn left instead. In 10 minutes the two of them were heading towards the far edge of town and into a much more affluent area. The building they pulled up to had an armed guard at the security gate; an actual human instead of a computer interface.

"Yes, sir?" The guard had left his guard shack immediately and stood beside the car, one hand resting on his weapon. "This parking lot is for tenants only," he informed them.

Kennex's eyebrows shot up; he was obviously in a police vehicle and the guy was still giving him guff? He pulled out his badge which didn't seem to overly impress the guard who gave it a cursory glance and then looked back at the detective expectantly.

"I'm Detective John Kennex. We are here because Rudy Lom has been kidnapped and we need to search his apartment."

"Dr. Lom? Kidnapped?" the young man asked, an alarmed look crossing his face. "Please wait a few moments," he told them, hurrying back to his cubicle. After a brief conversation on his phone he hung up and came back out. "Sirs, please head along this lane to the door at the far end. Mr. Brewer, the building manager, will meet you there."

"I don't need a guide," John grumbled, frowning at the delay.

"Perhaps not, sir, but you will need a passkey to enter his condo," the young man added, not budging an inch.

"John," Dorian murmured. The detective sighed and nodded at the security officer before driving to the indicated door; there was no sense causing a problem...at least not yet.

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"Whoa!" Kennex said when they walked in the door.

Dorian gave him an amused glance. John would have blushed if he still could; the cop had lost the ability to be embarrassed years ago.

"Rudy is an accomplished scientist," the android reminded him gently.

"Yeah. I guess I should have expected something like this when the guard called it a condo," John admitted.

'This' was the size and opulence of Rudy Lom's apartment...excuse me, condo. The whole front wall of the main room was windows—which had to be a real drain on the electro bill—and the view was killer, Central Park was prominently featured.

Instead of clutter and some cheap, 'it'll do' furniture, all that they could see seemed to be antiques and well-cared for ones at that. No clutter. No half-finished projects lying around. Instead, a nice, neat and very expensive living space.

A knock on the door interrupted Kennex's envious...err, perusal. He walked over and opened the door, expecting it to be the building manager again, who hadn't been at all happy to give them

admittance to 'Dr. Lom's' dwelling. Instead, it was detectives Jeffries and Michelson and their MXs.

"The captain sent us," Alan Michelson informed John although his eyes were already roaming the inside of the condo. Thomas Jeffries was more blasé, giving the inside a quick look.

"Fine," John said grudgingly. The cop knew that he and Dorian would need help to search, but for some reason he felt like they should guard Rudy's privacy. He sighed internally, because when a crime happened privacy went out the window. He glanced over.

'Even windows with a spectacular view.'

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The first thing they found was a computer Padd. It wasn't hard, because sitting on the small table beside the holoscreen, it was the only thing out of place in the main room.

"Hi, Babe,

I can't wait for this weekend. I've missed you so much.

Sorry about last time, but I had to go to that function. You know I would rather have been with you.

Later,

D.M."

"I wonder who D.M. is," he asked aloud.

"Someone very close to him," the android stated softly.

"Yeah."

"I wonder who she is."

The blue EM (electromagnetic) pulse on the side of Dorian's face lit up, indicating that he was interfacing with someone, or more likely, something. John waited for the android to give up whatever information he was accessing.

"There are approximately 8,340,700* humans living in New York City at the moment." He blinked a couple of times. "Of that number, 4,379 of them have the initials D.M."

The next entry was obviously Rudy's answer.

"Hi, D,

I know you would have made it if you could. LOL If for no other reason than you hate wearing a tuxedo.

I too am looking forward to Friday night. I have it all planned out...

"Okay, it's a he," Kennex concluded. "And these are love letters," John said quietly enough so that the other cops wouldn't hear him. He closed the Padd down, after showing it to Dorian first, not wanting to invade Rudy's private life any more than necessary.

More sparkles went up and down the side of Dorian's face, like a miniature series of lightning bolts. "Of that number 2,627 are male."

"Way too many to check out. I guess we'll never know who D.M. is," the detective concluded.

"Not unless Rudy gives us the information," Dorian added.

"Uh huh." It wasn't like John was all that interested in Rudy Lom's love life.

The two of them kept looking at the contents of the desktop. In a far room John could hear Jeffries and his MX searching the bedroom; he was glad that it was the more liberal-minded cop who was looking at Lom's inner sanctum and not Michelson, who was searching the kitchen.

"Huh, I was right," Kennex muttered a couple of minutes later.

"About what?" Dorian asked him, looking up from the Padd that he had been examining.

"I figured that Rudy would have half-done projects all over his apartment." Waving a hand at the dozen or more Padds littering the antique roll top desk he continued, "I was right, only they are schematics instead of actual projects."

"Hmmm," Dorian muttered, one eyebrow arching. John could see that his partner didn't buy his explanation; he knew that Kennex hadn't been quite that nice in his anticipation of Rudy's housekeeping. "I have found a Padd with several pictures on them," the android stated in his mellow voice.

"Oh yeah?" The detective reached over and took the proffered computer and looked at the picture displayed. The young man was standing in front of a tree, wind blowing his light brown hair back from his face. He was slender, almost to the point of emaciation, but instead of looking dreadful it made him look alluring.

