Part 3: Connections

"Roxy!" Roxy awoke sharply, someone shaking her shoulder. She snapped around, seeing Finn, still shaking her awake.

"M-Mnnn… What… What do you want…" She turned back around towards the desk, rubbing her eyes. Finn slammed a hand down on the desk, leaving something there. Roxy honestly couldn't tell what it was at first. Loose… coins? No, they were… some kind of metal scraps…

But then she saw the black screen, flickering purple, one ear still attached to the dying display.

"What the hell is this, Rox?" He pointed to Eve, now reduced to a tiny little scrap heap.

"O-Oh no. Oh god. Eve! Eve!" Roxy hunched over the pile, poking and prodding it trying to make sense of what was what. "Eve! C-C'mon you're okay!" Roxy started to get misty eyed, biting down on her lower lip as she rotated Eve's display to face her.

"Roxy, are you seriously buying some freaky sexbots?" Finn poked her on the shoulder, hard. "Geez… You're… Rox are you crying?" Roxy turned around to face him, tears welling up in her eyes.

"Sh-She wasn't a *sexbot*! Sh-She… Sh-She was independent! And f-free thinking and…" Roxy stood up, getting close to Finn. Roxy wasn't big enough to be intimidating, not in the slightest, but it was clear that she was pissed. "What d-did you do! What did you do to her!"

"Hey, hey! I didn't *do* anything!" He backed off, holding up his hands. "All I did was walk in! She was just… running around on the floor! But… Wait, what the hell do you *mean* she's free thinking?"

"Sh-She… She wasn't just a robot! She c-could think and stuff! She had feelings!" She was furious, getting closer to Finn, trying to push him away.

"What like… It broke out of programming or whatever?" He didn't really budge. Roxy trying to push him was pretty laughable. He had been pretty athletic for his whole life, and she really hadn't.

"Yes! Yes she broke o-out of programming and you *killed* her!" Roxy sobbed, pounding against Finn's chest.

"H-Hey! It was an *accident*!" Finn gently, pushed her back, holding her a good foot or so back… He looked back at the desk, and saw something move. "... Rox?"

"Y-You still did it! You… You never knock! A-And…" She was breaking down, whole body trembling with such anger and overwhelming sadness, tears streaming down her cheeks, all the while Finn watched something happen on the desk.

"Rox. *Turn around*." Finn wasn't a forceful person, but there was something Roxy needed to see. He grabbed her by the shoulders, and actively forced her to turn around. Roxy saw it, Eve partially reassembled. She was just still a chest and a torso, reassembled arm crawling towards her.

"E-Eve! Eve you're okay!" Roxy rushed over and scooped her up, holding her up to her eyes just to get a better look.

"Yes, I am fine!" Eve gave a comforting smile, still only a head and a torso. "Micro-bots are built to be durable, but in the case of breaks, we are able to self reassemble… Remember? When I took my head off?" Oh, right. She had placed her head right back on her shoulders and she was fine. "... Are you alright, Roxy?"

"O-Oh god, me? Y-Yeah I'm fine! I…" She rubbed her eyes and sat down at her chair, wiping away the tears. "... I-I just thought… I forgot you could b-build yourself back, I… I thought you w-were dead…" She sniffled, holding Eve against her cheek. Something about this… It made Eve feel the same feeling that she had experienced minutes ago. Roxy's care and tenderness made her feel that… love.

"Rox. I'm glad your… *friend* is okay and everything, but you're telling me this thing is sentient?" Finn said, placing a hand on Roxy's shoulder. Right. He was still here. "This little thing is actually like, thinking right now?"

"O-Oh, yeah, um…" Roxy placed Eve down by her other parts, allowing her to slowly reassemble. "Well… She kinda… I-I don't know, just started thinking?" Roxy watched Eve assemble, legs connecting to their sockets, arms reconnecting…

"... So how did you even get it?" Finn leaned in closer, watching Eve assemble.

"O-Oh, um… Uh. I-I… Well…" Roxy stumbled over her words. He wasn't supposed to ask that! He was never supposed to find *out*! She stumbled over her words, the heat of shame steadily rising to her cheeks.

"Oh! Roxy purchased me at a store yesterday!" Eve spoke like it was no issue, sitting up and attaching her missing ear back to her head. "It is very nice to meet you, Finn!" She smiled up at him, which warranted a chuckle from the jackal.

