

Wires and Wants

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Draft 4

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INT. APT LIVING ROOM- DAY

Bare feet with unpainted toenails move awkwardly to a spoken salsa count. This is BEV, an average nearing-thirty career woman. She's in her living room in plain yoga pants and a practical bra with a towel on her head.

The rug is rolled back to give her a wood dance floor. She is awkwardly mimicking a salsa instruction video on her computer. Her phone RINGS. Bev pauses the salsa lesson.

BEV

Hi mom, can I call you ba- I know I didn't call you last night but I didn't get out of the office til 10- Yes, I'm learning salsa. No, for the last time I will not go to lunch with Raul, when will you stop trying to set me up? No It's not that time of the month, I'll call you back.

She unpauses the salsa lesson. The doorbell RINGS. Bev grabs a shirt off the radiator and yells:

BEV (cont'd)

Just a second!

INT. APT HALLWAY TO DOOR

Bev, awkward, pulls her shirt over her head as she approaches the front door. She opens it but no one is there. A box looms over her, filling the doorway.

BEV

Wait, this is a mistake, I haven't ordered anything!

A TRUCK ENGINE is heard driving off. The label clearly reads "Beverly Marshall".

BEV (cont'd)

What the heck?

INT. LIVING ROOM

BEV struggles to drag the box inside. Bev drags the box into the living room but tugs too hard and it falls over.

She YELPS and scrambles out from underneath just in time. The box is now lying flat on the floor. Bev grabs scissors.

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CONTINUED:

BEV
You better be worth it.

Bev carefully slits the box and opens the flaps. She GASPS and closes the flaps again.

CHAD
(Voice from box)
Are you Beverly Marshall?

Chad emerges from the box, stark naked, looking like a Greek god. He is very human except for a tendency to stand still when talking. He speaks in a slightly robotic manner, using correct English instead of slang.

CHAD (cont'd)
I am Chad. Are you Beverly Marshall?

BEV
(Dumbstruck, staring)
Just Bev.

CHAD
I am here to please you.

BEV takes a deep breath and jerks her gaze to one side.

BEV
What?

Chad grins and steps forward.

CHAD
I am Chad. I am here to please you.

Bev backs up a step.

BEV
You can please me by getting back in the box!

CHAD
Do not be afraid. I am a promotion. I seek only to give you pleasure.

Chad reaches into the box and hands her an instruction manual for the Pleasuremate 2000, Chad. The cover reads: Dear Beverly, thank you for creating a profile on LonelyHearts.com You are our 1000th customer and have been chosen to receive this promotional Pleasuremate, version 6, more realistic than ever!

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CONTINUED:

BEV

You're a- but I didn't- Oh my god!

CHAD

Why are you upset?

BEV

Upset? There's a naked robot in my living room!

CHAD

Do my looks displease you?

BEV

That's not the point.

CHAD

Let me bring out my equipment,

BEV

No, no, no.

Bev covers her face.

BEV (cont'd)

Can't you cover yourself?

Chad bends into box and rustles, putting on boxers and pulling out a candle.

CHAD

(advancing slowly,
softly)

You doth teach the torches to burn bright. You hang upon the cheek of night like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear.

He takes her hand, turns it, and presses his lips to the inside of her wrist. She jerks away.

BEV

Don't quote at me, robot.

CHAD

(Hurt)

My name is Chad.

Bev crosses her arms. Chad SIGHS and goes back to the box, pulling out another candle and moving her cereal bowl.

BEV

Fine, Chad, what are you doing now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chad continues bringing things out of the box: massage lotion, whipped cream, grapes...

BEV (cont'd)
Moving in? This is ridiculous! Turn off.

Chad ignores her.

BEV (cont'd)
Switch off. Reboot. Fine. You are a product. You must be returnable.

Bev turns to get the return number from the instructions. Chad arranges flowers.

Bev flips to table of contents, sees "Learn to Ballroom Dance."

BEV (cont'd)
Damn those programmers to hell. You salsa too?

CHAD
(Comes over)
Yes, I ship with knowledge of all the current dances. You like the salsa?

BEV
No.
(beat)
Must you stand so close?

Chad reaches over and pulls a romance novel from the bookshelf by Bev's head.

CHAD
Why read these when I am the real thing?

Bev lunges for it.

BEV
Give that back!

CHAD
(reads aloud)
"Elle threw her water in his face. Silence fell. "You arrogant little prick!" Her voice quivered with fury." I thought this was a romance novel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEV

Yes, romance, as in emotions, a plot.
It's not porn.

Chad holds the book just out of reach, teasing her. She chases after him but remains wary of getting too close.

CHAD

(flips to another page)
A bolt of desire shot through her.
She struggled to pull back but he
kissed her harder. She moaned softly
and melted against his lean torso,
tongue tangling with his.