Kennex brushed his finger along the bottom of the Padd, moving on to the next picture. It was of the same young man, only a different setting and clothing. He flicked through picture after picture, all of the same guy.

"Huh, Rudy must really like the looks of this guy," John stated.

"Yeah."

"Uh huh," the other cops chimed in. Jeffries sounded matter of fact, whereas Michelson, who had a sneer on his face, sounded more interested... personally.

"I wonder who he is?" the detective wondered aloud. "Maybe that's D.M."

Dorian looked at the three police officers, a smirk on his face. "It's Rudy," he stated.

"What?"

"No way!"

"Hmmm," Jeffries added, looking at the picture a little more carefully.

"Yes," Dorian stated assuredly. "Look at his eyes."

Jeffries was definitely looking at the picture, and not just Rudy's eyes. Kennex turned the Padd away from the other detective. "Don't you have something else to do," he suggested...very strongly.

"Uh..." was Jeffries' clever answer.

"Yes, we do," his partner intervened taking hold of the ogling man's arm and pulling him to search one of the other bedrooms.

Once they were gone John turned the Padd back around and looked at it closely; now he could see Rudy's eyes in the figure on the screen. "Rudy did say that he used to be a child model, I just didn't believe it," Kennex admitted.

"You thought he lied?" Dorian asked him.

"Well, no, but..."

"You simply could not believe it."

"Yeah...I see it now, though."



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Thursday afternoon and still no sign of Rudy.

The images on the video feeds had been scrutinized, by man and bot, but to no avail. No matter the angle or recovered reflection the license plates of the kidnapper's van remained obscured. No news, good or bad, was eating away at their morale. It surprised John how many people seemed to be genuinely worried about the scientist, especially since most people weren't that friendly to him day-to-day.

'Hell, even the MXs act upset and I didn't think they were built with any feelings,' Kennex thought to himself.

"John, are you all right?" Dorian asked him.

"No, not really," he admitted. "The longer he's gone the less likely that we'll find Rudy." He didn't need to add 'alive' that was a given.

"Yes...I know."

Kennex noticed the slight pause and if he had to guess, John would have bet the android was about to give off the statistics on abductions but had refrained from giving them bad news. If he ever needed proof that the DRN was less of a machine and more alive than most people believed, there it was.

Breep.

The tone in his ear phone indicated that the detective had a call. He tapped the receiver to answer it.

"Kennex. Yeah, we are...What? Are you sure? Yeah, I believe you. Right, later." With another tap he ended the call.

"John?"

"That was one of my snitches," he explained to Dorian and then in a louder tone he informed the rest of the detectives, "I have a lead." That stopped all conversation in the room. "J.J. told me that he's heard rumors that a guy matching Rudy's description is being held in a warehouse in the auto manufacturing district. However, there is also a rumor about someone matching his description in an android replicating station downtown."

"Hmmm. Do you have addresses?" Captain Maldonado asked, having come out of her office.

Kennex's fingers flew as he typed the name into his computer. "Yes, Captain. The auto warehouse is located at 221457 144th St." He typed some more. "And the android warehouse is on 909 S. 110th St."

She nodded her head decisively and turned to look at the rest of the detectives. "Detective Paul, head gather ten detectives and head to 221457 144th St. Use extreme caution; if at all possible I

want Dr. Lom back, unharmed." She turned to John. "Detective Kennex take all remaining available personnel and head to the 110th St. address."

Even as the captain was speaking all but a few of the detectives gathered up their guns, coats and androids and headed out. Only the barest minimum of people stayed to man the station.

Of course, what Kennex didn't tell them was the name of the manufacturing warehouse his snitch had told him.

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"McGriffin's Pleasure Companion Warehouse?!" It was funny; John didn't even know that a grown man's voice could get that high.

"Yeah, yeah. It's been closed for years," Kennex informed them, rolling his eyes. "Come on," he said as he gestured to Dorian to follow him.

"Actually, John, I detect a great deal of activity from inside of this dwelling. I do believe it is a business once more," the android informed him.

"Crap!" John said severely, but under his breath. That was the last thing Rudy needed, more rumors, there were already enough ones circulating about the scientist's modeling pictures.

"Yes, I have a feeling that this is going to become a humorous situation."

"They must need Rudy to program the bots," Kennex mused aloud; loud enough for the other officers to hear him. Out of the corner of his eye, John saw several bobbing heads as they agreed with his assessment. Everyone was relieved to have a reasonable explanation why their thin and somewhat scraggly-looking computer expert was being held in a sexbot warehouse.

"I just hope Rudy is at one of these locations," the detective said to Dorian.

The mocha-skinned android nodded his head. "Yes, I do as well. I find that I miss his chatter."

John's eyebrows shot up as he looked at his lover. "Oh yeah?"

"Yes. Even though it irritates me at times I do find his conversation to be soothing."

"Huh," Kennex grunted, expressing his silent opinion on the computer expert's incessant talking. Personally, Rudy got on John's nerves in about two seconds, but then again, Dorian didn't have that many people to talk to and the MXs couldn't have been very good conversationalists, so Rudy's talking might be comforting to the sensitive android.

Everyone winced when a car alarm went off just as Kennex opened the warehouse door; the blah blah blah seemingly unnaturally loud. He paused for a second but when no corresponding alarm sounded inside, John and Dorian walked into the warehouse. It took the detective's eyes crucial seconds to adjust to the dim interior, luckily the DRN's ocular implants didn't have any trouble going from bright sunlight to the much-weaker incandescent lighting, so he was able to protect the human in that time.