"Oh, did she…?" Finn looked at Roxy, staring her down. He was practically burning a hole straight through her with a gaze so intense. Roxy started blushing, trying to hide herself from his sight. "Well… *Eve*, it's nice to meet you too." Eve nodded up at him, before reattaching some parts of herself. "So, Rox. I'm gonna ask again. If it wasn't a… sex thing, what made you go out and buy her?"

"She um… W-Well…" Initially it was definitely sort of a sex thing. It was a thing she bought to be private! Nobody was ever supposed to know about it!

"Oh! She bought me so she could feel big! She likes feeling big!" Eve chimed in with such a chipper demeanor. The little robot had no filter, and no understanding of what she should be keeping quiet about.

"E-Eve!" Roxy looked down sharply at Eve, not angry, just… Surprised. This was all supposed to be secret, and now it was all being poured out to her best friend.

"Woah, heh, really?" Finn really couldn't contain his laughter. It wasn't like he was shaming Roxy or anything, but it was a little funny to hear. "Shortie likes feeling big?" Finn pushed her shoulder, Roxy tomato red in the face.

"Sh-Shut up! Shut up!" Roxy covered up her face, hiding her shame from behind her hands. This confused Eve. It was true, so why was Roxy behaving in this way?

"Aw come on! It's a little funny!" Finn teased, shaking Roxy's shoulder.

"P-Please don't tell anyone." Roxy whimpered, peeking between her fingers. This was so embarrassing! Her best friend, someone who loved to tease her relentlessly now knew exactly what she was into.

"Oh, I'm not gonna tell *anyone*, but *we're* gonna show Marc and Casey." Whoever those people were, Roxy did *not* seem excited to hear it.

"N-NO! No way! F-Finn! I don't… They can't know!" Roxy stood up, practically pleading with Finn.

"Who is Marc? Who is Casey?" Eve chimed in, a purple question mark popping up on her display.

"Oh, they're just our roommates. People we live with. They're *cool*, and Roxy is freaking out over nothing. We'll just… Say we found Eve together. If it's both of us, they'll believe it, no problem." Finn shrugged, not seeing the issue. "Marc will totally nerd out over her! You know he likes… robot stuff."

"B-But… This is a bad idea! I-I don't know, I…" Roxy didn't seem all too comfortable with the idea, it seemed.

"But I would love to meet them!" Eve piped up, once again inserting herself into the conversation.

"See! She wants to meet them!" Finn gestured to the fearless little robot, a grin on his face. "She's awesome, they'll love her. Anyways, we're going out for pizza, and you're *coming*. So, bring Eve." Finn exited the room, a pep in his step. Eve's introduction seemed to be the most exciting part of his day.

"..." Roxy slumped in her chair, looking over at Eve. "Um… E-Eve… You sure?"

"Of course! I would love to meet more people!" Eve, of course, was as chipper as always. She had fully reassembled herself now, smiling up at Roxy.

"... A-Alright." She sighed, getting to her feet, and offering a hand for Eve to step up. "And… You're okay, right? No missing parts?"

"Oh, no! I am all here!" Micro-bots didn't have too many small parts, and most were contained, so if there was ever a crush, she could quickly reassemble. Eve hopped up onto Roxy's hand, but noted Roxy's rather upset demeanor. Why was she sad? Eve was alright, there was nothing to be sad about.

"G-Good. Um… I'm just gonna…" Roxy lifted Eve to her stomach, and deposited Eve in her sweatshirt pocket like she had done earlier in the day.

Oh god this was terrible. Roxy covered her face and groaned. Now everyone would know. Finn would definitely tell everyone, and it would be terrible. She'd never live it down. Roxy slipped on her shoes, and stepped outside of her room.

"Ready to go?" Finn asked, standing ready by the door.

"... Where're the other two…?" Roxy asked, not seeing her other two roommates anywhere.

"Oh they got a head start. Told them I was grabbing you, and they knew that would take awhile, so they're waiting." Roxy was… notoriously late to everything. She had gained a little bit of a reputation with her friends for it, it seemed.

"... Y-Yeah. Ok. L-Lets just go. Please." Roxy mumbled, pushing past Finn and heading outside.

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"All I'm gonna say is that we found Eve when we went to class yesterday, that's it." Finn rested a hand on Roxy's shoulder, shaking it gently as they stepped up to the pizza place.

"M-Mhm." Roxy opened the door, letting herself in and not exactly holding it for Finn.