The DOORBELL rings.

BEV

Crap!
(to Chad)
Not a word from you.

INT. APT HALLWAY TO DOOR

BEV goes to the door and peeks out. ALEX, a well-dressed handsome young man stands there with a black bag. Her brother. Bev sighs and opens the door a crack.

BEV

Alex. What are you doing here?

ALEX

Is that any way to speak to your
brother?

Bev realizes she's a little unkempt.

BEV

I'm not feeling well.

ALEX

Boring Bev not feeling well? You're
like the Energizer Bunny. Come on
then, let me in, I have to see this.

BEV

Seriously Alex, I don't want you to
catch it.

She spots the black bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEV (cont'd)
Aha. So much for sibling bonding.
Ironing or laundry?

ALEX
(sheepish)
Ironing. I have a dinner tonight and
that new girl is working at Wong's
and she leaves creases all over!

Bev motions Chad to shoo, opens the door and grabs the bag
one-handed, but strains at the weight.

ALEX (cont'd)
Let me at least bring it in.

BEV
Alex, no, really,

ALEX
You know me, I never get sick.

Alex enters the flat with the black bag. Bev checks to make
sure Chad is out of sight and blocks the doorway. Alex drops
the bag inside and pauses, looking at her.

BEV
Alex, did you sign me up for lonely
hearts dot com?

ALEX
Wow, receiving interest already?

BEV
Alex, I can't believe you did that!

ALEX
Look sis, it's been three years.

BEV
I like not having attachments!

Bev crosses her arms.

ALEX
Ok, ok I'll get out of your hair.
Wouldn't want to intrude on your
romance novel marathon.

CHAD slowly puts Bev's finger in his mouth. She freezes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX (cont'd)
You do look a bit flushed. Take care
of yourself ok? And try to get into
trouble. Love you.

BEV
(strained)
Love you too, bye!

Bev steps into the livingroom to find it transformed. She
rounds on Chad.

BEV (cont'd)
Stop it! I don't want you! I refuse
to fall for a naked man-bot that was
delivered on my doorstep!

INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

CHAD
I am a who, not a that.

BEV
Sorry?

CHAD
I am a who.

Chad glances around the room.

CHAD (cont'd)
You call this "real"?

He grabs her hand and puts it on his chest.

CHAD (cont'd)
And I am not?

Bev jerks away and goes for instructions but he grabs them
first.

CHAD (cont'd)
Why did he call you Boring Bev?

BEV
(Beat)
It's none of your business.

He stares at her, refusing to budge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEV (cont'd)
Fine! I don't lead the most
adventurous life, ok?

CHAD
Why do you not change it?

BEV
I'm being judged by a robot.

CHAD
No, Bev. I merely wonder if you are
happy.

Chad takes her hands and sings softly.

CHAD (cont'd)
Beautiful Bev, with eyes of green
fire, hair of spun gold, it's you I
desire. Beauty of mine, don't hide
from the world, give me a sign, will
you be my girl?

Bev laughs, enchanted.

CHAD (cont'd)
Ahhh, the laugh. Even lovelier than I
imagined. And eyes... Eyes to drown
in.

BEV
(Hesitant)
You're programmed to say that.

Bev moves in for an awkward kiss and her forehead hits his
nose. Chad is amused. Bev is devastated. She pulls away.

BEV (cont'd)
Leave me alone. Please, I want to be
alone.

CHAD
Bev. No one wants to be alone. Let me
help you. I want you to be happy.

BEV
You are wires! You don't have wants!

CHAD
Stop hiding behind that excuse! You
hide here because you are afraid of
being unwanted.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD (cont'd)
Who left you? Your father? Your
lover? Who cocooned you in this
loneliness?

BEV
Enough.

Chad looks at her. She gets out her phone with shaking
fingers. He SIGHS and starts packing his things.

CHAD
(softly, to himself)
My poor, wounded butterfly.

He changes into a tshirt and jeans while Bev dials. She
talks to an automated response.

BEV
One. Return. 0 7 1 5.

Her tone changes as a human answers the other end. She
watches Chad putting everything away. Only the candles are
left.

BEV (cont'd)
Yes hi this is Beverly Marshall, I'd
like to... I'd -

She hangs up, tosses phone on couch and darts forward to
grab Chad's wrist before he can take away the final candle.

BEV (cont'd)
Chad, for God's sake stop!

Chad stops and looks at her, confused.

CHAD
I am afraid I must be returned with
all of my original merchandise.

BEV
I'm asking you to stay.
(Beat)
Will you?

CHAD
I would like that very much.

Bev moves in to close salsa embrace. Chad moves her hips in
time with his, not awkward this time. Close on her smiling,
her arm around his neck.