As the other detectives and their MXs filed in behind them, John took the opportunity to give the place a good looking-over. The building was huge, but it seemed to be broken down into numerous cubicles. It was like a rabbit's warren and would take forever to search.

One of the more junior detectives waved his arms. Kennex frowned and looked over at the younger man who had been in the bullpen only six months. He motioned John and Dorian over. They silently crept over to a curtained partition. Inside, sitting in a chair, was none other than...

"Rudy!?" Dorian said in disbelief; John was sure his voice wasn't really that loud, it just sounded like it in the quiet of the building.

Dr. Lom looked up when his name was spoken and gave them a smile. A dreamy smile. He was dressed in a pair of loose cream-color slacks and a matching tunic.

John blinked. "Well, that was anticlimactic," he stated.

"Rudy, are you all right?" Dorian asked, stepping closer to the scientist.

"Why yes, I'm fine," Rudy answered, in a dreamy voice to match his smile.

"He must be drugged," Kennex decided. He looked the other man over and didn't see any overt signs of abuse. "You...uhm..."

"Detective Jensen," Dorian supplied the younger man's name.

"Yeah, Jensen. Take Dr. Lom outside and put him in one of the patrol cars. You and your MX stay outside and keep an eye on him.

"Yes, sir," the younger detective nodded sharply to the person with more experience. "Come along, doctor," he stated as he took hold of Rudy's upper arm and gently pulled him out of his chair.

"All right," Rudy agreed docilely. He allowed the detective to lead him out of the building. John noticed that the computer expert was leaning against Jensen, who seemed to be flustered all of a sudden.

"It might also be shock," Dorian added, also watching Rudy being escorted outside.

"There's no telling what's been done to him," one of the detectives said quietly.

Kennex changed the subject, for all their sakes, "All right, let's spread out and find the kidnappers. Somebody, contact Paul and his team to let them know we've found Dr. Lom," he ordered.

"I am contacting them right now," Dorian said, his face lighting up. "I will also inform Captain Maldonado."

"Great." Of course Dorian could contact the MXs through his interface; John forgot that sometimes.

The detectives split up into partners—one detective, one android—and began a systematic search of the warehouse. Kennex and Dorian headed to the next room to the right of the one they'd found Rudy in, hoping to find some evidence or a perp or...

"Rudy?!" John was the one to exclaim this time. "But..."

'Rudy' smiled up at the detective from where he was lounging on the bed in a, there was no other way to describe it, a very sensual way. John blinked in surprise when he realized that he found the scientist attractive, in a fragile sort of way.

"Perhaps," Dorian began, but he was interrupted by a message in his interface. "John, two other teams have discovered Dr. Lom. No, make that five teams." The two heard a noise at the door and turned, Kennex with his gun in hand, only to see yet another Rudy walk in. "I believe we can surmise that they have made android duplicates of him," the DRN stated wryly.

"You think?" John said sarcastically. "Have the others round up all of the Rudys they can find and take them outside with the real Rudy..." he trailed off in thought.

"If that is indeed the real Rudy," Dorian completed his thoughts.

"Yeah, maybe he isn't in shock after all. Or drugged."

"Hello, detective," one of Rudybots purred, running a hand up John's arm.

"Yeah, I think we can knock those worries off our list," Kennex admitted. "They are obviously sexbots modeled on Rudy."

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By the time all of the detectives had chimed in, they had an even dozen of Rudys; none of which seemed to be the original. John and Dorian exchanged a worried look, both of them worried that even after all of this they still wouldn't find the 'right Rudy'.

By now, Detective Paul and his search team had joined them. He and the MXs have the spare Rudys rounded up and in a police van, which was still sitting outside because no one knew what to do with them. Since they hadn't obviously been made from actual human tissue, they weren't actually illegal. So, for now, they sat in the van and waited.

John and Dorian, and the rest of the teams, minus Detective Paul, continued searching the building. They came across a lab with several half-finished Rudybots. One room was filled with eyes in all different colors, which was frankly creepy.

And then...

"Come on then. We need to get out of here," a gruff voice was heard around the corner.

Dorian and Kennex realized it was coming closer, so they moved to either side of the doorframe. What came around the corner was surprising, even after all that they had seen that day.

It was a Rudybot—not unexpected—accompanied by a short, stocky, balding man of about 40 years of age. He was leading the android by the hand. What was different was that this android was dressed different from the others that they had found.

“Crickey!” the smaller man yelled when he saw them. He automatically put the bot behind him in a protective stance. “Stay back!” he ordered.

Kennex looked at the man’s nametag. It read ‘P. N. Tell.’

“Relax Mr. Tell. We’re not going to hurt anyone.”

“No, we are looking for our friend, Rudy,” Dorian added, giving the surly man a calming smile.

“Rudy? Don’t know no Rudy,” Tell informed them.

“He was used as the model for your friend there,” John informed him.

“Oh, him. Yeah, he’s down that way.” P. N. Tell pointed to the stairs leading down to the next level.

“Thank you,” Dorian said.

“Right. Come on, Ragetti,” he said, pulling on the taller man, err, bot’s, hand.

“One question, if I may?” the DRN asked.