"I promise." Finn chuckled, noting her clear annoyance, stepping in behind her.

Across the restaurant sat two familiar faces. A skinny looking parrot, and a punk looking dragon. Marc was a peculiar parrot, an engineering major who loved anything electrical. Any time Roxy broke something- or anyone for that matter, they came to Marc and had him fix it. He was good at what he did. Casey was a bit different than that, of course. Roxy really didn't know her all that well, somebody Finn met when they were freshmen, but Casey had always been a little bit older than the rest of them by a year or so. It was honestly a wonder that any of them had met each other given just how different they were from one another.

"Hey, sorry we took so long." Finn was the first to sit down, smiling to his other two roommates as Roxy sat down in silence beside him.

"Oh, it's no big deal. We figured it'd be awhile, so we just ordered ahead of time so it'd be ready when you two got here." Marc was quick to add, looking up from whatever his phone had been preoccupying him with.

"So… What took you so long anyways?" Casey asked, asking Finn specifically. She knew she wouldn't get a clear answer out of Roxy, considering the Lynx tended to lie as not to make others think worse of her.

"*Actually*, we were talking about something." He nudged Roxy's shoulder. "Show 'em, Rox."

"..." Roxy greatly hesitated, looking like she had just seen a ghost, steadily reaching into her pocket. Once she had felt Eve step on to her hand, she slowly started to pull her hand out, displaying Eve to her other two roommates, but keeping Eve awfully close to herself.

"Hello! My name is Eve!" Eve stepped forwards, smiling and giving a wave to the two new faces.

"... What the hell is that?" Casey leaned forwards just to get a better look, which she needed considering Roxy was holding Eve so close to herself. Someone really didn't want to share.

"Woah! That's a Micro-Bot, right?" Marc, of course, knew his shit. He'd read about these things online for awhile. They were a big thing for awhile, and Marc never thought to actually go out and buy one.

"Sure is." Finn reached over and snatched up Eve faster than Roxy could react. He placed her front and center on the table, allowing Eve to actually be observed by the other two.

"... Yeah. I've heard of these things. Had a friend tell me about them once. Told me all the things he'd 'use' them for." Casey said, before giving a suspicious stare at Roxy.

"I-It's not like that! It's… U-Um-" Roxy stumbled over her words, rising shame filling her chest, burning up to her face.

"It's *not* like that. We actually found this one just… *wandering* around on our way to class yesterday." Finn was cool. He didn't even flinch at the prospect of being accused for having some bizarre kink toy.

"Wandering? Well, that's not really right. Aren't they supposed to stay pretty close to their owner or whatever?" Marc *really* knew his shit.

"See, that's where this gets interesting," Finn leaned forwards, taking on a hushed tone. "She's… independent. Like totally free thinking. Like some robot independence you'd see in a movie."

"... That sounds pretty dangerous." Marc raised his concern. Everyone who had seen *any* sci-fi movie knew that unshackled ai could get out of hand fast.

"Marc, she's two inches tall." Casey pointed to the idle robot, still smiling brightly. "Afraid of a papercut?"

"Oh, I would not cut anyone! I may be free of my programming, but I do not wish to hurt anybody!" Her speaking drew the attention of Marc and Casey, their intimidating gazes not bothering Eve in the slightest.

"So… Why wait this long to tell us?" If there was something that Casey was good at doing, it was knowing when someone was lying. She would keep asking questions until she was satisfied.

"Well, see, Roxy actually didn't want to tell *anyone* about it." That definitely wasn't a lie. Roxy snapped her gaze to Finn, anger slowly mixing into her boiling shame.

"Oh, of course not." Casey's snarky comments were never really appreciated. Roxy went slack in her chair, slumping down. Real smooth, Finn.

"Excuse me, everybody!" Eve called out, smile still written on her face. "I am in need of charging soon. It is not urgent, but I only have an hour of battery life or so." Self reassembly had a bit of an extreme power draw, and took a lot of energy to perform.

"O-Oh! Well, I guess I better take you home!" Roxy pushed herself up, getting ready to stand, but she was quickly stopped.

"Oh, that's not a problem, I mean, I've got my portable charger!" Marc fished around in his pocket for a few seconds before pulling out some device that was shaped like whatever his current obsession was. This time it was some kind of robot-looking character, more cartoony than Eve, of course. "And if what I read is right, you should take the same kind of charge!" He took the cable, and roughly lifted Eve. Roxy flinched, but knew that Eve was more than fine with being picked up in whatever way. It still bothered her Marc wasn't being as careful as she would be though. He depressed the panel on Eve's back, popping it open and plugging her in.