“Sure.”

“Why does he have an eye patch?”

John turned back; he was interested in that answer himself. As an android he obviously would have perfect eyesight.

“I like it,” Tell told them, rather aggressively. “Show them, Ragetti,” he ordered.

The Rudybot, aka Ragetti, dutifully raised the eye patch to reveal...what appeared to be a wooden eye underneath.

“I...see,” Dorian said, his tone indicating that he didn’t see at all.

“Uh huh. We’re outta here.” With that the two of them hurried down the side hall and around another corner. +

“Okay, that was weird,” Kennex muttered.

“Very.”

They continued on with their quest. Moving as quietly as possible they crept down the stairs, heading towards the basement. Hopes of finding the kidnappers were dwindling in both of their minds. After all, with all of the noise that had been made, the odds on the kidnappers sticking around were slim to none. Nevertheless, they kept up the search, hoping against hope to find the real Rudy.

It was in the fourth room they checked that they hit pay dirt.

Lying on a bed was Rudy, tied hand and foot. His hair was mussed up and his clothes were rumpled. He looked up the second that Kennex opened the door.

"Detective Kennex! Dorian! Thank heavens you are here! Did you know they've made androids based on me! Sexbots, at that! I mean, I understand about imitation being the sincerest form of flattery, but this is ridiculous!" He jerked at the ties holding him down. "Get me the hell out of here! The guy said that someone wanted the real thing!"

He was hyper and panicked and the two men wondered how they had ever mistaken one of the Rudybots for the scientist. John began to untie his feet while Dorian worked on his hands.

"Did they hurt you?" Kennex asked, eyeing the slender man critically. He was worried, considering the amount of time that Rudy had been held hostage. The scientist being tied to a bed didn't bode well for a negative answer, either.

"No, I wasn't hurt, or molested, if that's what you're worried about. They just did body imagery scans and took a few skin and hair samples. 'To get it just right,' they said." He gave a shudder.

As soon as the restraints were off, Rudy jumped off the bed...and immediately started to go down. Dorian caught his arm and sat him back down on the bed.

"Have they drugged you?" he asked, bending down to look the android expert in the eye. He didn't see any sign of drugs. No dilated pupils.

"No, no drugs. But I have been tied up here, off and on, for the whole time I've been missing. They'd let me up to do their tests. Or to eat. Or, you know..." he trailed off, his cheeks turning a soft shade of pink as he blushed. "...to go to the bathroom."

Kennex was bemused that a man his age would blush over going to the bathroom. Discussing it only, mind you, not even using one. It made the detective wonder if Lom ever actually used a public urinal or did he just wait until the bathroom was clear?

Shaking his head over the way his mind had been sidetracked by trivia, Kennex looked around the room Rudy had been held in, hoping to find some clues. He found the scientist's jacket, which he had been wearing when he was kidnapped, but not much else.

"Here are your shoes, Rudy," Dorian said, holding out the pair of running shoes.

"Oh, thank you, Dorian," the android specialist answered, taking the shoes and leaning over to put them on.

"Kennex," a voice spoke in his ear phone.

"Kennex here," he replied.

"This is Davidson. We're on the first level and I've found several technicians who are working on some bots. They don't seem to know anything about Dr. Lom's kidnapping or the creation of the sexbots designed on him."

"All right. We'll be there in a few minutes," the detective replied. He reached up a hand and ended the connection with the other detective.

John turned back in time to see Dorian tying one of Rudy's shoes. The scientist still looked a little unsteady. Presumably that was why the android was putting his shoes on for him.

"Everybody ready? Or do you need a while longer, Rudy?" Kennex asked. He did his best not to show, either in his tone of voice or the look on his face, his impatience.

"Yes, I think so," Lom said. He slowly stood up and except for a slight sway, which Dorian was ready for, Rudy seemed to be fine.

"Good." With that, Kennex led the way out of the room, Dorian and Rudy following him.

It took a little longer to go up the stairs, because Rudy was still a little unsteady on his feet. However, it was less than five minutes from the time Davidson called Kennex and when the trio emerged onto the main floor and into pandemonium.

Somehow, the Rudybots, all twelve of them, were running around, going up to different people and trying to seduce them. In most cases, they were successful, or at least, they would have been if they had access to rooms with beds. The one Rudybot who was dressed like a pirate, the one with the wooden-looking eye, was nowhere to be found. He and his initiator, P. N. Tell, were never seen again.

"Good heavens," Rudy muttered. He was looking at the simulacrum of himself, wide-eyed and more than a little freaked out.

"Jenkins!"

"Yes, sir?" one of the younger detectives asked, running up to stand beside Kennex.

"Would you please take Dr. Lom outside," he directed.

"Certainly. If you would follow me, please," the detective waved a hand towards the exit.

"What?" Rudy asked, giving Jenkins a startled glance.

"Rudy, this detective will escort you outside," Dorian informed his friend, using a calm, and hopefully soothing tone of voice.

"Oh? Oh, right. Sounds good...to me..." he trailed off as his attention was once again captured by the imitation versions of himself.

"Doctor?" the young detective took control of the situation and was able to lead Rudy out to a waiting police car.

"So, why the hell are these bots back inside the warehouse?" Kennex asked the room at large.

"Well," Detective Paul began to answer, but he was interrupted by a tall, thin man wearing a white lab coat.

"I would be the reason, detective." He walked over to John and Dorian, effectively dodging around androids and humans alike.

"And you are?" Kennex asked, giving the man a glare.

"I am Dr. Harold Raven," he informed the detective in a voice that just screamed 'I'm so famous, you should know me'. John raised an eyebrow at the man, indicating that not only did he not know who he was; he really didn't care, either. "I run this facility."

"I see."

"We are doing nothing wrong here. It is not against the law to create androids for the purpose of sexual encounters," Raven stated primly. "Therefore, it is illegal for you to remove property that belongs to the corporation. Namely, the androids these men had sequestered outside."

"Uh huh, and how long do you think those legalities would hold up once it was found out that the mold for your androids was kidnapped?" John asked him sarcastically.

"K-kidnapped? I don't know what you mean." Dr. Raven wasn't nearly so sure of himself now.

"Dr. Rudy Lom, who for your information works for the police, was kidnapped this last Monday morning. It is his likeness that these," Kennex waved a hand at the assembled androids, "beings were copied from."

"Uhm," Raven muttered as he looked furtively at the numerous Rudybots.

"That would be the same Dr. Lom who we just rescued from the basement of this building," Dorian added.

"The basement?" Dr. Raven asked for clarification. When John nodded he looked relieved. "The basement is a completely different company. The corporation I work with only owns this floor. The second and third floors are owned by a computer analysis company called Matrix Matters and the basement is rented out to an individual."

"What's his name?" Kennex asked aggressively.

"What?" the android specialist took a step back from the looming detective. "I'm sorry, I don't know. You will have to contact the owners of the building to find out that information."

"You do have that information, don't you?" Detective Paul asked, also stepping forward.

"I-I..." the doctor stuttered nervously, obviously not used to so much aggression.

The man standing behind Dr. Raven sighed. "I have the contact information, sir. If you would follow me."

"Yes, by all means, follow my assistant," Raven stated, waving the smaller detective after the other man, even though Paul and the assistant were already walking away by the time he spoke.

"Alright, he was being held by somebody else... supposedly," Kennex eyed the doctor up and down, his tone letting on how much he doubted the other man's story.

"Yes!" Dr. Raven stood up straighter at the slur on his honesty. "We are a legitimate group, dedicated to creating more advanced forms of pleasure companions."

"Sexbots," John stated.

Raven blushed a bright red. "Some people call them that, yes. We prefer the term pleasure companions."

"Yeah, whatever. So, where did you get the...the plans for these...companions?" John pointed to the group of Rudybots huddled around in groups.

"We...that is, I don't...I'm not sure," he finally admitted.

"I've got the information," Paul admitted walking up with Raven's assistant.

"Hey, you," John waved a hand at the assistant.

"Benny Edgar," the younger man supplied.

"Edgar. Do you know where the specs came for these androids?"

"Yes, I have that information on our computer."

Kennex sighed and looked at Paul. "Right. I'll get it." Detective Paul and Edgar headed off, yet again, to the office.

John looked over at Dorian who raised his eyebrows. It was going to be a long interrogation.

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One really long interrogation later and they were exactly nowhere.

"Any luck?" Captain Maldonado asked Kennex and Dorian.

"Not so far, captain," John informed her. He ran a hand through his hair in frustration. "Every lead turns into a dead end."

"The basement where Dr. Lom was being held prisoner was rented out to a corporation. It, in turn, was held in trust for a company located in Taiwan, which was owned by a corporation in Beijing, which was owned by a trust in South Africa, which..."

The captain held up a hand, stopping Dorian's dissertation. "I get it. It was all a runaround, leading nowhere, right?"

"Yes, captain," the DRN agreed. "Likewise, the specifications for the Rudy androids looped around the globe and has, as of yet, ended up nowhere." Dorian nodded at the MX, its hands a blur that was typing away at a computer terminal, still following the trail.

"Damn," she stated quietly. "What about identifying the androids that actually kidnapped Dr. Lom?" the captain asked.

"So far, nothing on that front either," Kennex reported with a frown. "Their likenesses don't appear in any android index and the facial identification software hasn't spotted them either."

"It is highly probable that their faces have been altered so as to render them invisible to computer searches," Dorian informed them.

"They can do that?" John asked, a perplexed frown on his handsome face.

"Yes. It wouldn't be easy to change, say my face, because it was permanently attached. However, there are some androids who were specifically designed with semi-attached faces for ease of change if whatever company or person who purchased them desired a different look."

From the looks on Kennex and the captain's faces they hadn't known about that aspect of android anatomy. John looked especially horrified.

"So, the odds are very high that we won't ever know who sent them," she stated for clarification.

"Yes, captain," Dorian said, his blue eyes exuding sympathy.

"What about the Rudy look-alike sexbots?" Kennex asked quietly.

"From what legal has been able to ascertain they were created without the knowledge of Dr. Lom's kidnapping, therefore they are legally the property of Dr. Raven and the company he works for."

"Damn!" John ran a hand through his hair in frustration.

"Yes," the captain agreed. "They and the ones that were already shipped..."

"There were more of them?!" Kennex yelled, causing the rest of the detectives to look up in interest.

Maldonado looked around the room, giving the detectives a pointed look until they went back to their work. "Yes," she said quietly. "There were about two dozen of them that were already shipped to various places around the world. Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do about them or the androids we had in custody."