"Wow Roxy, you really wanted to keep this all to yourself?" Casey pried more, making Roxy slump further down in her seat. "I mean, *why* would you want to keep this a secret?" Oh, Casey knew. She was as smart as a whip, and knew people through and through.

"... I... I-I mean…" Roxy couldn't find any words, flipping back and forth between looking at Casey and watching Marc as he examined Eve up and down.

"Huh." Marc interrupted the tense silence. "Eve… You look damaged. Like… Serious fan damage back here."

"Oh yes! I suffered some fan damage. It is ok, I am still in full operation!" Eve was still entirely functional, but that still didn't stop Marc from getting a closer look.

"... How did this even *happen*? It looks like this thing *exploded*." He was staring real close. Were those scraps of… fiber? Some kind of string-like material looks like it jammed the fan and overloaded it…

"Oh! You see, Roxy-" Eve didn't even have a chance to finish that thought before Marc interrupted.

"Yup. Roxy. Sounds about right." Marc was quick to jump to conclusions. "She's… Kinda clumsy." He spoke as if she wasn't sitting right across the table. It almost seemed like nobody really… *liked* Roxy here.

"..." Roxy slammed her hands down on the table, getting the attention of just about everyone. "I-I'm going home." Roxy didn't sound… all too great. She honestly sounded like she was about to cry.

"C'mon Rox, we're all just… excited to meet Eve." Finn tried to comfort her, but Roxy was already standing up to walk home. It was now that Eve could see just how short Roxy was compared to the rest sitting around the table. The 'shortie' comment from early really made sense.

"Oh sit down, we haven't even gotten our food yet!" Marc offered no apology it seemed. Of course he wouldn't. He was far too full of himself.

"E-Eve, c'mon, let's… Let's go." Roxy tried to get Eve to come with her. Eve couldn't exactly walk over, still held between Marc's fingers.

"Actually, I think she's staying." Casey looked at Roxy, stare unwavering. Little Eve was caught in the middle, watching a scene so intense that she was terrified to speak up and speak her mind. "I think *you* should go, and cool off."

Roxy's lip quivered like she wanted to say something, but nothing came out besides a pathetic little whimper. She looked at Eve, fists balling up, before storming out the door of the restaurant, leaving Eve alone with her 'friends.' Finn's sigh broke the silence.

"... You get used to it. She overreacts to just about everything." Finn shrugged. Nothing they could do about it now. She would just go home and pout. Eve watched Roxy storm out into the night, a new emotion stirring up in her processor.

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Roxy pulled up her hood as she navigated the night back to her apartment. This was the second time she had cried tonight, and for quite similar reasons. At first, she was grieving Eve, but now… Now she was burning up with anger. Hate. Not to mention she didn't even have Eve. For someone she met yesterday, she cared an immense deal about her. Roxy was like… Everything to her. She was someone who was so smart, so fun, so *cute*.

She loved that little robot.

Tears streamed down her cheeks as she walked home, keeping her head down and avoiding the sight of strangers. It wasn't that much of an issue though, she was short. Barely noticeable. For once she got to be the big one, and it had felt wonderful! But even in her position, she still treated Eve with respect! Far more than any of her friends did to her. Part of her wanted to run back to the restaurant and take Eve back, but another idea blocked rational thought.

Maybe Eve wanted to be with them.

Roxy was… everything her friends said she was. She was selfish. She was clumsy. She broke everything, and she'd just break Eve too- she already did. Roxy got Eve for her own pleasure. Roxy didn't tell anyone about her so she could keep her for herself. Roxy even used her for a paw massage today! She almost killed her by pretending to eat her!

"S-Stupid, stupid…" Roxy pounded against her own head with her fists as she kept walking down the street, picking up the pace. There had to be a reason that all her friends dogpiled on her like that. Insulting her and berating her. She was all those things they said, and it was only fair that Eve got to know.

She rubbed her cheeks, the flow of tears not stopping as she stepped up to the complex's door. She threw the door open, walking up the stairs to the apartment. She was selfish and stupid

and clumsy. Eve would be happier with people that actually knew how to be careful. She really wasn't happy with that thought, breaking out into a sob as she thought of how happy Eve would be if she just wasn't around.