"Had?" Dorian asked.

"Yes, had. They have been released back to their owners."

"Does Rudy know?" the android asked.

"Yes, I informed him a little while ago." She shrugged. "He took it better than I thought he would have. A lot better than I would," she admitted softly.

Kennex nodded. Dorian just looked at them, knowingly.

The captain tilted her head to one side. She touched her ear phone. "Yes?" Sandra listened for a few seconds. "Who? I see. All right, send her on up." One finger touched the phone, ending the call.

"Captain?" Kennex asked, knowing that she would either tell him what the call was about or not.

"That was the front desk. Apparently, there is a young woman who is demanding to see Rudy Lom. I'm having her sent up here."

"Perhaps she has information about the kidnapping," Dorian suggested.

"Let's hope so," the captain agreed.

"Would you like for me to contact Rudy?" the android asked.

"Yes. She did specifically ask for Dr. Lom, so it is probably better if he's here when she arrives."

Dorian nodded and the sparkles on the side of his face lit up as he contacted Rudy, via computer, and informed him that he had a visitor. The computer expert sounded tired, and would obviously have preferred to go on home, where he had been heading, but he agreed to come up to the bullpen.

About a minute later a younger woman hurried out of the elevator and into the bullpen. She looked around anxiously even as she hurried down the steps to where John, Dorian and the captain were waiting. She wasn't very tall, but slender, with long, dark hair.

"Are you the woman who was looking for Rudy Lom?" Maldonado asked her.

"Yes, I am." The young woman looked the captain in the eye. "Are you Captain Maldonado?"

"Yes, and..."

She turned to Kennex and Dorian. "And you must be Detective Kennex and Dorian."

"Yes, we are," Dorian answered with a smile which was returned.

"Maybe we were wrong about D. M. being a guy," John muttered to his lover.

"Uncle Rudy told me all about you all," she stated, throwing John's theory out the window. "I'm glad to meet you all, finally. I'm..."

"Lucy!" Rudy called as he hurried into the room.

"Uncle Rudy! Oh, thank goodness. I just found out that you had been kidnapped a couple of hours ago. I've been so worried. I'm so sorry that you had to go through all of that and for almost five full days." The two embraced in the middle of the bullpen, much to the amusement of the detectives who were watching. "Are you all right?" she asked, putting him at arm's length and looking the scientist over thoroughly.

"Yes, I'm okay, Lucy," Rudy reassured her. Except for looking a little tired, the android expert did seem to be unharmed.

"Oh, good!" She hugged him again.

"Come on. Come back to my office," Rudy suggested, leading the younger woman away.

"Yes, I would like to see where you work. By the way, I got hold of..." her voice trailed off as the two disappeared behind the closed elevator doors.

Captain Maldonado looked bemused. "She is certainly a whirlwind. Well, I'll leave you two to finish up your paperwork. Then you can head home. We've all had a hard week and deserve a long weekend."

With that the captain headed back into her office. Kennex and Dorian sat back down at the detective's desk.

"John?"

"Yeah?" Kennex asked distractedly.

"Rudy is on file as being an only child," Dorian stated.

"Okay?" The detective gave his partner a puzzled look.

"Then how can he be that young woman's 'uncle'?" the android asked, a frown on his face.

"Sometimes when you are a friend of the family or are dating someone with younger children you become an 'aunt' or an 'uncle'. It doesn't necessarily mean that you are literally related by blood."

"I see. Thank you for explaining it to me."

"No problem. Now, help me with this paperwork, so we can get home. There is a couch with our name on it."

Dorian raised an eyebrow at that, but decided not to comment on the silliness of a sitting area with their names inscribed on it. He knew it was just a saying, but sometimes liked to pull John's chain.

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'She's just like her mother, Lindsay,' Rudy thought with a smile.

He waved as Lucy got into her car and drove out of the parking lot. The scientist wasn't alone, thank goodness. He had a police escort, one that was going to drive him home.

Lucy's late mother, Lindsay, and her father, Danny, had been good friends of Rudy's since he was a teenager. The scientist's parents had been best friends with Danny and Lindsay. It had been a devastating blow to them all when Lindsay had died in a plane crash 10 years earlier.

Rudy had done his best to be there for Danny and Lucy. He and the young woman had become even closer friends and Rudy and Danny had become much closer, in a more romantic way. It

didn't matter that Danny was almost 25 years Rudy's senior, their feelings had blossomed anyway.

'Not that age matters,' Rudy thought to himself.

In a day and time when medical advancements pushed back the aging process by decades, what was a few years difference? It certainly didn't bother Rudy and, after a little persuasion, it stopped bothering Danny as well.

The scientist slumped into Detective Paul's front seat and waited for the smaller man to dismiss the other detectives and get in to drive him home. Richard's MX was sitting in the back seat and was being blessedly quiet. After the upheaval of the past week, all Rudy wanted was some peace and more importantly, quiet.

"You ready to go home, Dr. Lom?" Paul asked, getting into his car and starting the engine.

"Yes, I definitely am," Rudy agreed, his eyes closed.

"Yes, sir. Off we go." After a few minutes of driving where the only sound was the quiet purring of the well-tuned engine, the scientist was startled when the detective spoke again. "I'm glad you are all right," he stated.

Rudy opened his eyes and turned to look at the detective in surprise. As far as he knew, no one really liked him all that well. Dorian hopefully. Kennex possibly. But not any of the others.

"Thank you," he said sincerely, touched by the sentiment.

Paul nodded, still watching the road. "We were all really worried about you, Dr. Lom."

"Please call me Rudy," the android expert suggested.

"Okay. Please call me Richard."

"All right, Richard."

"I am MX 431," a voice piped up from the back seat, startling both men.

Rudy turned to face the android. "It is very nice to meet you MX 431," he formally introduced himself. He wondered to himself if the MXs were as generically unfeeling as they appeared to be. It would garner some looking into.

"It is nice to meet you, Dr. Lom," the android intoned.

"Uhm, yes," Paul added, nonplused by the MXs intrusion into the conversation; it certainly wasn't like the bot to do that.

The conversation petered out after that. The noise of the engine and the slight motion of the car rocked the drained man to sleep. It was quiet until the detective pulled into the parking garage of Rudy's condo. Paul tapped Rudy on the shoulder to awaken him. The scientist waved goodbye to Detective Paul and MX 431 after he got out of the vehicle and was walking away.

“Good to see you back, Dr. Lom,” the security guard greeted him.

“Thank you, Eddie.”

Paul and his MX, who had moved to the front seat, waited until they saw the scientist get onto the secured elevator before they drove off, their duty done. The scientist was back home, safe and sound.

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Rudy walked into his condo. He was a bit surprised how normal it looked; after the better part of a week being held captive he felt that there ought to be some sign of it. The scientist was also amazed, and gratified, at how clean, at least the main room, looked; he'd have to wait to see the rest of the condo. Rudy had seen the aftermath of a police search before and it generally ended up with the place left in a mess.

“Maybe it's because I was the victim,” Rudy thought as he shut the door behind himself, making sure all of the locks were set.

He sniffed the air and gave a tired smile. “Good, no rotting garbage smell.” Rudy generally took the trash out every morning, but had been known to forget on occasion. He was glad not to have to deal with a stench.

The android expert didn't need to check the refrigerator, because it was a very expensive model, one that kept the food in stasis while the door was closed. That meant he still had the strawberry cheesecake he bought the night before he was kidnapped to look forward to. Rudy had been imagining eating a big piece of that the whole time he was in captivity.

Rudy went into his bedroom to get a change of clothes. Happily, it was as neat as when he left it, as well. He stripped off by his bed, dropping the several days' worn clothes onto the floor. Lom gathered them up and placed them in the laundry container. Once full, or when he pushed the appropriate button, the laundry would be whooshed down into the basement where the clothing would be washed, dried, iron where needed, folded and brought back up by one of the attendants. Just one of the many perks that came from living in a high-end condo.

Rudy stood under the shower for almost 30 minutes; until the bathroom was steamy. Standing under the running water made him feel marginally cleaner, but it was a start.

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Less than an hour later, Rudy was sitting in front of his television, an outrageously large piece of strawberry-topped cheesecake in his lap, letting the noise of the program further soothe his nerves, when he was interrupted.

Bing. Bing.

The soft chimes were his doorbell. Rudy set the desert down on the coffee table and got up. He wasn't unduly worried about answering the door, because only people who lived in the building,

or were on a specified visitor's list were allowed entrance to the parking area. Let alone the key card pass that was needed to get onto the elevators.

'It's too bad the security at the police station isn't as secure,' he thought wryly. He opened the door.

"Danny!"

"Rudy! Oh, thank heavens," the blond-haired man gave the scientist an enthusiastic hug. "I just got Lucy's message an hour ago."

The scientist clung to his lover, hugging him for all he was worth. Rudy allowed all of the fear and anxiety he'd been feeling since those androids had kidnapped him in the police parking garage to tumble out. He stood in his lover's arms and let the older man's embrace comfort him.

The two men stood in the open doorway for several moments. They seemed to come to their senses at almost the exact same time and pulled away long enough for Danny to close and lock the door behind him.

"Come on, babe, let's sit down." The two men sat down on the sofa facing one another. "Now, tell me what happened," he asked.

Rudy proceeded to give Danny a detailed account of what went on, from his kidnapping to his rescue at the warehouse by Kennex and Dorian. By the time he was finished, Lom's hands were shaking and he was obviously upset.

"So, they didn't catch whoever set this all up?" the blond man asked.

"No, and the description I gave of the scientists and the one man I did see probably weren't very accurate," Rudy admitted.

"Why not?" Danny asked, his eyebrows shooting up. "You are very observant and I've seen you give a suspect's description before."

In fact, that was how the two men had met. Danny was the captain at one of New York City's police departments and Rudy had been a witness to a hit-and-run. Based on the composite drawing from the scientist's recollection they had caught the driver. Because Dr. Lom was such a prestigious man, Danny had worked with him personally. After the criminal was caught, he'd called Rudy up and asked him out for some coffee. That was three years ago.

"They put Invisi-vision goggles on me," Rudy explained.

Invisi-vision goggles were a product that had been introduced to the gaming community about five years previously. They were intended to make games more realistic, offering the features of either blurring the wearer's sight or blocking it altogether. In reality, it was more of a boon to criminals, making it almost impossible for victims of kidnappings, etc. able to give decent descriptions of their captors.