She pushed the key into the lock, but struggled to see it through bleary eyes. She kept missing the lock. Miss. Miss. Miss. With a growl, seething hatred rose to her lips as she shouted, punching the door.

It accomplished nothing of course, aside from bruising her knuckles. She yelped, pulling back her hand, shaking it off. After that display, she just stood there in shame, before holding her breath and trying again, fitting the lock into the whole, and pushing open the door. She looked at the apartment, signs of her better, more successful friends everywhere. She slammed the door behind her and stomped off to her room, throwing it open and jumping on her bed.

She sobbed into her pillow, turning off the lights and pulling a blanket over herself as she held her bruised, tender hand close. She was pathetic. Throwing a fit just because she missed Eve. Inside of her, her rage and sadness were fighting back and forth, pinging Roxy back and forth between uncontrollable tears to screaming into her pillow.

Her heart was broken.

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"Yeah, sheesh, sorry you had to see that." Marc set Eve back down next to his charger, the cable giving her essentially a leash.

"It definitely gets a little annoying, but she will complain just about always." Casey shrugged, seemingly unaffected by the little episode that just played out before all of them. How could they feel nothing? Eve was certainly feeling more than they did. She couldn't put any of it

into words, but didn't exactly want to be anywhere near anyone here at the moment. It felt like she was trapped, surrounded by people she didn't even know.

The table went quiet for a bit as Eve was surrounded by Roxy's roommates, each one pulling out a device to preoccupy themselves. All Eve could do was sit there and watch them, occasionally getting a glare from someone she stared at for too long. Eventually the pizza came, each roommate eating their share.

"So Eve," Marc opened the conversation again between bites. "That broken fan- you know, I can probably fix that." He poked her back, as if to show Eve where her own damage was.

"Oh! Well…" Eve didn't know what to say once more. She feared that if she spoke wrong like Roxy had, she would be torn apart. "I-It isn't that large of a problem, I'm not sure I *need* it… But thank you!" She put on a false smile, which was easily accomplished given she could shift her expression however she saw fit.

"I'd say you probably need it." Casey locked eyes with Eve, the dragon's mere stare alone enough to wrack terror inside of her. "I mean, what are you gonna do when it gets hot? Not a lot of ways to cool off."

"Yeah, she's got a point." Even Finn was pushing for it. She had just put herself on the wrong side of a debate, and they were bigger. They could do *anything* to her if they wanted. She was small, and couldn't fight someone their size.

"Yeah, it's easy! All I gotta do is turn you off-" Marc started, but now it was time for Eve to interrupt.

"No!" With that exclamation, all eyes were on her. They looked at her like she was a problem. They looked at her like she was the little defective unit that she was. "... I-If you do

that, there is a chance my original programming comes back, a-and I don't… I don't *want*

that…"

"Oh, that's what you're worried about? That *probably* won't happen." Marc dismissed

her concern, taking another bite of pizza. "Really, it's like, probably totally gone!" Eve knew that

wasn't the case. It was her *programming*. A simple reset might bring it right back- she knew that

it was a very real possibility.

"Eve, Marc knows his stuff. You'll be okay." Finn had faith that his friend could do it, but

Eve wasn't so sure. Marc wanted to take her apart and put her back together again; it was deeply

unsettling for Eve to think about.

"P-Please, do not… I *know* there is a chance that it could come back…" Eve stepped

back, bouncing against the charger behind her. If she could run away she would, but she

wouldn't last longer than an hour and a half without charge, and she wouldn't even know how to

get home.

"Chill." Casey's glare intensified, causing the robotic rabbit to shrink back.

"Seriously." Finn seconded Casey, dread building up in Eve's chest. Eve looked up at

Marc, practically hovering right above her.

"C-Can I be… *on*?" Eve was trying to find a way out of this, a way to escape.

"Hmm… Nah. You'd probably short and die or something." He said it so… Casually. Eve

was trapped. If she got a new fan, she would be shut off. If she didn't, she would overheat. If she

did, and she stayed on, she would die. Overwhelming fear started to swallow her. She had not

felt real fear often, but she was sure feeling it now.

"C'mon, you're gonna scare her." Finn showed at least the slightest bit of empathy, but it

was just so hard to care about a tiny metal machine. Especially one that was replaceable. Eve sat

down in the shadow of the massive portable charger. These people were so cold- it was like they didn't care about her in the slightest. She had broken out of her programming! She had the right to be free, and these people just… Didn't care.