"Damn, I'm sorry, babe. I know how much you hate not bein' able to see," Danny's Queens accent tended to bleed through when he was upset.

"Yeah," the scientist admitted. "Plus, they did blood work on me and it turns out I was given sedatives while I was being held." That had upset Rudy almost as much as the goggles had. Being helpless and not even knowing it was a frightening prospect.

"Did they..."

"No, all the other tests indicate that nothing else was done to me," Rudy murmured into Danny's shoulder.

"Thank heavens," the captain said fervently.

The two men sat like that, cuddling and comforting one another, on the couch for some time. Finally, they seemed to come to a mutual, unspoken agreement that they'd done enough; both men drew back from one another and leaned back.

"Soooo, cheesecake, huh?" Danny drawled out.

Rudy grinned. "Yes, and yes, there is more in the fridge if you want some."

"Hmmm, maybe later. Let's just stay like this for a while," the older man suggested.

"I like that idea," Rudy admitted, snuggling closer to his lover. He closed his eyes and let himself relax, knowing he was safe and loved.

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John and Dorian were sitting in their living room, John on the couch and Dorian on a chair right beside him. They had exhausted all conversation—would they ever catch Rudy's kidnapper? - probably not—were physically exhausted—John, anyway—and taking a few precious moments to relax.

"So, who do you think D. M. is?" Kennex asked when the program went to commercial.

"I am not certain," Dorian admitted, turning to face John. "There is a high probability that the Lucy who visited Rudy at the station is related to D. M. somehow, but as I do not know her last name it is extremely unlikely that I can track him down."

"Yeah, I guess that will have to remain a mystery." He gave the cushion beside him a pat. "Why don't you come on over here," the detective suggested, a leer on his tired face.

Dorian smiled at his lover and moved over to sit beside him on the couch. He put a hand on John's thigh while the human began to nuzzle the side of his neck.

"We can let Rudy keep his secret. After all, we have our own little secret," the cop murmured into Dorian's skin.

The DRN smiled but didn't answer. He had his own suspicions that their 'secret' wasn't so secret after all. Dorian was fairly certain that at least Captain Maldonado knew and Detective Stahl was suspicious. He didn't say anything though, allowing his lover to keep his illusions of secrecy for a while longer.

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Alan Michelson sat in his bedroom, on his bed, in a t-shirt and boxer shorts. The detective kept glancing around furtively, as if he expected someone to pop out of the closet at any time. Or as if he thought there might be someone watching him.

After several times of looking around, Alan finally gathered up his courage and picked up the Padd sitting on his bedside table. He fumbled nervously for a few moments before he finally got it turned on, his hands slick with anticipation, and it took him three tries to successfully enter the password.

With one last look around, Detective Michelson opened the file. There was a picture of Rudy Lom, one of the ones from the scientist's own personal Padd that the police officer had copied when no one was looking. It was a fairly modest photograph where Rudy was sitting on a swing, his bare feet aimed towards the camera as he swung upwards.

It was the bare feet that did it for Alan. He wasn't sure why, but Rudy's toes innocently pointed towards the camera were very enticing for the detective. He had many other pictures on the Padd, ones where the scientist had less on or more form-fitting clothes, but this was the one he kept looking at...for a very long time to come.

The End

*According to a Google search, this is how many people live in New York City right now. Thanks to Caitlin for looking it up.

+These are characters from the Pirates of the Caribbean; Pintell and Ragetti. Ragetti was played by Mackenzie Crook, the actor who played Rudy.

A/N: Surprise pairing: Rudy/Danny Messer (CSI: New York)

"Mirrors"

Shut up
(Konvict)

Shut your mouth and close the door
I wanna watch you while you take it off
I'm gonna take a blindfold put it on
And then I drop the leather to the floor
I said shut up

Turning the lights out
Burning the candles
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight
Turning the lights out
Tighten the handcuffs
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight

My stiletto on your neck
Until I tie your hands above the bed
You've 'bout to
But boy, don't pull the trigger yet
Na na na
I haven't reloaded the clip
Na na na

Squeeze hard, hold that pose
You know I like it, do it
Sweetheart, I'm the boss
And when you get close to it
I'm gonna make tonight a show (oh, oh, oh)
I'll make your love grenade explode (na, na, na)

Turning the lights out
Burning the candles
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight
Turning the lights out
Tighten the handcuffs
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight

Turning the lights out
Burning the candles
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight
Turning the lights out
Tighten the handcuffs
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight

Sex, love, control, vanity
Sex, love, control, vanity
Sex, love, control, vanity (and the mirrors gonna fog tonight)
Sex, love, control, vanity (and the mirrors gonna fog tonight)
Sex, love, control, vanity (and the mirrors gonna fog tonight)
Sex, love, control, vanity (and the mirrors gonna fog tonight)
Vanity, vanity

Squeeze hard, hold that pose

You know I like it, do it
Sweetheart, I'm the boss
And when you get close to it
I'm gonna make tonight a show (oh, oh, oh)
I'll make your love grenade explode (na, na, na)

Turning the lights out
Burning the candles
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight
Turning the lights out
Tighten the handcuffs
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight

Turning the lights out
Burning the candles
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight
Turning the lights out
Tighten the handcuffs
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight

And the mirror's gonna fog tonight
And the mirror's gonna fog tonight

Natalia Kills