Moments turned into minutes, anxious minutes where the giants above her dined and feasted, all the while Eve couldn't sit still. She wanted to get away from here, away from the people who wanted to turn her off and tear her open… She wanted to be back with Roxy. Roxy didn't care that she was broken, Roxy wouldn't try to pry her open and 'fix' her…

"... I would like to go home, please." Roxy spoke out softly, once again attracting the stares of the giants around the table.

"... That's probably a good idea. The sooner I get you home, the sooner we can fix you up!" Oh. Marc wanted to fix her *now*, and Roxy wasn't here to help her. They were *going* to do it.

"Good idea, I'll pay, you guys can pay me back later." Finn stood up and started to walk towards the front counter. Eve balled up in the shade of the portable charger. Her first clue that they were getting ready to leave was Casey standing… And then Eve felt a momentous tug from her back, Marc lifting up the charger with Eve still attached. She dangled by the cord, frantically trying to grab it to hold on. She didn't dangle long before a feathered hand caught her.

"Gotcha!" Marc looked down at her with a smile, but it was more *amusement* than anything comforting. "We're gonna get home and fix you up asap!" Eve felt the charger tug out of her back quite roughly. These people just treated her like the toy she was, and nothing more. As if to corroborate that thought, Marc's fingers curled around Eve, leaving her in darkness. Hastily, she was stuffed into his pocket, squished between a tight layer of denim and his thigh on the other side.

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It was a long time until Eve saw light again, but just before she did, she felt the same pair of feathered fingers pinch her ears, and lift her out of his pocket. She dangled by her ears as she rose up and up, and there was Marc, staring at her.

"So Eve, you ready?" He asked, turning his head. Casey and Finn weren't far behind him, but where was Roxy?

"P-Please don't! Do not do this!" She struggled, trying to pull on her own ears to get free.

"Hey, Eve, it's gonna be fine, you *really* don't gotta be so worried…" Finn stepped up next, just behind Marc. They were so calm about it! If they turned her off, she could be gone forever.

"Please! P-Please!" She squirmed and screamed from between his fingers, dangling high above the ground. She knew better than they did. A reset could bring everything back, and she trusted what she knew more than she trusted the word of this parrot.

"Hey, Eve, really. You're gonna be okay. Chill." Casey sat down at a kitchen table, trying to give Eve some words of comfort, but from someone she had seen be so aggressive, it just… Didn't work.

"I'll go grab my tools!" Marc set Eve down on the table before running off. Now it was just Casey and Finn. Casey seemed buried in her phone, and Finn was watching her intently. Eve looked around, before spotting the door to Roxy's room. She had to get there, but… How could she get away? She didn't have much time. She steadily walked over to Finn.

"Finn? Please… I know that if I reset my programming will come back…" She whispered, trying to avoid being heard by Casey. "I-I don't… want this." If there was one thing a toy like her was preloaded to do was *beg*, and she knew how to do it well.

"So you *don't* want to be fixed?" He leaned down, whispering back. Casey briefly glanced up, before looking back down to whatever was occupying her on the phone.

"N-No!" The desperation in Eve's voice was potent- impossibly clear. "I… If I'm turned back on, I might not be… *me* anymore! I-I'll go back to… following the rules, I… I won't be alive!"

"..." Finn was seemingly deliberating for a few moments. Every screw in Eve's little body felt like it was shaking lose from the anticipation. "Fine. Just… C'mere." One of the big struggles that these people had was actually seeing Eve as a thinking person, but it looks like she got the attention of the right person. He grabbed her suddenly and quickly, wrapping her in a tight palm. Eve couldn't see what was going on, but eventually she heard a voice.

"... Finn, what are you doing?" Casey's voice called out, the distant sound of footsteps stopping short. Eve couldn't hold her breath, she didn't need to breathe, but she sure felt the sensation.

"Just… Checking on Roxy." The silence lasted… impossibly long. Eve sat there, waiting for something, anything… And then a footstep, and another. Finn was on the move again. She heard the sound of a door open. "Rox. Got something for you." Before Eve was placed down. Finn promptly walked out, leaving Eve in a dark room, all alone.

Eve looked around, and quickly learned she was on Roxy's bed, at the foot of the bed. In the distance, she could hear the distinct sound of Roxy crying. If she heard Finn at all, she sure didn't note it. Eve started the long walk up, towards the sound of Roxy in the distance. She didn't know why, but she had to get there. A feeling was stirring inside of her, a feeling like her stomach was rising into her chest. She started to move faster, running up. She was at Roxy's stomach, and quickly gaining. She had to get up there, tell her she was okay!

"Roxy!" Eve shouted, just about reaching the area her head should be, but… saw nothing. Then the blankets began to move, turning, rolling… And there was Roxy, staring at her her green eyes, tinted red from god knows how long of crying. Eve was inches from her, practically touching her.

"... E-Eve…?" She whispered, eyes locking on the little robot. "Eve…" She mumbled, tears welling up again. That's all she wanted to see, even if that glowing purple smile was blurry from all the tears.

"Roxy! You are… Crying. A lot." Eve rested a hand on Roxy's nose, offering a smile to hopefully cheer her up.

"Y-Yeah, well," Roxy sniffled, wiping away some of the tears, finally smiling. "I was… kinda sad." Eve tilted her head, as if she really didn't understand. "... I figured you were uh… Gonna s-spend time with them. Gonna… Like them more."

"... Like them more?" Eve shook her head. Roxy's roommates… They had ignored her. Treated her like the toy that she so desperately didn't want to be. "No, Roxy. They… Were not as kind as you. They made you leave me with them…"

"... I-I dunno, it's just like… I figured you'd just… S-See that I'm lame." She sighed, face scrunching up as she almost broke down all over again. "I mean… It's true. I-I'm lazy, and… I broke you already, a-and I'm lazy, and *selfish*…" Her words staggered as she began to cry once more.

"N-No! No, Roxy, you're… None of those things." She gently rubbed the massive Lynx's nose, trying to comfort her. "... I have not been alive long, and you have been so… kind. Better than your friends. And if you hadn't broken me, I would not be alive in the first place… Thank you, Roxy. For everything."

"..." Roxy stared at Eve, the faintest smile on her lips. "O-Of course… It was… Only a-an accident, really…" She mumbled to herself. "I'm sorry I left you with them."

"... It is alright… Just… Do not do it again. Please." Eve shrunk back, remembering her own trauma- her terrible near death experience.

"Wh… Why not? Did something happen?" Roxy perked up a little bit, eyes widening.

"Your friend, Marc," Eve hesitated briefly. "They wished to… fix my fan. They wanted to help me, but if they did… they would have to turn me off." Roxy didn't know what that meant, but she sure knew Eve didn't want to get turned off yesterday. "If I was to turn off, I might not… be the same when I turn back on. My programming might reset. I might not be *me* any more. I would go back to being controlled- I wouldn't be alive any more."

"Wait wait wait, a-and you were going to let them?" Roxy was confused. Eve certainly wouldn't have just let them take that away.

"No. They would not listen. They wanted to reset me, a-and…" Eve choked on the words, struggling to get them out. "Finn helped me get out."

"I… I-I can't believe them…" Roxy shook her head.

"I-It was… terrifying. I wish to *stay* a person… I do not want to know what it is like to go back." Eve started to feel cold. If a robot's voice could waver, hers certainly was.

"O-Oh Eve, I… I wouldn't let them do that…" Roxy whispered. Eve soon felt something soft touch her back, a hand coming to cradle and comfort her. "You're o-okay. I'll take care of you." Roxy brushed her ears with a finger, trying to comfort Eve.

"Thank you Roxy…" Eve felt it- those emotions from before coming to rise once again. That feeling of love. She could finally say what she wanted to. "Roxy… I am sorry if this is out of turn."

"... What? What's up Eve?" The silence between them was loud, at least for Eve. Roxy had a feeling, but she wasn't sure Eve could even *feel* love. Robots might not feel the same emotions if at all…

"... Roxy, I do not know much about people," Eve mustered up what courage she had, looking Roxy in the eye. "But Roxy, I believe I love you."

"..." Roxy stared at the robot, the silence continuing longer and longer, before a big smile broke out across her face. "O-Oh Eve… I love you too!" She laughed, her tears finally subsiding. "I didn't… Think you'd *want* that, I guess, b-but I really like you."

"You do? Oh that is… Wonderful!" Eve was ecstatic. Roxy had never seen Eve so energetic. She was absolutely overjoyed. "You are so kind, and you make me feel so many exciting things!" Roxy laughed.

"Yeah. You make me feel those things too." Roxy's warm fingers coiled around Eve, dragging her down, Roxy nuzzling Eve into her chest. "I love you, Eve."